A House to Call a Home:

Housing, Governance, and Wellbeing in Nunavik

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Abstract

A House to Call a Home: Housing, Governance, and Wellbeing in Nunavik

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This thesis examines the persistence of the housing crisis in Nunavik, Quebec by conducting an in-depth analysis of government policies and social, cultural, and economic motivations. Using a phronetic research approach based on Bent Flyvberg's work, the analysis is conducted using ethical knowledge and "practical common sense" (known as *phronesis*) to derive an interpretation of the status of values and interests expressed in housing policies, agreements, and Inuit-Crown partnerships. The analysis reveals a disconnect between the intentions and promises made by governments and the programs and actions actually proposed, evidenced in the details of the actual policies and plans. The major gap is found in the goal towards wellbeing, a term that is neither well-defined nor Inuit-specific in government policies. Moreover, the foundational role of housing in Inuit wellbeing is not understood. Assumptions made about what wellbeing means and how it can be reached are largely influenced by neoliberal policies that identify solutions in economic terms. Inuit housing is framed by a capitalist welfare model that responds to housing needs rather than housing as a right. Housing is dealt with through social policy. In this context, the story of social housing as welfare, as a response to poverty, and as a drain on government resources, can only be countered with a discourse of housing as an economic asset. However, I argue that reducing the housing discourse to economic terms and technical issues (such as questions about construction and logistics) leaves no room to insist on critical political issues related to housing such as autonomy, control, and self-determination. Housing *is* political. It is part of the larger Inuit-state relationship framed by

legal, constitutional, and policy contexts. By expressing the political, historical, and cultural contexts of the housing discourse, I survey the vast potential of the idea of *home* as a new focal point. Shifting *from housing to home* opens the door to reflect on housing for Inuit wellbeing and for self-determination. Building on Julia Christensen's work with northern Indigenous populations that showed the material, relational, emotional, and spiritual qualities of homemaking, I explore the *idea of home* in detail from the literature and from reflections drawn from Inuit sources. Because home is part of what makes us human, something everyone can relate to at some level, and because home is also political, I suggest that it has the potential to change the housing dialogue and bring ethics, justice, care, and the shared value of mutual respect as key themes to include in Inuit housing decisions.

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In memory of my Dad
Peter Koschade

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Abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Organization	Level of government	English or French equivalent	New name of organization
ARK	Administration régionale Kativik	Nunavik	KRG	
ANPF	Arctic and Northern Policy Framework	Canada		
CBJNQ	Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécoise	Nunavik-Québec-Canada	JBNQA	
CMHC	Canadian Mortgage and Housing Bureau	Canada	SCHL	
CSK	Commission scolaire Kativik	Nunavik	KSB	Kativik Ilisarniliriniq
DNANR	Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (1958)	Canada	Ministre des Affaires du Nord	
DIAND	Department of Indian and Northern Development	Canada	MAINC	INAC
D.G.N.Q.	Direction générale du Nouveau-Québec	Quebec		
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Council (Canada)	National		
INAC	Indigenous and Northern Affaires Canada	Canada		
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami	National		
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement	Nunavik-Quebec-Canada	CBJNQ	
KMHB	Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau	Nunavik	OMHK	Nunavik Housing Bureau NHB since 2023
KRG	Kativik Regional Government	Nunavik	ARK	
KSB	Kativik School Board	Nunavik	Commission scolaire Kativik	Kativik Ilisarniliriniq
LHC	Landholding Corporation	Nunavik	--	
MAINC	Ministère des Affaires Indiens et du Nord Canada	Canada	DIAND	INAC
Makivik	Makivik Corporation (English) Société Makivik (French)	Nunavik	Makivik	
MAMOT	Ministère des affaires municipals et de l'occupation du territoire	Quebec	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Land Occupancy	Ministère des Affaires municipals et de l'Habitation
MPTA	Quebec Ministry of Public Works	Quebec		

Abbreviation	Organization	Level of government	English or French equivalent	New name of organization
NLHCA	Nunavik Landholding Corporations Association	Nunavik	Association des corporations foncières du Nunavik	
NRBHSS	Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services	Nunavik	RRSSSN	
NV	Northern Village	Nunavik	--	
OMHK	Office municipal d'habitation Kativik	Nunavik	KMHB	Office d'habitation du Nunavik OHN Since 2023
OMHQ	Office municipal d'habitation du Québec	Quebec		
PN	Plan Nord	Quebec	--	
RRSSSN	Régie régionale de la santé et des services sociaux du Nunavik	Nunavik	NRBHSS	
SAA	Secrétariat des affaires autochtones	Quebec	--	Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et le Inuit
SAGMAI	Sécrétariat des activités gouvernementales en milieu améridien et inuit	Quebec	--	
SCHL	Société canadienne d'hypotèques et de logement	Canada	CMHC	
SHQ	Société d'habitation du Québec	Quebec	"SHQ" used in English documents	
SPN	Société du Plan Nord	Quebec		

Preamble

This dissertation is an attempt to tackle the pervasive and devastating problem of the housing crisis in Inuit Nunangat, specifically in Nunavik. Seven years with these issues bouncing around in my head, I keep returning to the inevitable problem of *money*. Specifically, that there is only so much money the government is ever going to "hand over" to one issue, or to one region, no matter how compelling the argument is made, because there is only so much to go around. Regardless of the necessity, the desperation, the number of lives lost, the promises made, or the desire to "fix things," the reality is that there are an endless number of societal issues in Canada that need attention and that need funds in order to alleviate some of the suffering and pain citizens are experiencing, from healthcare shortcomings, nursing and doctor shortages, mental health crises, environmental devastation, climate disasters, economic inequality, discrimination, teacher shortages, unemployment, policing practices, and inadequate housing conditions and homelessness.

So I keep imagining a pie. A money pie, and the ingredients are made up of taxes.
There is only one pie. One pie to be divided to serve all these issues. To serve the people. To alleviate the suffering.
Maybe there is even a housing pie! A pie to address homelessness, housing affordability, and low-income housing needs.
Better yet, maybe there is even an Indigenous housing pie!

But even then, there are about 700 Indigenous communities across Canada. Most of which suffer from substantial housing inadequacies. Fourteen of these communities are in Nunavik.
How do we divide this pie?

How can one make the argument—regardless of how convincing, well-substantiated, and urgently it is made—that one place, one people, need more? More than the others get? Doesn't the argument for appropriate housing options have to be made across the board? That they *all* need more? And that they may well *all* be as equally in need and in pain to *require* relief?
Yes.
That is indeed an argument that can be made.
And yet.

I argue that it is not about determining *needs*. It's not about measuring suffering.
And it's not about allocating funds according to need.
That is not the argument I am making. I don't believe that funding should be always be allocated in this manner.
Moreover, the housing "need" in Inuit communities has already been ascertained—scholars and local governments have proven it. There is a need, people are suffering, and the consequences of inadequate housing in Inuit Nunangat are devastating. There are statistics to show it.
But this is political.

And it's political *because* they are Indigenous, *because* they are Inuit, and most importantly *because* they have signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement with the Canadian and Quebec governments.

So, despite the reality of suffering due to housing shortages across the board, across Canada, by all those citizens who do not have access to the services and care they need from the government that they elect and from the society they have acceded to live in, despite all those who do not experience wellbeing, I realize that this is *not*, in fact, the dilemma I am struggling against (even though for years, it was the dilemma I could not come to terms with). I could not justify why Inuit in Nunavik deserve more, better living conditions than so many other impoverished, immigrant, homeless, and unwell people who are in crisis right now in our urban and rural communities in Canada.
And I realize that I could not justify it because it's not that which requires justification. From a moral and ethical point of view, there is no argument that can be made to say that one human being "deserves" to experience wellbeing more than any other.

When I argue for the necessity to stop the housing crisis in Inuit Nunangat, it is based on a different argument..
I am talking about a different pie altogether. Because there *must* be *another* pie. The government has the *duty* to ensure that there is *an entire pie* dedicated to fulfilling its responsibilities towards Indigenous people, as signatories to the treaties from which all of Canadian society continues to benefit daily. Because it is only through those treaties that we have all the wealth, the land, and the realm we call Canada.

This is my starting point. (Though it was actually a point that came to me at the end of this lengthy thought-process of finding "new ways of looking" at the housing problem.)

We hear about "the government's responsibility towards Indigenous people," but we need to *truly understand* what that means. We need to employ an ethical form of knowledge, and common sense, to arrive at this point.
I try to shed light on the problem of the persistence of the Inuit housing crisis in Nunavik by finding a new way of looking at it.

So, how do I make this ethical political argument? How do I make it plausible, convincing, revealing?

I tackle this with the *idea of home*.

Introduction to *A House to Call a Home*

I am compelled by a level of frustration directed at my own government that continues to fail large numbers of citizens towards whom we all have an ethical duty and responsibility. As a citizen of a political community ostensibly based on equality, I consider it common sense that Indigenous peoples and Inuit need to be treated with due respect and dignity. As a citizen of a community composed of diverse cultures, I also recognize that respect and dignity are contextual, tied, that is, to different values. Of the many issues that could be exposed to illustrate Canada's collective failure to fulfill its constitutional duties, its treaty responsibilities, and to provide the necessary foundation for Inuit wellbeing especially, I pose a simple question[1]:

Why is the Nunavik housing crisis so persistent?

I am not the first to ask this question.[2] It has been posed by academics, research institutes, journalists, and Inuit alike. The question itself states an undeniable truth: the housing conditions in Nunavik are inadequate by any metric. In fact, they are *extremely* inadequate. So much so that the situation has long been called a *crisis*. The living conditions remain a serious life-threatening issue, and the crisis continues unresolved. And

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[1] Initially, my research question emerged in the form of, comedian and late night TV show host, John Oliver's occasional monologue called "How Is This Still A Thing?" where he would mock Western society as a whole by debating, often with ire, objectionable things such as "dressing up as other races" and other normalized things such as the absurdity of celebrating Columbus Day or of producing pennies that cost more to produce than they are worth (in the US). And so I asked myself, bewilderedly: *"The Inuit housing crisis: How is this still a thing?"* I think it is conceivable that the completely incompetent system of Inuit housing could have qualified as a sufficiently abhorrent reality for one of John Oliver's well-researched rants about Canadian society. (https://www.bustle.com/articles/150370-7-john-oliver-how-is-this-still-a-thing-moments-that-will-make-you-question-everything)

[2] Aude Therrien (2013) asked: "Il est donc possible de se demander pourquoi, malgré ces sommes investies, les besoins en logements dans cette région sont toujours aussi grands" (Therrien 2013, 2). Andréanne Brière (2014) asked: "L'État commande des études sur les problèmes rencontrés en lien avec l'habitation et cela depuis le début de sa présence au Nunavik. Alors, pourquoi cette situation qu'est la crise de l'habitation sociale est-elle si tenace et si lourde de consequences socioculturelles?" (Brière 2014, 107), as have countless others.

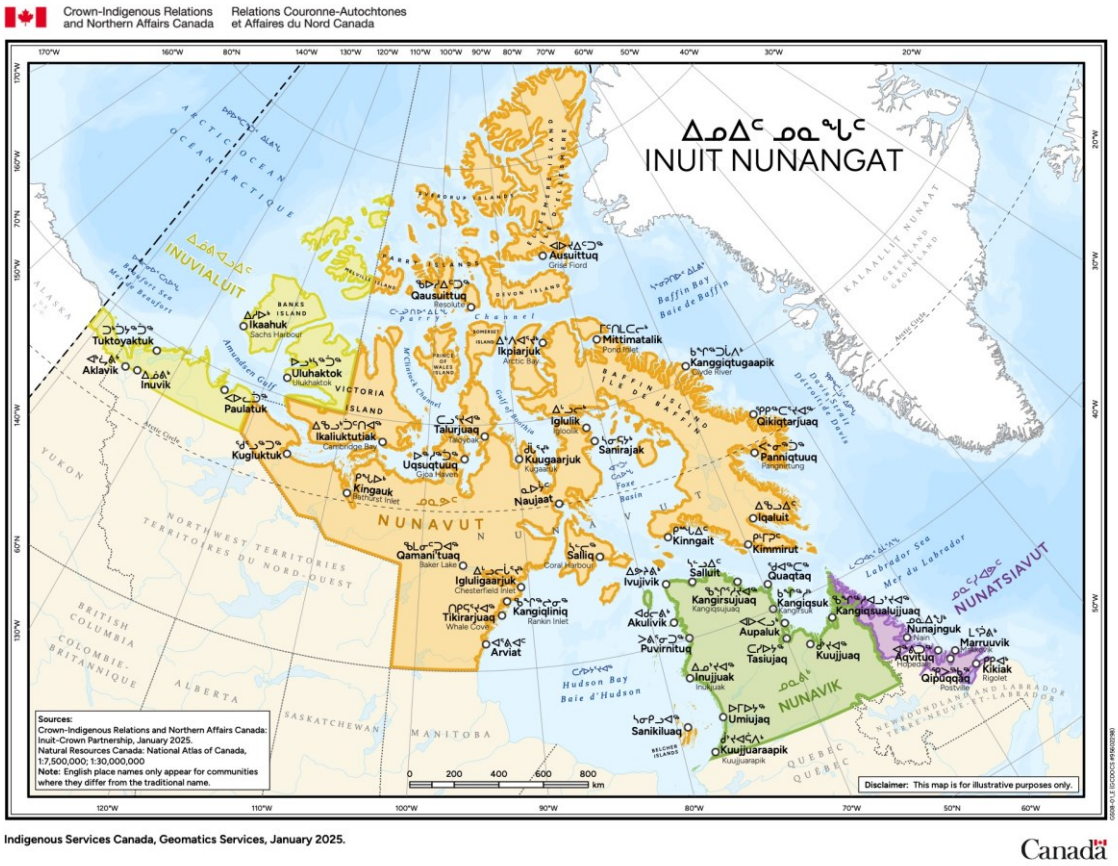
the problem is that the contradictions within the debate also persist. Much of the political debate revolves around the question of whose responsibility is it to ensure that there is adequate housing in Inuit communities, and for how long will this responsibility continue.

In fact, I might say that the very nature of my question is contradictory. Dictionary definitions of "crisis" imply that it is an event, something acute that has reached a critical phase, a state of affairs that is likely to have an undesirable outcome, and therefore a decisive change is imminent. Yet, this situation that so urgently demands a response to prevent suffering and death has not been treated as a crisis, nor as an emergency, because decisive change and response have not occurred. It is a constant, ongoing state of emergency with a majority of Inuit being forced to live their day-to-day in crisis-mode to survive.

Fig. 1. Map of Inuit Nunangat, showing Nunavik in green.

Source: Government of Canada https://geo.sac-isc.gc.ca/Collection_de_cartes-Map_room/PDF/Inuit%20Nunangat_w_Inuktitut_2025_E.pdf

The premise for this research is that most Arctic communities across Northern Canada have been burdened with an ongoing, extreme housing shortage, causing overcrowded living conditions, with low-quality deteriorating housing stock, for the past 60 plus years. Nunavik is widely known to have the worst housing conditions and the biggest housing shortage across the Arctic. Yet ample research, endless reports, and decades of Inuit testimony have shown that housing is the *essential* foundation for wellbeing. Governments and departments with responsibilities in the northern housing process have



all stated the desire and intent to improve Inuit wellbeing. It is written into treaty agreements. However, what is meant by Inuit "wellbeing" has not been well-defined in any

literature[3] nor, I argue, does it appear to be well understood at the governing tables. It is either left vaguely defined, or has been relegated to a single (state) sector: health agencies must deal with the "health" impacts of inadequate housing; economic development departments to support economic wellbeing. As such, how can one address a vital multifaceted condition of wellbeing within the wider process of housing so that there are actual improvements in Inuit individual and community wellbeing? Without clarity on this question, I argue that reaching policy and program goals will remain elusive. It is simply not clear in decades of policy documents which needs or rights are to be addressed by Inuit housing or program design. The connection between housing and Inuit "wellbeing" remains implicit but never more than that.

I posit that a more direct investigation into the causes of the disconnect between housing and wellbeing is necessary. I provide evidence of it, and demonstrate ways in which it is upheld. This requires examining the actual expressed intent of government housing policy, revisiting the power relations in the Inuit-state relations with a new perspective, and putting these scenarios in their evolving, historical context. I do this using a set of methodological questions to frame the analysis with what is called a phronetic research approach based on a form of ethical knowledge. With this I put forward a new epistemological interpretation of the housing crisis in Nunavik and propose a new way of thinking about housing through the concept of *home*.

As a more formal research question, I ask:

Main Question:
Why is the housing system in Nunavik failing to provide a foundation for Inuit wellbeing and what makes this problem so persistent?

[3] Upon finishing this dissertation, a research team in Quebec has published a definition of Inuit wellbeing (NRBHSS 2022) subsequent to extensive research and interviews conducted with Nunavimmiut.

This question will follow two lines of inquiry:

First:
Given the recognized societal harms that have been linked to inadequate Inuit housing, what are the economic, social, cultural, and political assumptions upon which Inuit housing policies and programs are predicated?

Second:
How can the concept of home offer a novel way to uncover and understand systemic and ideological barriers in Nunavik's housing system in order to reveal the necessary features and intrinsic value of proper housing for Inuit wellbeing?

The Context

It comes as a surprise to many Canadians to hear that Western-style housing in Inuit Nunangat has only been part of the northern landscape for about two to three generations. The process of sedentarization of Inuit in the North began systematically only at the very end of the 1950s with the introduction of the first Inuit housing program in 1959. One can regularly meet an Inuk today who will tell you that they were born in a tent or an igloo. They may tell stories about the first 10 or 20 years of their lives spent living on the land with their family, being self-sufficient, travelling by dog team as a child "snuggled into warm blankets and fur in a box tied safely on top of the *qamutiik*, the dogsled" (Watt-Cloutier 2015, xiii). They will also talk about how much they miss it even though they would not want to return to it now.[4] These anecdotes may seem trivial—even nostalgic—to the few

[4] In an interview with Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk, he expressed the way he interweaves his time between his modern and traditional life. He dreams of being out on a hunt, even while he is on his computer writing the next film script. His time is split between filmmaking, heading out with family or friends for a few weeks of hunting—something that "he wouldn't miss for anything in the world"—and time in the South. Though after two weeks in the South he is too bored and must return home to Igloolik, upon which he does not reject the technology that allows him his cinematic expression, working at the television studio. He can even watch his daughter learn the alphabet on a tablet, a tool he describes as "useful" (Pélouas 2015, 92–96). Likewise, Sheila Watt-Cloutier's autobiography *The Right To Be Cold* (2015) tells about a life that "has bridged the ice age to the digital age" and all that these two worlds have brought her (Watt-Cloutier 2015). And a moving collection of life stories by Inuit women leaders in the publication *Arnait Nipingit: Voices of Inuit Women in Leadership and Governance* in which many of the authors start with a description of having

southerners who know them, and it may also appear irrelevant to dealing with the housing problems of today. But, in fact, the living story of Inuit sedentarization, in which housing played, and continues to play, a central role can prompt a visceral response by Inuit who are in the midst of an ongoing, evolving process in Inuit Nunangat. The memory of it is fresh for many Inuit families, who often describe the process in traumatic terms. Even if one learns of young Inuit today who have never had the chance to go out on the land, most will still express the desire to be there. They often will say that they feel "*at home*" on their territory when they are away from their community (Joliet, Herrmann, and Chanteloup 2017). So where is home *in* the community? I argue that not only is the historical context of this territorial connection important in order to understand where Inuit come from and to appreciate that they have a unique ontological foundation, but that it is vital to keep this expansive temporal and spatial visualization of home inside the housing discourse today.

The full process of sedentarization, including all the infrastructure, amenities, services, and houses that make a village, cannot be simply explained as a natural result of the demand arising from the migration of a people to a central location; it did not happen of its own accord. It was, and is, an outcome of federal intervention in the lives of Inuit who were all living on the land until the 1950s (with a very small number of exceptions). However one might choose to view government involvement—either as a necessity due to high levels of poverty and starvation or as a control mechanism of the state—the process itself remains the source of the deplorable outcomes. Sedentarization set the original basic scaffolding for the power imbalance in the Inuit-state relationship that has been expressed through the built environment. It is a materially and emotionally felt form of colonialism.

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been delivered by their mothers or grandmothers in a tent and being the generation that moved into social housing during their childhood or teen years (McComber and Partridge 2010).

Federal policy towards the Inuit in Canada has gone through several minor and major shifts over the last 100 years. It has moved from first discouraging Inuit dependency on the state to offering services despite the fear of Inuit dependency, then later to full-fledged assimilationist approaches, to a new relationship based on attempts at equality through modern treaty-making. This was then attached to programs with the renewed hope of diminishing so-called Inuit dependency on the state, and then finally to attempts at creating new forms of partnership and collaboration between Inuit and the state based on "shared values". These changes in approach suggest that there have been improvements to the way the state has viewed Inuit, with arguably less racism, paternalism, and condescension than in the past. Yet, the results speak loudly—the living conditions remain grim and unacceptable.

As a result of the 1975 *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA), state power over housing in Quebec moved from federal to provincial hands, with some of the administrative reins for housing and other social services being transferred to more local or regional organizations in Nunavik. Policy shifts are a reflection of changes in the way the state[5] has interpreted its relationship with the Inuit, the way they have tried to distribute or reduce responsibility, and as a result of changing national interests. Indigenous policy is a mirror indicating the amount of responsibility—or neglect—that the government has accepted with regards to the problems Inuit have faced over the years. Housing policies likewise reproduce government self-interest and power dynamics. Examining the government's willingness or unwillingness to fulfill agreements, to fund social welfare programs, or to part with control over expenditures, are illustrations of the ways in which

[5] In using the term "the state" here, I acknowledge that because of the JBNQA, it is not just a theoretical term but an entity with shared sovereignty consisting of two colonial powers that see themselves as both partners and rivals.

state interests, including national interests—and therefore the Inuit-state relationship—can be grasped.

The current Inuit-state relationship is the embodiment of the process of sedentarization. Housing in the 1950s and 60s was an integral part of it—it was *the* determining factor in the most rapid and extreme social and cultural change that Inuit, or any people, have ever faced. Now, only a few decades later, "[a]fter thousands of years of self-sufficiency, Inuit communities have become embedded in the global economy [...] Poverty became commonplace" (Kral et al. 2011, 428). All in all, the living conditions for a majority of Inuit in Nunavik today are abysmal. It is a direct result of a failed government commitment to ensure that sedentarization in the North creates more wellbeing. There are many Inuit living in isolated communities without access to their own living accommodations, or in houses in abject disrepair, with designs that are not culturally-relevant. On top of this, a high percentage of houses are overcrowded. But these problems are not recent; it goes back to when the very first houses were built.

Part of the problem is what the state allows us to see. The ways that housing is represented in statistics today can be misleading. For example, the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau (KMHB) for Nunavik stated on its website in September 2018, that "90% of the Nunavik population are housed thanks to the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau" (with the other 10 percent in a combination of privately-owned homes, rentals or housing provided by an employer). It also confirmed that the housing stock in Nunavik consisted of 3356 units across its fourteen communities ("KMHB" 2017). The statement may be factual, but only if one defines "housed" loosely as "someone living in *a* house." There are technically no Inuit living on the streets in Nunavik. Homelessness in the North takes the form of "hidden homelessness," in which everyone finds a place somewhere, somehow,

whether crowded together with family, or friends, or by leaving the community altogether to go south to Montreal. IPY (International Polar Year) research in 2011 found that in Inuit Nunangat "1 in 4 homes were crowded, 1 in 5 homes provided temporary shelter to homeless visitors, and 2 in 5 homes were in need of major repairs" (Egeland 2011). More recent statistics show that the housing problems in Nunavik are the worst of the four Inuit regions of Canada. In 2019 there were 4,425 families living in 3,384 KMHB housing units. The number of units needed to eliminate the housing shortage in 2019 was 1,041, which is a 24 percent increase if population growth remains flat. In 2013, the shortage had already been at 992 (Duhaime, Caron, and Everett 2021, 44). Despite the reality that the government *is* indeed providing new houses for Nunavik—at an average of about 60 per year—the problem continues to grow with the population growth and the deterioration of existing houses, and so the living conditions worsen.

A great deal of good academic research has probed into the complexity of these statistics. Most of it reveals that the raw numbers can be misleading (see Tester 2009). Firstly, they do not come close to measuring qualitative issues: the figures overlook the realities of the conditions in which Inuit are "housed" such as then the KMHB claims that it houses 90 percent of the population without mention of the conditions of their housing. Secondly, housing policy is articulated in ways that do not reflect the reality of Inuit culture and values. Tester (2009) showed one of the contradictions in Inuit housing based on his research in Nunavut, although it applies across Inuit Nunangat: housing policy is founded on the view that housing is a market commodity and home ownership is part of the Western goal of capital accumulation through real estate. As a market commodity, private housing is something that individuals and families should strive towards, and one's "inability" to earn enough to participate in the housing market is *the* ultimate economic

problem that needs to be resolved through policy (Tester 2009). The KMHB and Société d'Habitation du Québec (SHQ) programs have also reintroduced the view that developing a private housing market in Nunavik should be part of the solution to the housing crisis with programs and funding to support Inuit who want to purchase their rented homes or construct their own homes. This approach is also supported by the recent Makivik Corporation (Makivik) president, Charlie Watt, who stated: "Access to property is a step forward for us as it offers an alternative to social housing" (*Nunatsiaq News* 2018; Rogers 2018b). But homeownership programs promoted by the SHQ and KRG have repeatedly failed to have any substantial uptake. Only 2.1 percent of dwellings were owned in Nunavik in 2016, and 97.8 percent are rented (Duhaime, Caron, and Everett 2021, 40).

These two representations of the housing conditions articulated by statistics and housing policy for northern communities are founded on the value of capital accumulation. It demonstrates that there is an underlying set of assumptions about how housing issues in the North are conceived, and the limits to which solutions might be formulated. Issues such as these are further complicated when Inuit leaders likewise agree to encouraging Inuit society into systems and structures that may in fact further undermine goals of cultural continuity and Inuit practices, culture, and values, all the while the path towards Inuit autonomy and self-determination remain unclear through these state-driven approaches. We cannot argue, of course, that these Inuit leaders are, perforce, wrong for embracing a different developmental model just because it comes from the colonial state. But it raises important questions about what constitutes Inuit "interests" in terms of cultural continuity.

The following pages will delve into the history and various aspects of Nunavik's housing policy, programs, and funding agreements in the last sixty years. The ongoing settler colonial structure that northern housing policy and attendant programs reproduce is

a view that can help to understand why solutions founded on the current democratic liberal tradition do not in fact—and may not in theory be able to—improve the actual long-term living conditions for Inuit in Nunavik because they block the chance for the development of an approach to housing that would *expand* Inuit concepts of autonomy and self-determination and, therefore, Inuit wellbeing.

I argue that we need to understand the underlying assumptions, ideologies, values, and power imbalances upon which housing programs and policies are built in order to find an approach that can overcome these barriers that keep getting in the way, and finally start discussing the real problems. This research pursuit, to what is essentially a policy analysis, is what differentiates it from other policy studies that frequently focus on whether policy outcomes meet policy objectives and how to improve the implementation tools. The argument has been made that we *already know* what to do with regards improving Indigenous policy: we need to create "positive, social transformative change designed to better the social and economic conditions of Indigenous peoples [...] through a much greater measure of self-government than what they have been allowed to enjoy, and direct, unimpeded, and unconditional participation in any decision likely to affect them" (Salée and Lévesque 2021, 425). In order to pick up on Salée and Levesque's (2021) call for the need to investigate the state's resistance to real change by analyzing motives and determining whether Canada seems prepared to actually "reconfiguring the nature and content of its relationship with Indigenous peoples by accepting unreservedly their conception of what is important to them" (Salée and Lévesque 2021, 425), I have taken a distinctive analytical approach based on ethical knowledge to analyze power relations, and I suggest a new concept, *home*, around which the housing dialogue can revolve and begin to distill the power imbalances. With this, the work in my policy analysis is to uncover

assumptions, as well as interpret the values upon which policies and programs are built. I will show how these are plotted by the state to appear universal, and therefore a function of an inevitable and irresistible logic, rather than an expression of power. This will be necessary to understand how the concept of *home* can be employed to confront these barriers.

The Idea of Home

What does it mean to call one's house a *home*?

What does home mean for you?

And what kind of house would it have to be?

Every person will answer these questions differently. And yet there are certain baseline criteria shared across the board. Once the basics are established, other essential features of *home* reflect a person's particular ontology, their set of values, influenced by heritage, culture, family dynamics, societal conditions, and personal circumstances and responsibilities. Basically, in order to feel "at home" requires the space, the place, and the structure to fulfill certain essentials, including own's own social, cultural, health, economic, and political values. I propose that one of the ways to structure an answer to the question "what are your housing needs?" might be to think of housing in terms of what "*home* needs."

Home is a concept that has been recognized in research in the northern Indigenous context as a word that resonates culturally and politically for different Indigenous peoples. It is a term that has been described as a uniquely "human" condition,[6] regardless of culture

[6] Tim Ingold, an anthropologist who has published in a wide range of topics including ethnography, the environment, human-animal relations, movement, art, design, architecture, and placemaking, referred to *home* as the thing that makes us uniquely human (Ingold 2012).

or politics, even though it has cultural and political implications. Four different aspects of home that have been identified by Indigenous people and academic collaborators together, mainly through studies with northern urban homelessness, consists of *material*, *relational*, *emotional* and *spiritual* aspects. This way of thinking about *home* is the source for a conceptual frame and guide to offer alternative ways of seeing housing in the North, specifically in Nunavik. This research will not provide a categorical "answer" to the problems identified in the Inuit housing complex. Yet it offers a new interpretation of where we are going, what the associated power relationships are, and what might be done. It is framed within a backdrop of human rights, ethics, and respect for our mutual humanity.

It may in fact be time to make an ethical judgment of what the state has been doing. At some point, when all the promised, spoken and written, "good intentions" of so many decades have not come to fruition, it may require a deeper look into the conscious or unconscious motivations and inner workings of the system. With an ethical lens to reveal the ontological and ideological barriers, it would prevent us from falling back on procedural excuses for the failures. And I argue that this analysis must not be focused on the technical and technocratic aspects of housing such as logistics, funding, design, and construction issues. By focusing on ontological and ideological questions, it will reveal other equally important issues in the housing question, issues connected to identity, emotional lifeworlds, and the relational needs that makes one feel at home or not at home in a house or in a community.

Methodology and Theory

Since ethics lies at the heart of my research, I draw on the phronetic research approach developed by Danish planner Bent Flyvbjerg. It is a relatively new direction in critical policy studies, influenced by Aristotle's original philosophy of knowledge. Aristotle proposed three categories of knowledge: *episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis*. *Episteme* has become what we now call epistemology or scientific knowledge—highly valued and considered to be universal and context-independent. *Techne* is the application of technical knowledge and skills, such as in art and craft—it is, in this sense, pragmatic. *Phronesis*, less familiar and rarely recognized as "knowledge," is neither a science nor an art. It is often referred to as "practical common sense," or as Flyvbjerg called it, practical wisdom. It is, in the end, a kind of ethical knowledge. Using a phronetic research approach "is to perform an analysis to derive interpretations about the status of values and interests in societies or social organizations aimed at social change" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 60). This must be done through "consideration, judgement, and choice" by examining something concrete within its general context (Flyvbjerg 2001, 57) and by answering the four main phronetic research questions: 1) where we are going; 2) who gains, who loses, and by which mechanisms of power; 3) is it desirable, and; 4) what should be done? (Flyvbjerg 2001, 60).

Flyvbjerg argued that all political inquiry would benefit from an interpretation of the status of values. In fairness, most political systems contain, implicitly or explicitly, some foundational sense of value; but the relationship between power and those privileged values are not well acknowledged. An analysis of power therefore includes questions about what kind of power relations are present, what links them together, what the local power relations are, and what can be done differently in such contexts (Flyvbjerg 2001). This line of thinking has also been influenced by Michel Foucault's ethics, which Flyvbjerg believes

most closely resembles Aristotle's *phronesis*. It is a kind of applied ethics that is also designated as context-dependent judgment (Flyvbjerg 2001, 136).

The approach requires a close reading of a large set of data with clarity on the social and historical context in which a particular policy issue takes place. This reading of the values, power relations, and assumptions in the situation is done by addressing the four general questions of a phronetic approach which will guide my research path. The path is founded on looking at the details to build a clearer picture of what the housing process consists of in Nunavik. This will be set in its closely-read historical context; in the context of the political relationship as expressed in government agreements, policy, and reports and attendant relations of power; and as expressed by Inuit organizations and leaders in reports, statements, and policies.

The dissertation begins in Chapter 1 with an assessment of the academic literature on Nunavik housing to establish what we know and what kind of gaps still exist. Chapter 2 explains the value of the phronetic research approach I have chosen and how it provides a framework for a new interpretation and way of seeing Nunavik housing. The four main questions of the phronetic research approach guide the flow of the rest of the narrative through contextualization, an interpretation values, power relations, and a new epistemological reformulation for housing to bring towards a social justice issue. This will be done in four parts.

In Part I of the dissertation, to establish where we are going, I have included a "where we have been" section, with a history of early Inuit-state relations in Chapter 3, focusing particularly on those past events that still linger powerfully in the memories of Inuit, namely the process of sedentarization up until the 1950s. The more recent history of housing in Nunavik after the 1950s, in Chapter 4, includes key negotiations and agreements related to

housing and the political relationship that forms the historical and political context of the Inuit-state relationship today. Inuit interpretations of their own history come from personal memoirs, Inuit news outlets,[7] and reports from Inuit organizations.

Part II offers the main analysis of power relations. To respond to Flyvbjerg's question *Who gains, who loses, and by what mechanisms of power?* I dive into the government's promises, commitments, exchanges, and intentions related to Inuit housing in Nunavik by looking through the vast layers of the state's structural, legal, political and policy changes. This will establish a detailed interpretation of the way government has formulated responses to the crisis, to its treaty responsibilities, and to its own democratic values. This is divided into three separate chapters. In Chapter 5, I present the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA): the treaty signed between the Nunavimmiut, the Eeyou, Quebec, and Canada. The political context of the treaty itself and the way the final agreement was presented to the Quebec public was a parade of state power, despite having been proclaimed as a modern treaty that would benefit the Indigenous signatories. All other government commitments that followed essentially reveal how the state has implemented and interpreted the meaning of the JBNQA. Therefore, Chapter 6 is a purview of various government accords and partnerships initiated with Inuit that express intentions, shared values, and ways forward, most recently under the umbrella of reconciliation. It shows commitments to certain values claimed to be essential to the character of Canadian society. Chapter 7 contains the main housing policy analysis where I argue that to build a bigger picture of what is going on requires looking at the many

[7] This includes excerpts from a collection of writings by Inuit and reprints from Inuit newspapers and magazines that often go back to the 1970s or earlier, found in a ten volume publication called *Voices and Images of Nunavimmiut* edited by Minnie Grey, Peter Mittenhal, and Marianne Stenbaek, published between 2010 and 2015.

interconnected levels of decision-making, negotiations, and signing of agreements and new policy development. Housing policies in this chapter include those at the federal, provincial, and local levels, as well as all housing and other related programs and statements that can be called *de facto* housing policies.

In Part III, the question of whether the current situation is desirable is addressed through the concept of Inuit wellbeing. With so many policies, reports, and new accords set on improving Inuit wellbeing, we can focus on whether the current housing system is desirable based on whether it supports the targeted result: individual and community wellbeing for Nunavimmiut. This chapter will include an overview of what is generally meant by the expression "wellbeing" which has been, it must be said, poorly defined in most policies that claim to want to create it.

Finally in Part IV, I address the final phronetic question—*What should be done?*—in two ways. First, it is important to note that the goal of phronetic research is not, by definition, to write the final word on any issue. It is to offer a narrative and reinterpretation that provides the best interpretation one can provide *for now*, until a better one comes along. Therefore, Chapter 9 is the final chapter with an argument for the benefit, relevance, and potential of including the idea of *home* into the Inuit housing policy discourse. In order to make this argument convincingly, it is necessary to investigate what *home* actually means, and whether and how it is germane to Inuit culture based on the many ways it takes form. I then go on to suggest that to introduce any new ideas requires a setting with an openness to receiving alternatives, and acceptance of the continued existence of other identities.

One of the main barriers to the reception and acceptance of other ontologies and identities has been fear and mistrust. Fear of losing hold, of compromising the idea of

sovereignty and our nationhood, and of degrading our democracy. I suggest another way of considering "what should be done" without the fear that it could compromise our democratic principles. Since the lack of trust is one of the main emotional remnants from the series of historical events that founded the Inuit-state relationship, we need something that can undermine the fear and doubt of allowing other identities and ontologies to flourish inside our democratic system. A kind of radical democracy based on Chantal Mouffe's work would in fact strengthen our democratic foundation with the inclusion of more voices, ideas, and solutions.

Knowledge Gaps and Contribution to Knowledge

This research is a response to the call by many researchers and organizations that have recognized that there is a shortage of quantitative, qualitative, and theoretical research on Inuit housing. For example, the Canadian Polar Commission summarized the state of knowledge on northern housing in 2014 indicating where the gaps and future research might focus. It put emphasis on more multi-disciplinary research that can inform policy-making (Canadian Polar Commission 2014, 6). And it recommended that the relationship between housing and socio-economic conditions be better understood, as well as "identifying where the need exists and what the need will be in the future to allow planners and builders to supply housing that fits with demand" and to "document evidence of the relationship between housing, health, education attainment, and economic prosperity to inform education and economic related policies and plans" (Canadian Polar Commission 2014, 6). In the emergent body of research on Inuit housing, a considerable proportion of it has been concerned with establishing the statistics, the links, and the consequences of the housing "situation" (Duhaime and Édouard 2014; Duhaime et al. 2004; Édouard and

Duhaime 2013a; S. Lévesque and Duhaime 2020; Riva 2013; Riva et al. 2014; Riva, Larsen, and Bjerregaard 2014; Riva, Perreault, et al. 2020; Perreault et al. 2020; Khan et al. 2016; Pepin et al. 2018). My research analyzes this body literature and focuses it toward the idea of *home* to encompass the interrelated issues of health, socio-cultural, and economic needs, and to add the way the political needs and rights of Inuit are deeply related to housing.

Unfortunately, the Commission's recommendations neglected or seemed indifferent to the essential need to understand housing from an Inuit perspective. Instead, the report placed emphasis on the economic drive to improve housing for Inuit, namely, for example, to have "appropriate types of construction for efficient and effective investment allocation" and "meaningful investment in housing that can reduce expenditures on other social services" (Canadian Polar Commission 2014, 6). This kind of framing reveals the essential economic driving forces of Canadian governments, instead of focusing on how Inuit frame their issues. The Commission's report is an example of how the housing discourse regularly fails to link housing to the equally important issues of Inuit identity, self-determination, and autonomy. Instead, it promotes policy changes that will assist in resolving the economic burden Inuit housing puts on government. This neoliberal undertone actually undermines its own call for "community participation" (Canadian Polar Commission 2014, 5). Tellingly, the appeal for participation is only mentioned in the context of Inuit giving *input* for housing designs, and not—explicitly—for decision-making or governance by Inuit themselves. Inuit agency is not part of the federal government's Canadian Polar Commission's report.

The Commission recognized from the outset that "[t]here is no 'one-size-fits-all' design that can appropriately meet the needs of all Northerners" (Canadian Polar

Commission 2014, 5) which reminds us how important it is to have a housing system or format that can be flexible and responsive to the different regional, community, family, and individual needs. Thinking about housing in terms of the concept of *home* can provide that type of flexible response. In this sense, my research addresses some of these recommendations but also goes beyond them. As my literature review will show, the research has also made it unequivocally clear that Inuit voice and control over their own housing system and living conditions is non-negotiable.

My research contribution is to provide some of the core research needed to proceed with further housing questions. I have written a critical multidisciplinary literature review of the research relevant to the Nunavik housing situation to encapsulate the many ways housing is viewed and the areas that have been focused on. I also offer a wide-ranging critical analysis of housing policies that affect the Nunavik region by going into details of the intent and claims made by governments. I offer a potential path forward to try to broaden the housing discourse with an essential, relatable concept centered on our collective and shared humanity that reaches across cultures, politics, and beliefs. This is a concept that does not stay at the conceptual level but requires actual physical and material outcomes as well as political implications to become part of the dialogue and change the conversation.

My contribution is in large part an assessment of the current state of affairs, of the direction we are going now. It is about uncovering not just the fact that there are power imbalances with detrimental effects (as most researchers in this field have found), but about uncovering the way values expressed by Canadian society—the assumptions we make about norms and about how to reach and measure goals—are a big part of the underlying problem. The second part of my work is mainly ideas-based. It proposes another way of bridging different ontologies and values without compromising our democracy, nor

compromising diverse conceptions of wellbeing.

Nunavik is a particularly important region for study. It is often neglected in research conducted in Inuit Nunangat. It has been the most frequently excluded region in data sets about the state of housing and homelessness in Inuit Nunangat (e.g. Minich et al. 2011). For example, in 2007-08, the Circumpolar International Polar Year did not even include Nunavik on its map of the North, even though Nunavik experiences the same climatic conditions of an Arctic region. It only showed territories above 60°N (Natural Resources Canada 2008). Only as recently as 2012 did the International Polar Year map include all the Nunavik villages. Promisingly, the label "Inuit Nunangat" used by Inuit to describe the entire Inuit territory in Canada which includes all four regions (Nunavut, Inuvialuit, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut) has recently taken a more consistent hold in research and in government reports. Much of the research on Nunavik is conducted by universities in Quebec, and there is a palpable separation in the literature on research conducted on Nunavik and on the rest of the Arctic regions,[8] a condition doubtless amplified by the French-English language barrier, and the general linguistic siloing of Canadian academic research. With this in mind, I try to include as much data from both as possible.

Boundaries of my Research

The Inuit voice that is central to my research and data is a compilation of comments, quotations, and discussions from previous research, reports, consultations, and surveys that were often collaborative efforts in which the knowledge and perspective from Inuit has stood out. I have made use of existing research with Inuit for the purpose of informing new

[8] There are of course always exceptions such as Mylene Riva's research team that has worked across communities in Nunavik and Nunavut on the housing issue, and others.

ideas and concepts, especially in the initial development of the concept of *home* for an Inuit context.

This dissertation is not the result of collaborative work. It is my express intention *not* to speak *for* Inuit, and *not* to presume what they need, want, or how they see the situation. Therefore, I have chosen to focus on the government's actions: its promises, its reports, and its claims. While there is no doubt that Inuit-led research is the way forward with many of the urgent questions that need investigating, I have chosen to re-visit past research results to find evidence that the idea of *home* offers a viable future path. I have also put a critical eye on government publications and non-Inuit research, letting myself be guided in my critique by statements, reports, and quotations from Inuit leaders and research participants to provide perspective on the relationship between Inuit and non- Inuit in terms of housing. My conceptual contribution of *home* for the Inuit housing context is at this point still "untested." I have not applied the idea of *home* in praxis. One reason is that some Inuit have expressed considerable research exhaustion or aversion in Inuit Nunangat,[9] especially research conducted by outsiders questioning and disturbing residents and other organizational bodies with endless surveys and interviews during times of crisis (de Leeuw, Cameron, and Greenwood 2012, 187). So my research offers an essential background investigation comprising a theoretical and normative approach that exposes and critiques Western assumptions and ideologies about Inuit housing, enough to suggest that the

[9] In my personal experience as Assistant Executive Director with Saturviit in 2018, I encountered tangible suspicion from Board members when proposing to engage in any form of "research" for the organization. Research ideas and proposals were discernably judged, and government funding offered through a successful funding proposal for a research project was rejected. These are understandable reactions, given how scientific research has been embedded in our colonial history. The same sentiment has been noted by many Indigenous scholars, as Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith states: "The word itself, 'research' is probably one of the dirtiest word in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (Smith 2012, xi, 1) Therefore the response I sensed was likely part of a form of distain or discomfort with the idea of research, possibly due to past experiences and stories from the region.

colonizers need to find new ways to respond to Inuit demands, a new kind of dialogue needs to take place between government and Inuit, and in ways that pose serious questions about Canada's democratic governance under conditions of pluralism.

Chapter 1: A Critical Literature Review on the Subject of Northern Housing for Inuit with a Focus on the Nunavik Region

> ***'L'habitation: une honte nationale?' la réponse est sans équivoque. Il n'y a aucune raison d'avoir tardé – ni de retarder encore advantage – au Canada, à construire suffisamment d'habitations de bonne qualité dans les communautés autochtones.[10]***

(Piché and Rodon 2017, 9)

Introduction

Across Canada, housing conditions for Indigenous peoples have been below standard for decades, if not ever since government first intervened with its inadequate housing programs. It is not long after the first housing was provided by governments (through homeownership programs or rent-to-own options) that research and reports addressing the growing problems were first published. Problems with health and safety of the houses were observed across many Indigenous communities. Below the 55th parallel in Quebec, in as early as 1973, the *Association des Indiens du Québec* launched an inquiry into Indigenous housing conditions on- and off-reserve. It confirmed the overall deplorable conditions, with housese in desperate need of repairs and the shortage of housing for the population size (Lefebvre 1975). Organizations such as *L'Alliance laurentienne des Métis et Indiens* worked to reduce safety and health risks for Indigenous residents stuck in below-standard housing, and to improve the social and economic conditions for their people (Chalifoux 1975).

[10] English translation by DeepL.com: "Housing: a national disgrace? the answer is unequivocal. There is no reason for Canada to have delayed—nor to delay any further—building a sufficient number of good-quality homes in Indigenous communities."

Similarly bleak stories were coming out of Northern Quebec, north of the 55th parallel, in what we now call Nunavik. The numbers showed that by the end of the 1970s, Nunavik was going to need 474 *new* lodgings to meet demand, and 691 of the 800 existing units needed to be properly equiped and renovated (Québec 1981, 9). The housing situation in Indigenous communities across Quebec clearly required immediate attention. Numerous surveys, inquiries, and reports from different organizations and levels of government were produced in concert with what has become a new multidisciplinary research area: Indigenous housing. Together, reporting from organizations and academic research have attempted to uncover the causes of the problems, find technology and policy solutions, and build an understanding of the social, cultural and health consequences and related needs of residents to try to develop the delivery of adequate housing for Indigenous people in Canada. A subset of this field has been the focus on the unique housing conditions of Inuit, specifically in remote, northern, fly-in communities.

Among this literature, a critical body of research has also begun to reveal the colonial underpinnings of not just our past government housing approaches that were part of a process of forced sedentarization, but also of the ongoing problems in the complex housing system today. These colonial views, still evident today, have been examined in terms of conflicting ideologies and ontologies when it comes to establishing housing needs, in terms of the need for Inuit agency and voice in policy-making (and in the research itself), and through critiques of the cultural relevance of certain research and survey approaches, terminology, and methodological choices. All together, this is an indispensable, emergent, and novel body of research that comes at a critical time as the current Trudeau government says it is going to pay more attention to Indigenous and Inuit issues in Canada and prioritize its relationship with all original inhabitants in this vast territory.

This literature review will provide an overview of the research conducted on Inuit housing principally in Nunavik, though not rigidly limited to this geographical region. The topic of Inuit housing has been investigated through a wide range of academic fields that at times complement each other. Approaches to research have also changed in the last 70 years. Each field has evolved in its own way, based on the epistemological foundations of the discipline. I will review literature from the following disciplines: architecture, political science and policy studies, geography, sociology, anthropology, health research, as well as from several interdisciplinary research groups. Regardless of the disciplinary source, the purpose is to uncover and critique the following three aspects of the literature : 1) to identify the means with which Inuit housing needs and wellbeing have been addressed and defined in the literature; 2) to evaluate the researchers' dispositions to reading the housing crisis in terms of colonialism and relationships of power, and 3) to discern the evolution of the research approaches and the epistemological foundations of the study of Inuit housing.

There is somewhat of a divide in the academic output across regional and linguistic divides in Canada. It means that research progress in one region may not be built upon by researchers in other parts of Canada. For example, issues related to Nunavik's history and current housing situation have been addressed more consistently by scholars from the province of Quebec than from other provinces, including the large research teams from Laval University which have played a leading role in this field over many decades. This is expected; universities often focus on their most immediate regions. I believe, however, that either due to linguistic barriers between French and English publications, or because of the regional gaps, there is a surprising lack of overlap and cross-referencing between research conducted in Quebec on Inuit housing and research from other parts of Canada and in other Inuit regions. I have tried to bridge this gap by making sure I include any literature in

French or English that is about Nunavik housing or relevant to the conceptual and methodological development of Inuit housing studies in general.

This critical literature review explores the contributions scholars have made to understanding the *persistence* of the housing crisis. As Grant and Booth (2009) explain in their analysis of fourteen different types of reviews and methodologies, it is important for critical reviews to "'take stock' and evaluate what is of value" from the body of work which can "provide a 'launch pad' for a new phase of conceptual development" without being bogged down by a systematic search, synthesis and analysis of all the literature. I therefore focus on the "conceptual contribution of each item of included literature, not on formal quality assessment" in order to have a "starting point for further evaluation" (Grant and Booth 2009, 93, 97). This will allow me to focus *less* on the *effects* of inadequate housing, and instead cast a critical eye on the way the *causes* of inadequate housing have been explained. Alongside that I will look at the approach authors have taken to rationalize their explanations for the ongoing housing crisis in Nunavik.

Research that has explored the ongoing nature of the housing crisis from a critical lens has had to consider the various perspectives, including the effects of sedentarization, colonialism, paternalism, and assimilationist policies. Based on different epistemological foundations, explanations differ dramatically. There are scholars who believe that the state has always had good intentions towards its citizens. Based on this assumption, research might describe the history, cultural change, and the loss of territorial control not as a result of dominant or unequal relations, but merely as an unfortunate by-product of overall ameliorations to Inuit quality of life (scholars such as Damas 2002). There are scholars who describe today's housing issues as originating out of a *historically* colonial relationship, whereby colonialism explains past problems but is no longer the cause of today's problems.

These scholars will often focus on righting past wrongs, even righting them by finding new technical or logistical solutions and adjustments by working within the existing system. These studies do not aim to upset existing structures and governance relationships, even if they do indeed sometimes find alternate routes for material improvements. Finally, there are others who examine the ways in which colonial and paternalistic views *persist* in the Inuit-state relationship today in new economic, political, and socio-cultural forms. These colonial forms can be found in governance structures, institutional design, or even in the power expressed by individual players such as bureaucrats or politicians. These scholars identify political, ethical, or ideological differences between Inuit and non-Inuit stakeholders and institutions that have created considerable impediments in the housing process. Usually in these cases, healing and solutions are dependent on a revision of the Inuit-state relationship. Power imbalances are most likely to be uncovered in research that acknowledges a level of continuity in the colonial attitudes and colonial structures still in place today.

Early research on housing in Nunavik

There has been undeniable progress in the research conducted on Inuit housing over the decades and through the many disciplines. These changes have been influenced in part by the public dialogue regarding our Indigenous-state relations, political transformations and interests, and new and innovative research approaches that have brought about fresh results and ideas. These in turn have had some positive repercussions on policy and the Inuit-state relationship. And yet, despite the research and changes, Inuit housing remains a serious problem across Inuit Nunanga.

Essentially, the research literature tries to answer the same question I am asking: What is going on with Inuit housing crisis in Nunavik? They have tried to pinpoint the root of the problems either in institutional structures, policy-making, the attitudes of actors involved, state ideologies, or cultural or ontological differences between Inuit and Western ways of seeing the world and interacting with it.

In the early years, research about Inuit living conditions was conducted in a top-down manner, often without consultation or input from Inuit themselves. This is true for medical research, government reporting, anthropological studies, among other areas. It is largely agreed upon today that even when the research did include contact with Inuit, most early research in the North, at least up until the 1960s, was largely unbalanced, part of an uneven relationship and larger imperial project. However, there were also exceptions to this tendency, even if in hindsight today we could find fault among those exceptions. Hugh Brody's work spanned over half a century as a writer, filmmaker, and occasional academic anthropologist. He is an example of a "white guy in the Arctic" in the late sixties whose observations and relationships with Inuit were far more insightful and realistic than many others who wrote at the same time. While he may not have written his texts "with" Inuit, he wrote in solidarity with Inuit; he wrote about the fears they had shared with him about their future. He never shied away from seeing the beauty of the northern people and landscape as well as directly addressing the harsh reality of the impacts of colonialism and the harm that the state relations had caused the Inuit.[11]

When it comes to research on housing in the North, there is a wide range of approaches. Some research was conducted with collaborative methods, some was

[11] See Hugh Brody's 1975 *The People's Land: Eskimos and Whites in the Eastern Arctic* (Markham: Penguin Books) and 2000 *The Other Side of Eden: Hunters, Farmers and the Shaping of the World* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre).

concerned about the negative impacts of colonialism and sedentarization, and others viewed change such as sedentarization as a necessary sign of "progress." The differences in how scholars have analyzed the Inuit housing reflect this range, and the approaches they have taken also heralded their particular disciplinary track.

Since the early 1970s[12], Université Laval scholars have been working in Nunavik (Nouveau-Quebec) to try to dismantle the cultural barriers between the academic-professional-technical knowledge of northern housing and Inuit-specific cultural-technical knowledge of housing needs in their territory and society. Université Laval has supported several large research teams based in architecture, political science, anthropology, geography, and through various northern research institutes that have been funded for multiple years through Canada and Quebec research grants.[13] Research on northern housing was and continues to be pursued by several of these research teams.

Some of the most interesting early research aimed at understanding cultural needs of Inuit housing has been through an innovative approach in architecture. This has been called "participatory design," "collaborative design," and is also known by the term "charettes," described as "forums in which participants are encouraged to think in positive and innovative ways about sustainable building design and construction [in] a creative environment where diverse skills, expertise and personal interests can be brought together to contribute new perspectives on issues in order to develop new solutions" (CMHC and Semple 2009, 1). Over the last decades, architects immersed in culturally diverse

[12] In fact, scholars have been working in Nouveau-Quebec even prior to the 1970s, for example on a 1958 housing project as evidenced in documents found in Library and Archives Canada, included in my housing history chapter.

[13] These include recent research teams such as Habiter le Nord Québecois, Centre d'études nordiques (CEN), Centre interunivesitaire d'études et de recherches autochtones (CIÉRA), Institut nordique du Québec (INQ), Sentinelle Nord, Amundsen Science, ArcticNet, and more. The university has multiple professors who have funding through Canada research chairs on northern and Inuit topics, they have multiple research stations in arctic and sub-arctic regions, and they have a research icebreaker ship as well.

international design projects have adopted this approach worldwide, especially with Indigenous peoples.[14] Today, charettes continue to contribute the architectural design process in the Arctic (CMHC and Semple 2009).

Université Laval's *Nunaturliq* research project in the 1970s on Inuit housing was the first of these endeavours. Refusing to toe the government line that offered only a generic approach to northern housing, the team's goal was to find a way to create housing *for* Inuit. The goal was that housing could be easily designed, specifically for each family's needs, taking into account family size and composition in order to create the spaces necessary for each family's particular daily, economic, cultural, and relational activities to thrive. The research team also strove to create designs *with* Inuit as seen in Leo Zrudlo's project (Zrudlo 1975, 50). In 1973, Zrudlo, an architect and scholar who worked with this research team in Puvirnituq, Nunavik, described an interactive tactile design strategy that he used with twenty-three families (Zrudlo 1976). By providing a small-scale model kit of a house to each participant family, which they could assemble themselves based on their image and needs,[15] it allowed each family to imagine and demonstrate how they would chose to create a space for their activities inside and outside the walls of these experimental houses. Each family came up with a different configuration of the movable panels and sections of the house. The research team also attempted to find technical solutions for a design that could be further adapted and transformed years down the road to accommodate a family's changing needs and practices (Zrudlo 1975).

[14] For example, Ottawa-based architect, William Semple, has applied his extensive knowledge gained from international design work to the question of cultural sustainability in the Canadian Arctic housing context (Semple 2005; CMHC and Semple 2009; Cotterill 2021).

[15] The families worked on designing their homes in the context of a game with a set of scale models, called *illunguat* that was to allow for the physical visual expression of their housing needs (Baillargeon 1975).

The research team identified a funding source for construction, and three families benefitted from having their models realized in these experimental designs. Inuit had full control over the construction of these houses, having even refused the presence of a southern foreman to oversee the construction work (Zrudlo 1975, 60). The ultimate long-term goal of the project was to create a stepping stone for Inuit to ensure self-governance ("auto-gérance") for all aspects of building in the future, and eventually toward the prospect of developing their own new housing models (Zrudlo 1975, 61).

The project goals of *Nunaturliq* were laudable, and the implementation process was original. Researchers lived with Inuit families and learned about family routines and activities. They returned to adapt the proposed designs multiple times to understand the needs of Inuit participants. Finally, by obtaining government funding to build the experimental houses, it had the benefit of engaging Inuit families in a more committed way. The team collected feedback at half a year and then at a full year later to see whether technical aspects of the buildings had met the dwellers' socio-cultural needs (Larochelle 1975b).

It must be noted, however, that this remained a southern-led initiative. The strategy of the project was designed by architects and anthropologists (Larochelle 1975b, 46). The expertise about the materials, construction, techniques, and adaptions to climate came from external and international sources with construction experience in other Arctic regions. To determine the prevailing winds for orienting the buildings they had not consulted local residents (Zrudlo 1975, 52). It is difficult to gauge whether unequal or uncomfortable power relationships might have infiltrated parts of the participatory design process with Inuit. Zrudlo explained that the analysis and design strategy phase took place once the team *left* Puvirnituq to return to Quebec city (Zrudlo 1975, 52), presumably

without Inuit participants. These are methodological issues in participatory research that often continue today, some which have been improved over the years, offering results that more clearly show what housing could look like for Nunavimmiut.

In fact, it is from reading about these early collaborative research projects that my leading research questions had sprung: If knowledge, partnerships, and strategies have been developed *with* Inuit since the 1970s offering new innovations for collaborative approaches, new house concepts, and with research that frequently expressed the goal to provide a template to giving over control for socio-economic decisions to Inuit, then what were the obstacles that have prevented wider implementation of these types of alternative housing solutions? One clue in a 1975 *Nunaturliq* article revealed that: the federal Ministère des affaires indiennes had intervened several times before implementation or construction of the model houses had begun. The government overrode certain technical decisions of the proposed house designs. With the funding tied to government release, there always remains final oversight and ultimately government control (Zrudlo 1975, 59–60). And decision-making by government officials with only an outsider's view does not, in my opinion, have the capacity to be sensitive to cultural needs or recognition that researchers closer to the project had developed, such as understanding the need for more autonomy and self-determination for Inuit.

It has long been acknowledged that decisions about Inuit housing should be in the hands of Inuit. In 1974, the Fraternité des Indiens du Canada's stated in their *Déclaration sur le logement* that only when the conception, construction, maintenance, financing and execution of the policies are in the hands of Indigenous people will housing be better adapted to respond to Indigenous needs (Vincent 1975b, 2). Anthropologist Richard Baillargeon (1975) recognized that improvements would come when programs are

designed to have Inuit in charge of decision-making and controlling their own administration (original: "Le nouveau programme permettrait [...] un prise de décision et de contrôle de leur proper administration par les Inuit") (Baillargeon 1975, 42). This was meant to be in line with the government's apparent "politique de 'décolonisation administrative' amorcée par le federal depuis quelques années" (1975, 42).[16]

The connection, however, between administrative control, decision-making control, and meeting political needs through housing is somewhat less clear in the literature, though illusions towards these connections have been made. For example, in 1975, the editor of special housing edition of the journal *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* (where articles about the *Nunaturliq* project are found) expressed cautious optimism in the case of housing when she said that only upon acquiring full economic independence and cultural freedom was there a chance that Indigenous people would be in harmony with their lodgings due to a kind of self-determination (although she did not use the term "self-determination") (Vincent 1975b, 3). The concept of self-determination is in large part about holding the reins over one's life's circumstances. She observed a misalignment between government actions on housing and the needs of Indigenous people in Quebec which she said would continue until changes to the political relationship are made. Through the *Nunaturliq* project, Vincent described the insistence by Inuit to have control over the experimental houses as a form of resistance, though she did not use the term resistance.[17] Instead, Vincent wrote: "[les Inuit] sont aussi les salariés d'une économie massivement controlée par le Sud, et essentiellement par les gouvernements dont ils

[16] English translation by DeepL.com: "'administrative decolonisation' policy initiated by the federal government in previous years."
[17] I have noted in the scholarly literature a tacit avoidance or reluctance to use the word "resistance" in relation to Inuit actions.

essaient de repousser la tutelle" (Vincent 1975a, 4) which in translation can mean that the Inuit are trying to "break away" from the south, or "regain control over" their economy, or "wrest control from" the governments—this is essentially a description of resistance.

The focus on cultural and social needs has continued to be of central concern in housing research because it spans the whole gamut of design questions, health issues, and power relations. In recent decades, research on northern housing in Nunavik and other Quebec Indigenous communities has expanded significantly. In a recent special edition of *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* entitled "Habitation: imaginaires et réalités autochtones," scholars, mostly in Quebec, responded to the enduring theme published forty-two years earlier in the same journal. The 2017 edition amassed new research on Inuit housing that embraced the range of possibilities that comes from imagining, living, and creating dwellings in new innovative ways. Inuit culture and changing social and economic needs featured prominently with research into new domains, taking into account Indigenous knowledge of sustainable planning (G. Vachon et al. 2017), to contemplating the meaning of the practice of building cabins on the land (Brière and Laugrand 2017), and getting a real sense of how traditional and modern living create new links to territory and identity (Charest 2017; Desbiens 2017; Hervé and Laneuville 2017; Vaillancourt 2017).

Economics and labour literature related to Inuit housing

One particular focus in the housing research is the role of housing in the new northern economy, with researchers asking how the economy and waged labour has affected, and been affected by, inadequate supply or low-quality housing problems. I have identified two main economic issues addressed through northern housing research. One, housing as part of the larger story of changes effected in the economic structures of the

North through the process of sedentarization and resource development. Two, the major shift towards an Inuit waged labour workforce, part of which was through the new construction industry. The economic lives of Inuit became a focus in housing research because house designs have mostly failed to consider the new economic needs and diverse labour needs of Inuit. For example, designs failed to take into account their particular traditional *and* modern income-generating activities that are practiced in or near the home and require tailored spaces for work. The need for an adequate house in the newly formed communities arose alongside the newly created desire for waged labour during the onset of the market economy in North. Government welfare and social assistance programs, to which housing programs belonged, was responding to the dire economic situation of Inuit through jobs and housing though the rapid cultural change in progress made for quickly changing needs and daily activities.

In a 1975 article about the socio-economic context of unemployment and social assistance in Nunavik, anthropologist Alain Bernard rallied for the need to have a better understanding the power relations between Inuit and the "dominant society" over time in order to formulate a more solid theoretical base for research and policy design (Bernard 1975, 25). He said we needed better terminology and definitions to understand the intertwining of the capitalist market into a non-capitalist mode of production. Bernard (1975) critiqued some statistics produced a few years earlier that had attempted to gauge the degree of industrialization in Nunavik and its socio-economic impact on the Nunavimmiut. Bernard (1975) observed that the numbers had failed to include "les activités traditionelles" (traditional activities) in calculating the total Inuit workforce (Bernard 1975, 22). And Bernard offered a harsh critique of the original author who had failed to recognize that traditional activities were often a form of economic or income

generating activities, saying: “on peut s’interroger sur la nature de l’entêtement qui est à l’origine d’un calcul du taux de chômage à ce point dénué de sens”[18] (Bernard 1975, 22). While such an observation may seem tangential to housing studies, it is precisely this type of misleading scholarship that analyzes the impacts of the capitalist economic system on Inuit employment in Nunavik which in turn provides a foundation for the analysis of the socio-economic effects of housing program development in Nunavik.

Bernard (1975) argued that an anthropological inquiry into the transition of Inuit communities towards capitalist tendencies was needed. He said this was necessary in order to create better terms with which to understand the “social wellbeing in Inuit communities” (my translation) (Bernard 1975, 20–21). He explained that it was more important to have measurements and definitions that recognize and account for cultural differences rather than applying measurements from a southern research context in the interest of having exact comparable results. The greater risk, which he had proven was indeed problematic, was that data gathering approaches from the field of economics and statistics founded in southern values and livelihoods would lead to misconstruing the actual conditions and realities of Inuit society.

The absence of an accurate representation of the range of work in which Inuit engage had the immediate consequence of underestimating the many labour activities that were normalized in Inuit society. It minimized the value of domestic work, often by women, and other non-salaried work in general (i.e. hunting, fishing, harvesting, etc.), which would sometimes become income-generating activities in the sale of labour or products. Bernard (1975) even pointed out that the ski-doo (snowmobile) or the boat in Inuit society is

[18] English translation of original from DeepL.com: “One must wonder about the nature of the stubbornness that is at the origin of a calculation of the unemployment rate that is so meaningless.”

principally a "means of production" in that it plays a central role in income-generating activities today. This type of critique provided a foundation with which to understand how housing, as a form of "social assistance," had fit into Inuit society. In the 1960s and 70s, it was perceived as a form of economic dependence. This scholarship pointed out the problem with southern researchers and policy-makers developing housing programs with only a scarce understanding of the socio-economic needs of the Inuit population.

In this muddled understanding, reinforced by a lack of acknowledgement of the impact of decades and centuries of complex Inuit-white power relations, meant that a simplified definition of social housing as a form of dependence was welcomed. This term *dependence* upheld the belief that unequal power relations based on socio-economic inequality was *necessary* because Inuit were perceived as powerless and dependent.

In the case of the *Nunaturliq* housing research project in Puvirnituq mentioned earlier, a study was conducted about the job opportunities arising from the building project. The employment needs of Inuit were closely analyzed in association with construction needs and opportunities. They classified the labour force into categories: "traditionelles, artisanales et salariales" (traditional, artisanal, and salaried) (Larochelle 1975a, 28). The author, scholar, and coordinator of the *Nunaturliq* project, Gilles Larochelle, identified Puvirnituq as an artisanal center, with many Inuit engaged in creative occupations such as professional sculptors and with most residents engaged in more than one labour sector, including construction employment. The research team had recognized the residents' diversified needs and economic activities evidently shaping the building plan of the three experimental houses which was conducted with the direct involvement of the Inuit residents, Puvirniturmiut. Their involvement in the construction of the three experimental houses also brought about new knowledge and a level of agency to the Puvirniturmiut in

the housing process. The administrative and operational parts of the worksites were conducted by Inuit themselves, and yet despite this, as the author points out: "Les 'Blancs' ont d'abord contrôlé la construction en imposant presque tous leurs modèles de travail"[19] (Larochelle 1975a, 30). Larochelle (1975) said that a political consciousness such as that of "worker's rights" was not a concern at that time. Moreover, construction was not a "typical" or "traditional" Inuit occupation. He said that the older generation would pass down knowledge about hunting, not about building rigid frame houses. This kind of salaried work had not become an integral part of the Inuit value system (Larochelle 1975a, 30). With this in mind, Larochelle argued that in order to meet the particular needs of the Inuit population in relation to the construction opportunities generated through the housing projects, a progressive and "flexible policy" would be needed (Larochelle 1975b, 49). Some Inuit clearly still identified as sculptors, some as hunters, and others now, as salaried workers. With Larochelle's recognition, he imparted the complex way that the construction of houses in this one community was a gradual initiation (or, arguably, a quick one) into a sedentary way of life which changed the needs of Inuit. With the concentration of services located in one place, the access to consume imported goods, the need to have a source of revenue was met through the option of salaried work through construction (Larochelle 1975a, 32).

Obviously, the economic needs and therefore some of the housing design needs of Inuit will have changed in the last fifty years since this study took place, but what is important to note is that the scholars involved were fully aware of the way housing for Inuit provided the opportunity to meet more than one need. Beyond just the physical shelter,

[19] English translation by DeepL.com: "The 'Whites' took control of the construction from the outset by imposing almost all of their work models"

housing was a source of meeting economic, cultural, relational needs, and it could be a place of agency and control. This would be the first of many arguments that support the belief that the potential and promise of Inuit housing could be realized if only Inuit had more control over the design, the decision-making, the labour, and the larger housing process, which could be possible through more collaborative university-government-community ventures.

Some thirty years later, these same issues about income and design were still prominent concerns in the scholarly literature. In 2006, Tester's housing study in Kinngait, Nunavut, considered how mental health problems were heightened by low-income and employment concerns. In a compounding way, poorly designed houses, which was the number one reason Inuit had stated that they were in need of a new house, had also impeded their capacity to make a living. In order to have an income from certain activities, one needed the space to practice craft occupations from the home, such as carving and sewing (Tester 2006b, 37); injudicious housing designs contributed directly to the stress caused by limited economic and income opportunities. This brings up the connection between economic needs and health needs that contribute overall to Inuit wellbeing.

In terms of the economics of housing for Inuit, the federal and provincial governments have responded to the dire economic situations of Inuit in Nunavik by providing housing support programs designed to respond to low-income family needs and low employment community conditions. They provide social housing programs, as well as rent-to-own programs, mortgage subsidies, gradual rent payback programs, and more. Riva et.al. (2020) stressed the importance of conducting more studies concerning different modes of housing tenure proposed in Arctic communities such as rent-to-own and homeownership programs in order to have a more critical understanding of the positive or

negative impacts of these kinds of programs which could thereby strengthen Indigenous decision-making about housing policy and programming (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 28).

The economic needs addressed in the literature has links to ideas about control, autonomy, and the need for culturally-relevant processes and design in order to meet and support economic needs of Inuit through housing. It is clear that political needs such as autonomy or having a say in decisions is closely connected to economic power. The main issues revealed in the literature comes back to the incompatibility of Western processes and dominance in the northern housing sector, whether design, construction, or decision-making. However, there is overall insufficient research on the economics of housing that addresses power imbalances, the effects of capitalism in the North, and the ongoing effects of sedentarization and colonialism in these remote communities. The few examples I have presented here are an important start, and scholars have called for more critical research on this topic of housing and the economic lives of Inuit. Power imbalances, however, have been more frequently addressed in critical housing research through the issues of identity, voice, participation—overall through the topic of Inuit agency. These issues are also related to the political and to Inuit-government relations, which I will look at more closely in the following section.

Policy and Inuit agency literature related to Inuit housing

In academic research, the role of policy in the failure to resolve the housing crisis in Inuit Nunangat has been much debated. Research on housing and Inuit policy often includes examinations of Inuit involvement in policy-making and their involvement in any part of the housing process. These involve discussions about Inuit voice, participation, autonomy, and agency. These studies are not often conducted through policy studies but

rather have bridged many diverse disciplines such as sociology, geography, Indigenous studies, and multidisciplinary research.

I will start with studies conducted by some Quebec scholars on the policy problems of Inuit housing. Early accounts of the poor housing conditions of Inuit in Nunavik, such as reports about Quebec's Indigenous housing problems in the 1970s, pointed to the patchwork nature of government policy and funding. Government policy eschewed Indigenous autonomy and instead offered programs that effectively condemned reserves to a prolonged status of dependence (Lefebvre 1975, 24). Richard Baillargeon argued that, in Nunavik, the first government housing programs had likewise failed to meet the primary needs of the Inuit population, and that the programs desperately required revision in order to meet the growing needs of the Nunavimmiut (Baillargeon 1975, 41).

Quebec scholars critical of government policy at the time directly blamed DIAND's underlying philosophy that claimed to "help" Indigenous communities without actually supporting them with tools to create their own development path (Lefebvre 1975, 25). An opinion piece in *Le Devoir* by a Montagnais woman in 1972 readily pointed to government policy and civil servants as accomplices in a campaign of control, paternalism, and condescension through a series of deportations, lies, and broken promises in relation to their right to housing and living on their traditional territory (St-Onge-André 1972). From the Laval research team on housing, the Association Inuksiutiit Katimajiit in Nunavik in 1973, it was demonstrated that the barriers to proper housing were not just economic, but also clearly ideological. The research team critiqued the government that ignored or minimized the importance of cultural relevance and protection of Inuit culture. With researchers and Inuit working together, they recognized that "l'habitation est le foyer de la culture... et de l'acculturation. Parler de politique de logement à Pointe-Bleue, Puvirnituq

ou Montréal, c'est parler de politique de développemnt, et même de politique tout court" (Vincent 1975b, 3).[20] Housing *was* political. It needed to be understood in the context of this unique political relationship that the Inuit had with the state.

A leading scholar in northern socio-economic research, Gérard Duhaime (1985), wrote an invaluable critical historical analysis of how housing had evolved in Nunavik up until 1985. He painted a picture of constantly changing government commitments to housing including knee-jerk reactions to "fix" problematic living conditions of the Inuit. The conditions and mobility of Inuit changed dramatically across the Arctic from the 1950s to the 1970s. The coinciding housing policies had *initially* offered significant improvements in comparison to the first buildings Inuit had constructed with leftover materials and debris near trading and mining centers. However, these housing programs did not last. Within a few years, the construction of inferior housing for Inuit began, a shift that has been explained as a result of the introduction of capitalist ideas for the North, as Duhaime argued.

He presented some of the housing designs and plans from the initial housing program in the last 1950s and early 1960s. The houses appeared to respond to an image of what officials believed was needed in the Arctic at the time: houses apparently specifically designed for Inuit residents. But in fact, upon revision, Duhaime showed how the designs represented a distinct colonial, condescending, and paternalistic view of Inuit needs (Duhaime 1985). For example, a house model adopted in 1954 by the federal Ministry of Northern Affairs', namely model "512," was considered well-built, well-insulated, and bright, with double-pane windows, three rooms, and an exterior porch. However, it was

[20] English translation by DeepL.com: "housing is the home of culture... and acculturation. To speak of housing policy in Pointe-Bleue, Puvirnituq or Montreal is to speak of development policy, and even politics in general."

quickly abandoned in 1957 for the more simple, economical, quick-build models intended only for Inuit (Duhaime 1985, 36). Duhaime explained that this was apparently done in the interest of encouraging the development of a housing market in the Arctic by offering affordable houses for this low-income population. Thereafter, the well-built structures were only made for non-Inuit government employees (Duhaime 1985, 36). Moreover, this ideological stance by government meant that in reality, "c'est que le gouvernement ne tient aucun compte des besoins familiaux et culturels des futurs locataires [...] tout en simulant la consultation" (Vincent 1975b, 3).[21]

Duhaime described the government housing policy of the 1950s as a two-tiered policy in which the main section supported the idea of building a northern housing market, while the other branch offered free housing for the destitute through a welfare housing program intended for only a small number of individuals (Duhaime 1985, 37). He explained that the first government housing policy in 1959 failed altogether to meet either of its two goals which were to: 1) reduce the negative consequences to Inuit health and, 2) to provide a level of equal living conditions compared to other Canadians. Instead, the new houses were overcrowded, morbidity and mortality rates for Inuit increased after 1959, and new illnesses emerged (Duhaime 1985, 40). The housing programs also created a case of housing inequality that was an already familiar scene in southern Canadian cities.

Using a Marxist argument, Duhaime (1985) turned to the problem of capitalism to explain the enduring housing problems. He examined the way housing policies in Nunavik supported the legitimacy of the nation state and its capitalist system, a system which imposed itself on the whole society, including Inuit society (Duhaime 1985, 11). He

[21] English translation by DeepL.com: "is that the government disregards the family and cultural needs of future tenants [...] while pretending to consult them."

explained the interplay between the structure of society and the roles of individual actors involved. As new social spaces such as villages were formed, it occurred within a particular societal structure and with particular actors involved. The new social spaces developed because of housing programs within both economic constraints and within social structures that were enacted by social agents motivated by colonial ideas (Duhaime 1985, 10). Duhaime described how this Inuit society was transformed from a domestic economy to a capitalist society (Duhaime 1985, 11). The state maintained its own legitimacy through the intervention of housing as a means of social regulation "car le logement influence les pratiques et propose une image de soi et du monde, modèle l'identité, les rapports aux autres. Le logement public exprime la considération paternaliste de la société pour ses incapables, puisqu'il ne laisse pas le choix du lieu, de la forme, du mode de gestion" (Duhaime 1985, 12).[22] Because a person lives both physically and psychologically in this world, the state has to provide both physical and psychological reinforcements of its legitimacy. The state cannot only project its force upon the population to behave in a certain way, but must communicate valid reasons for the regulation of social life in order to create a common meaning in the heads of the actors in a society. With this explanation, Duhaime showed why in Northern Quebec, at the end of the 1950s, Inuit indeed welcomed the homes offered by the federal government: Because the state was there for them to relieve the "scourge that threatened the citizen."[23] Duhaime argued: "l'État produit en meme temps sa légitimité: les gouvernés acceptent le gouvernement parce qu'il montre

[22] English translation by DeepL.com: "because housing influences practices and proposes an image of itself and the world, shaping identity and relationships with others. Public housing expresses society's paternalistic regard for its incompetents, since it leaves no choice as to location, form or management method."
[23] My translation of the original: "il symbolize ... la souveraineté démocratique ou l'omniscience capable de soulager les fléaux qui menacent le citoyen" (Duhaime 1985, 10).

cette remarquable puissance qui se moque du froid" (Duhaime 1985, 10).[24] Referring to Habermas, Duhaime argued that the principle of legitimation of the contemporary state was no longer free trade, but minimal welfare. This posed technical problems that the government system and scientific expertise were charged with solving (my translation from original):

> Le principe de legitimation de l'État contemporain n'est plus le libre-échangisme mais le bien-être minimal; celui-ci ne pose plus que des problèmes techniques, que l'appareil gouvememental et l'expertise scientifique sont chargés de resoudre (Duhaime 1985, 12).[25]

Duhaime also made a poignant claim about how the welfare state with its social policies *appeared* as good intentions, and responded to an assumed, almost innate, government responsibility, but which in fact maintained unequal power relations and institutionalized social differentiation. In other words, it means that when lower quality social housing exists parallel to a private housing market and poor housing is spatially distributed in a particular way, it maintains so-called Indigenous "slums" in communities across the country. This type of analysis gave critical insight into the "do-gooder" image in which the value of government was to provide an irreplaceable social service and that they did this out of care and compassion for the wellbeing of that population, rather than out of its own need to reinforce its legitimacy and power.

Another view was that government had the *responsibility* to do so, due to formerly signed treaties which likewise reflected an idea that these programs were a kind of ongoing, never-ending, form of compensation or even charity. The purpose of Duhaime's text was to explain the role of the welfare state (l'État-providence) in social history (Duhaime 1985).

[24] English translation by DeepL.com: "at the same time, the state produces its own legitimacy: the governed accept the government because it displays that remarkable power that scoffs at the cold."
[25] English translation by DeepL.com: "The legitimating principle of the contemporary state is no longer free trade, but minimal welfare, which poses only technical problems that the government apparatus and scientific expertise are charged with solving."

Duhaime's interpretations of the relationship between the state and Inuit in terms of Inuit housing made an important critical contribution to the literature, one that I argue has not been sufficiently taken up by many other scholars. I suspect that one reason for this could be attributed to the fact that his text may be inaccessible to scholars who do not speak French, or some might not even come across the publication since it was not published in a prominent journal.

The role of the state as a welfare state has indeed been examined by other scholars, though it is not all scholars that view it as problematic, nor as an unequal relationship. The fact that there was a paternalistic-style government in place during the first housing programs and the fact that many Inuit welcomed these houses has resulted in scholars refusing to see the critical imbalance in political and decision-making power or at a minimum, refusing to see this as problematic, or even to question state motivation. David Damas (2002), for example, wrote a book about the intentions and reception of government policy during the era of the formation of villages across the Arctic (although without referencing the Nunavik region). His research spanned a forty-year period in which he examined a large body of archival documents and included his own experiences in the Arctic in the 1960s. He did not refer to Duhaime's 1985 text that, like his, was precisely about the significance of the welfare state in the North (albeit in Nunavik, not Nunavut) but nor does Damas speak to many other critical texts except for Hugh Brody (who he abruptly denounces for not citing his sources that were critical of government intentions (Damas 2002, 194)). Damas' work relied on traditional writings from earlier Arctic ethnographers. His text is highly descriptive, though with gaping holes.

In what seems like an effort to mitigate the criticism of Canada in its role in in the North, Damas took the view that the government, with its welfare policy, was a benevolent

altruistic regime that helped "advance" the Inuit condition in almost all aspects of their lives. His sources relied mostly on the writings of northern officers and agents who frequently viewed their presence in the Arctic villages in the same way. Louis-Jacques Dorais, who has been a dedicated anthropologist working with Nunavimmiut ever since his first fieldwork in 1965, categorized Damas as a classic ethnologist with a traditional approach to his study, including the all-to-common university tradition of the "Western gaze." Dorais also compared Damas' style as similar to the much critiqued Diamond Jenness, who wrote extensively, and condescendingly, about relations between Northern officials and Inuit in the 1960s, based on his own experiences (Dorais 2004).

Damas's (2002) text described government policies as consequential, but not problematic. He explained how various government policies, including housing policies, contributed to the centralization of Inuit settlement.[26] Damas focused on what he calls centralization, rather than a process of sedentarization, even though he does refer to an earlier form of paternalism from the government (Damas 2002, 199). His is a view of a welfare state with good intentions that had nation-wide strategy to alleviate poverty in Canada. Therefore, in his view, housing policies in the North were not coercive nor obligatory, but altruistic; he did not believe that the government had forced Inuit into their new settlement pattern because, as Desbiens' (2005) critique stated, in his view "the attractiveness of certain services (housing, schools, clinics, stores, churches) cannot be seen as a *pressure*, nor can the threat of lack of access to these services" (my translation and emphasis of Desbiens 2005, 440). Damas maintained that the government only intervened

[26] He used the term centralization instead of sedentarization. Sedentarization is term used in the fields of ethnology and anthropology to describe the settling of a nomadic people. It is used in place of the expression "forced sedentism" which is a deliberate act that occurs when a dominant group restricts the movements of a nomadic group (see: http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/Sedentarization). The term "sedentarization" seems to be an academic term that has not yet been included in American or British dictionaries.

in the Arctic in the 1960s to alleviate the suffering of Inuit, and that any ulterior motives were irrelevant or non-existent. His misleadingly optimistic view of government housing program can be summarized in this one vastly unsubstantiated statement: "At the end of the 1960s almost all Inuit had comfortable houses with ample space for the occupants, fuel oil heating, and adequate furnishings, and which were served with garbage and sewage removal, water distribution, and in most cases electricity" (Damas 2002, 122). It does not take long to discredit this statement, if not merely with the federal government report published in 1960 depicting the deplorable conditions and consequences of inadequate Inuit housing in the Arctic in *Eskimo Mortality and Housing* (Canada 1960).

Damas (2002) has been critiqued by various scholars, as mentioned Dorais (2004) and Desbiens (2005). Desbiens believes this type of research would need to be expanded *with* Inuit researchers (Desbiens 2005, 400), raising the issue that can be identified in most uncritical research: a lack of Inuit voices and perspectives. Studies that *include* their voices tend to be unable to paint a rosy picture about historical or present-day Inuit housing and the Inuit-state relationship that frames policy-making and program delivery. In Couto's (2015) thesis on government housing intervention in the Arctic, he contends that the failure of insight in this often-referenced text by Damas has perpetuated a false view of the first *Eskimo Rental Housing Program* with his "with sweeping generalizations about the Inuit and government housing" (Couto 2015, 3) where the policy is portrayed as a well-intentioned, humanitarian act, rather than a sign of the prevailing colonial state inclined towards its neoliberal phase. If Damas' research was trying to bring a historical view to the question the current housing crisis with an understanding of the intentions and acts of the Canadian welfare state, he managed to select data and take a view that removed blame from the government and its policies.

A more accurate historical context of Inuit-state relations is needed to shed light on today's crisis in Inuit communities continues. A more balanced approach was offered by Sarah Bonesteel, federal government senior policy analyst, and Erik Anderson, in their 2008 INAC publication (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada), "Canada's Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development." The authors asserted that to get a better sense of the history one must look not only through written historical texts but by listening to what Inuit were saying back then and continue to assert today (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, iv). This includes acknowledging the damaging consequences of having excluded Inuit in policy-making ever since the beginning.

With the formation of the Inuit Relations Secretariat in 2005, this research report was written to provide historical context to build a new foundation for the Inuit-state relationship, a relationship described as one "developed around a long conversation of rights recognition and struggle for voice within the Canadian political system" (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, iii). Though I do not believe it has been a very balanced "long conversation" at the political level, the discussion has undoubtedly been maintained in various forms in academic circles. It is a relationship beset with mistrust. It is important to understand "the mistakes that were made in the past, notably a lack of consultation with Inuit when developing those policies, and a general lack of cultural competence and understanding on the part of policy-makers, service providers, and politicians" (E. Anderson and Bonesteel 2010, 148). These authors recognized the "autonomy and agency" of Inuit (E. Anderson and Bonesteel 2010, 148) that has continually been ignored by government actors.

One of the most detrimental approaches that government actors adopted early on in building the Inuit-state relationship was that "the federal government failed to consult with

Inuit before implementing programs, thereby creating Inuit dissatisfaction" (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008 p.vii). Housing was one of the prominent features in Bonesteel and Anderson's description of the evolution of Inuit policy since the 1950s. The authors adopted a normative liberal outlook believing that as a democratic country we strive for "equality within diversity," and in order to live up to that national identity, we need to understand our mistakes because our northern communities *represent who we are as a country* (E. Anderson and Bonesteel 2010, 164). The goal of the Secretariat is to advocate for Inuit interests, and to "advance in the struggle for an Inuit political voice within the federal system" (E. Anderson and Bonesteel 2010, 147). How effective this new government body has been in this goal is a topic for another study, but it is noteworthy that this government-initiated Secretariat was formed out of a recognition of the necessity to change the way policy has been made in the past. It is a new institution designed with the goal to provide more political power to Inuit. Inuit should be the ones to gain from a successful implementation of the Secretariat's work.

There has been a lot of research on the role Inuit have in all of this, on their actions, on their involvement as active players in their relationship with the state, and on their overall agency in their own lives. Agency is related to having "voice" but it is also slightly different. Agency can be achieved in various ways and in various locations, in both public and private domains. Inuit have shown agency in domestic spaces and in public and political arenas. Agency means not being passive.

Duhaime (1985) believes that all actors, Inuit and state alike had a role in the unfolding of history. As I mentioned already, Duhaime (1985) had viewed housing as one of the means used for the legitimation of the nation-state. Housing as welfare was part of a national identity, which in turn resulted in a form of "social regulation" (Duhaime 1985,

12). Due to the institutionalization of Inuit housing, he suggested that it replaced existing social relations that been part of the formation of housing solutions customary to Inuit. In turn, housing became a politicized issue and shifted responsibility to government. Housing, at this point, became a state matter (Duhaime 1985, 41). Despite this interpretation, Duhaime interestingly, if not mistakenly, did not view the sedentarization proces as a top-down situation. He believed that "le passage à la sedentarité ne soit pas machiavélique ni mécanique, mais plutôt le résultat d'une dynamique où chaque acteur social intervient par sa praxis" (Duhaime 1985, 41).[27] Duhaime's depiction of the story of housing for Nunavimmiut has all actors involved in the making of history. I believe this is a valuable historical perspective that takes Inuit out of a state of victimhood. They are seen as actors with their own agency. However, my misgivings of Duhaime's account are that it does not sufficiently acknowledge the deception and harmful miscommunication by government and its representatives in the North about the conditions, goals, and consequences of Inuit aligning themselves, either willingly or unwillingly, with the housing programs at that time.[28] Yet, the value of his illustration, about the active making of history, is an essential portrait to behold today: it emphasizes and respects Inuit agency within all of these colonial processes. It provides the space to reconsider and rewrite a dominant history, one that frequently depicts Inuit as an unwitting caricature who is a contented benign recipient of government handouts, who is incapable of adopting "proper" behaviour inside the house, who is deficient in the letters of Western governing structures, and who is also incapable of

[27] English translation through DeepL.com: "The transition to a sedentary life is not Machiavellian or mechanical, but rather the result of a process in which each social actor intervenes through his or her praxis."
[28] There are other instances in the Inuit-state relationship that have been proven to be founded on lies, the most representative of this government harm is most clearly depicted in the story of the High Arctic Inuit relocation program by the Canadian government in 1963. There are many analyses and personal accounts of this colonial project that clearly show that Inuit were not told the truth about the governments plans for them once they arrived in the High Arctic nor about what their implication in the project would entail. For more details, see: (Tester and Kulchyski 1994; Marcus 1995; Sponagle 2017).

predicting the detrimental long term cultural and societal consequences of compliance with the officials' demands and requests.[29]

I suggest, however, that Inuit agency should not be directly interpreted as political power—at least, not as a given. The research that looks at the housing problems in light of Inuit agency is also a story of Inuit losing control over their own housing outcomes and decisions *despite* their involvement and despite the fact that many of them had welcomed government housing options. While the speed of cultural change and new living conditions may have inhibited Inuit from adapting in their own ways and using their own structures and sources of knowledge to accommodate the new mode of production, they have had agency and they continue to have agency. With this view, the academic literature has also addressed the more recent legal, administrative, political, and social conditions in the last decades in which Inuit voice and agency is regarded in the context of housing.

In the current context, the JBNQA (James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement) is one critical piece that frames the Inuit-state relationship in Nunavik since its signing in 1975. The JBNQA is ultimately an outcome of Inuit action and demands for recognition of their rights.[30] After 1975, the government was required to recognize Inuit presence and rights, while also establishing a new legal context in which to debate and assert Inuit rights. Duhaime (1985) assessed the effect that the JBNQA had had on their freedom to create appropriate housing programs and to have influence. He described the Agreement as a *pretense* to give Inuit the tools necessary to exercise decision-making powers. However, he argued, this was housed within an immense participative structure that in fact left the

[29] These are the kinds of stereotypes that Western media depicts of Inuit, as Andréanne Brière's master's thesis had shown how Inuit are depicted as "eternal claimants, unsatisfied people, irresponsible individuals, privileged taxpayers" (my translation Brière 2014, 120).
[30] Chapter 4 delves into more detail about the key role of Inuit in the creation of the JBNQA.

external institutional powers intact.[31] As an outcome of this, Canada kept an eye on its "wards," supposedly ensuring their wellbeing, while Quebec took front and center stage for developing programming (Duhaime 1985, 61). The so-called "decision-making power" for Inuit came in the form of a local administrative role for Inuit, which, according to Duhaime, has been the absolute limiting factor in the process of housing for Inuit. This critique about failed attempts at levelling the power imbalances has been argued by other academics as well.

In two articles, by Brière and Laugrand (2017) and by Breton and Cloutier (2017), the authors identified an institutional stalemate in housing and planning in Nunavik, especially in the appropriate inclusion of Inuit voices and perspectives. Both articles review past attempts at levelling political influence and imbalances through various processes of devolution and the transfer of responsibility to bodies such as KMHB (Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau) or SHQ (Société d'habitation du Québec). However, both articles recognized that despite these changes, political power has remained in the hands of non-Inuit (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 35; Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90). The final word has always been left to either the Treasury Board or other government agencies charged with enforcing regulations—a fact equally recognized in 1985 by Duhaime (Duhaime 1985, 69). It has also been said that even if decision-making could be contained fully at the regional level, the regional government would inevitably have to function within a neoliberal government system and be tied to international market forces (Duhaime and Robichaud 2010).

[31] Paraphrased from original French text: "Prétendant donner aux Inuit les outils nécessaires à l'exercice d'un pouvoir de décision, la Convention les insère, en fait, dans une immense structure participative qui laisse à peu près intactes les prerogatives du pouvoir institutionnel exogène, dont le siege se déplace d'Ottawa à Québec" (Duhaime 1985, 60).

Critical literature on housing readily acknowledges the problem of unequal power relations in the Inuit-state relationship. Breton and Cloutier (2017), scholars in planning and development, believe that state intervention remains necessary at this point since economic independence is unlikely. Yet they also believe that collaboration between state and local actors is necessary to bring into the current state structures another perspective which they call "Inuit reasoning" ("la rationalité inuite") (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90). Interestingly, despite these inevitable constrictions that they describe, the authors acknowledge that it will be impossible to truly know how Inuit needs should be addressed in northern planning until it is *fully locally* controlled (ie. "un meilleur reflet des besoins des citoyens dans l'aménagement nordique ne pourrait être confirmée sans une prise en charge locale totale" (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 98).[32]

Hervé and Laneuville (2017) examined very specific ways that government deprived Inuit the capacity to *act* on their own needs, where previously, they would have had control over the conception, construction, and planning of their homes (Hervé and Laneuville 2017, 56). The authors identified a major ongoing policy lapse: decision-makers have ignored the particular needs of *women* and have excluded them from housing policy discussions. As a result, women's livelihoods were, and continue to be, adversely affected by both the loss of residential autonomy and the absence of options for securing safe living conditions away from violence and chaos. Hervé and Laneuville depicted Nunavik women's agency today in terms of how they have had to negotiate the imposed housing constraints for themselves. They illustrated the way some Inuit women have been left with no other option than to leave their home communities or their marriages in order to find

[32] English translation by DeepL.com: "a better reflection of citizens' needs in northern development cannot be achieved without full local control."

residential stability elsewhere. In Hervé and Laneuville's assessment, Inuit women need to be included in the definition of housing legislation as well as in the design of their dwellings (Hervé and Laneuville 2017, 56–57). The shortcomings of government policy that has been ignoring women's needs is another critique of how housing policy has been a factor in community discord and imbalance.

In other recent work analyzing voice and agency, Aude Therrien, in her 2013 Master's thesis, analyzed levels of participation in the development of two Nunavik housing policies. She argued that only partial and limited autonomy was gained through Inuit participation in the housing processes (Therrien 2013). One policy that she studied was the updated 2000 *Agreement respecting the implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) with respect to housing in Nunavik*. Therrien (2013) suggested that her research might be positioned in one of the three theoretical camps that define Inuit status inside the Inuit-state relations: modernization (that they are in a stage of development that has marginalized them), dependence (that they are dependent on the state's economic development and have lost their own ability to govern themselves along the way), and colonial (that they are caught in a relationship with a power imbalance in which the government is not willing to relinquish or transfer to them, and this has also been defined as a racialized state that wishes to maintain control over the destinies of Indigenous people) (Therrien 2013, 3; Salée 2005). Therrien illustrated the widespread dominance by the state showing how political and economic power is distributed in the Inuit-state relationship. Through the notions of participation and autonomy, Therrien (2013) brought forward an important distinction and understanding about the *nature* of Inuit participation and voice in order to avoid assuming that participation necessarily translates into power or influence.

However, as Ruffin and Alaku (2011) argue, local involvement and ideally governance of major community decisions is not only important for the practice of including "voice," but is crucial to ensuring that local knowledge contributes to the decisions. In a 2009 example of a community planning initiative for Salluit, Ruffin and Alaku (2011) contended alongside consulted community members that local governance was absolutely essential to decide where to build more houses and whether to move the Northern Village to a new location.[33] There was clear recognition that technical and climate expertise was necessary to identify melting permafrost issues, but local perspectives were *essential* to ensure that the final decision for community relocation would meet local sociocultural and economic needs. Inuit residents argued—and the researchers agreed—that this could not be properly accomplished without active local involvement and ideally through a local governance system (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 170–71). The collaboration in the research allowed for local voices to take center stage in the research process itself which in turn could feed vital local knowledge and territorial values to the local and technical decision-making body.

Some research condemns the state for showing too little sense of urgency in the face of deteriorating housing conditions in Indigenous communities. Well-known political scientist and frequent critic of neoliberal policies, Yale D. Belanger, said he would more readily assign blame on bureaucratic inadequacies before he would characterize Canadian society as unsympathetic to poor Indigenous housing conditions (Y. D. Belanger 2016,

[33] The need to potentially move Salluit to a new location is a result of the melting of the permafrost and the loss of viable construction sites around the village. The Quebec government took note of the problem more than a decade earlier, and Laval University started testing different zones and locations amenable for construction. A technical committee for the purpose was formed consisting of MAMROT (Ministère des affaires municipals, des regions et de l'occupation du territoire du Québec), l'organization régionale de l'ARK, and Laval University's scientists from the CEN (Centre d'Études Nordiques) (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 168).

443). In a normative critical review of Indigenous housing policy in Canada since 1867, he attributed responsibility for Indigenous housing to the state. He demonstrated how Indigenous people have been separated from mainstream society in both legal and policy terms which has contributed to federal reluctance to recognizing government responsibility. Belanger (2016) demonstrated how it began with the *Indian Act* that separated Indigenous people from other Canadian citizens and placed them under separate, underfunded policy realms and legal rights (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 444). Belanger's main argument was that meaningful long-term solutions have been threatened by "the endemic lack of Aboriginal partnerships guiding the decision-making processes" (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 455). He maintained throughout that Indigenous people have been denied a voice *in the formulation of policies*, despite being expected to take on greater responsibility for the implementation of the policies, policies that have always been written outside of their communities and without their input.

Belanger (2016) demonstrated clearly the way policy has been passed around like a hot potato between different government departments and levels. He provided an analysis from a larger systems perspective (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 454) which provides a description of the complex administrative and political conditions within which unequal relations exist and the consequences thereof. It is a normative analysis of what the political relationship should be. But it does not investigate the fundamental ontological barriers for understanding one's prejudices within this system. He provides an aspirational conclusion—a form of hope for change:

> Until Aboriginal housing and homelessness become part of Canada's everyday business, and in ways that acknowledge the systemic disadvantages Aboriginal peoples confront (e.g. geographic disparity, socioeconomic condition, urban-reserve divides, federal and provincial silo approaches to Aboriginal policy creation, soon-to-be-

> lapsing urban housing subsidy programs hinting at future crises and perhaps the most important issue – the endemic lack of Aboriginal partnerships guiding the decision making processes), any interventions will remain Band-Aid approaches and ultimately of limited practical value (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 455).

However, this is, unfortunately, a "wait-and-see" approach: waiting for a future point in time when people will, and should, care more. He does not emphasize the *current* relationship as a colonial one despite having applied a colonial lens for the historical context of sedentarization and inequalities that have become systemic. Belanger made an argument based on differentiation, separateness, inequality caused by faulty policies. He acknowledged that having outsiders such as Ottawa bureaucrats devise policy without input from community planners has been one of the central problems (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 453). Yet he does not question *why* Indigenous voices have not been included. It is presented simply as something that occurred. With regards to Indigenous on-reserve housing, he implied there was a hidden intent of bureaucrats "hoping reserve residents will abdicate treaty-protected lands in lieu of purchasing individual plots for home construction" (Y. D. Belanger 2016, 453). But there is no suggestion as to an underlying competing ideology or problematic worldview that would make bureaucrats behave this way. Why would bureaucrats hope for this? Would the individual bureaucrats benefit in some way? What does it mean to have systemic inequalities? What does it mean to be in a colonial relationship? At one level, Belanger provides a thorough review and critical analysis of the past and current policy relationships. And at the same time, it is a prime example of how policy analyses can interpret policies as if they did not have real implications on the people in those houses (or without those houses), and as if the policies were not created by people with their own set of ideas and beliefs. Is it perhaps an example of the unwillingness of non-Indigenous scholars to describe western interests as prejudiced,

discriminatory, and perhaps even racist, or at a minimum, without regard for their humanity. What he does do, however, is pinpoint a problem: that bureaucrats exhibit a lack of care for the relationship as well as for the Indigenous inhabitants of these houses.

The process of devolution in housing administration has been a topic of a lot of scholarly critique, and in the last twenty years there has been more attention paid to the specific issue of Inuit *participation* in social housing decisions (Chabot and Duhaime 1998; Therrien 2013; Therrien and Duhaime 2017; Rogers 2019). Aude Therrien (2013), a student of Gérard Duhaime, picked up where he had left off in the mid-1980s, to investigate if there had been any changes in the last decades to the levels of Inuit participation in the housing process. She examined the connections between the level and type of participation by local actors in social housing (i.e. Inuit participation) and then analyzed how much autonomy it had achieved them. She applied a geographer's rubric to parse out and analyze various features in the concept of "autonomy" over the social housing process. It described autonomy in terms of two sub-categories: initiative and immunity. Initiative is the capacity of actors to act and legislate in their sphere of power, and immunity is the power to act without higher levels of government reviewing their actions (my translation of the defintions in Therrien 2013, 129). These notions are especially relevant in a top-down context of control and with the history and critique of ongoing paternalism. Therrien used these terms as an analytical tool, not with the intent to define autonomy *for* Inuit. In her descriptive work, she identified multiple parts of the housing process in which the Inuit organizations (regional actors) carried certain limited powers, but rarely autonomy in their decisions (Therrien 2013, 137) compared to the normative and power exerted by either the provincial or the federal governments.

Therrien's conclusion was that there has not been any change in their participation: "En trente ans, il ne semble donc pas que l'autonomie et la participation des acteurs régionaux aient changé" (Therrien 2013, 138).[34] The Inuit organizations studied were Kativik Regional Government (KRG), Makivik Corporation, and the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau (KMHB). One of her key observations was that the one area where an Inuit organization (KRG) had full autonomy in both initiative and immunity was for a decision in which there were no financial consequences associated with the decision.[35] This insight by Therrien suggests that economic concerns, or perhaps, dare I suggest, even fears of economic misconduct or responsibility, may play a more important role in the hesitancy provincial and federal governments exhibit in relinquishing or devolving full power and autonomy to Inuit organizations. It points to the importance of understanding economic structures and ideologies in relation to continued restricted political power and autonomy of Inuit actors.

Therrien's (2013) descriptive presentation of the decision-making powers in the context of two specific housing policies in Nunavik demonstrated the value of descriptive analysis. I would argue that this type of description would benefit from more theoretical analysis to start clarifying how and why there remains so many obstacles to political power for Inuit. Her story is revelatory, but the question remains: what can explain this hesitancy on behalf of the governments?

[34] English translation by DeepL.com: "In thirty years, the autonomy and participation of regional players do not appear to have changed."

[35] Specifically, the KRG had full initiative and immunity control over the decision about which villages would receive the next set of new houses. The power to decide this was not "granted" by any other government (i.e. KRG had initiative) . Likewise, this allocation decision, made during a regional meeting with councilors from all 14 communities, did not require review or approval by the provincial or federal governments (i.e. KRG had immunity).

In another study also addressing Inuit autonomy, researchers explored ontological differences to help parse out assumptions we might make about what Inuit autonomy looks like. Despite the many ways that Inuit have adopted, adapted, or resisted Western ways of living and some Western values, there remain ontological divisions between Western ways of seeing the world and Inuit ways of seeing the world. Two areas of discussion have emerged in the housing literature. On the one hand, the dwelling itself has been studied as a site representative of an ontological expression with a set of values based on knowledge, traditions, and worldviews. In another way, Inuit ontology shapes culturally-specific understandings about needs, and the way their worldview shapes their actions, their values, and how their needs are defined.

For example, Caroline Hervé and Pascale Laneuville (2017) have articulated this in specific ways through the housing complex. Their research was conducted in part through their work with the Nunavik Inuit Women's Association called Saturviit. Laneuville and Lisa Koperqualuk, an Inuit anthropologist and the chairperson of Saturviit at the time, had conducted extensive interviews in half of the Nunavik communities as well as in Montreal asking about Inuit women's quality of life (Laneuville 2015). Part of this research lead to Laneuville and Hervé, the subsequent chairperson of Saturviit as well as an invested anthropologist doing extensive research on Inuit culture in Nunavik, to pursue an anthropological examination of Inuit women's search for residential autonomy. In their analysis of the actions and discourse that Inuit women had demonstrated, Hervé and Laneuville excavated the ontological discord of two different meanings of political autonomy (Hervé and Laneuville 2017). They explained that from a Western ontological perspective, individual and collective *autonomy* is essentially about *separating* individuals or a group of individuals respectively. However, Indigenous ontological understandings of

autonomy have been described as *relational* in which autonomy cannot exist outside of one's social relations.

With this in mind, Hervé and Laneuville (2017) analyzed women's housing situations using this Indigenous conceptualization of autonomy. The concept was grounded in the work of Mario Blaser, an anthropologist who has extensively studied the relations that Indigenous peoples around the globe have with non-Indigenous institutions paying particular attention to the ontological and epistemological consequences of those relations. Hervé and Laneuville proposed a definition of Inuit autonomy as follows: "L'autonomie peut en effet être comprise comme étant une forme particulière de lien social à travers lequel les individus tentent de négocier une nouvelle position vis-à-vis des personnes ou des entités avec lesquelles ils sont en relation" (Hervé and Laneuville 2017, 49).[36] Autonomy in this sense is not an individualistic concept nor is it about separateness. Rather than assuming that autonomy is inevitably a Western concept with its roots in a society that values individualism in which the individual is separate from others and from nature, there is the option of understanding autonomy as part of an Indigenous understanding of relationality, including "reciprocity, obligation, shared experiences, coexistence, co-operation and social memory" (Blaser et al. 2010, 7). Blaser (2010) had explained that in Western thought, even in a democracy, "decisions are expected to arise from the exercise of collective autonomy by communities composed of individuals who themselves possess individual autonomy" where everyone is separated not only from each other, but also from nature (2010, 6). An Inuit concept of autonomy does not require separation between bodies. It has the potential to lead to different concepts of democracy that are based on

[36] English translation by DeepL.com: "Autonomy can in fact be understood as a particular form of social bond through which individuals attempt to negotiate a new position vis-à-vis the people or entities with which they are in contact."

building relationships, not divisions. Hervé and Laneuville (2017) theorized that the Inuit women's actions and housing demands were a new creation of their identity, a relational identity, that was being expressed through their housing decisions. These Inuit conceptualizations and values do not destroy or deteriorate Western ideas about democracy nor the basic system of social services that are in place. However, they may challenge our thinking and worldview, and they may change power relations within the system.

Moreover, in their discussion on women and housing, Hervé and Laneuville (2017) have presented social housing in Nunavik as a *positive* entity. It has the potential for positive impacts for women in Nunavik, despite the fact that the housing system is charged as an underlying cause for many of the social ills in Inuit society. As one respondent in their study stated, compared to living in the chaos of an overcrowded house, acquiring her own house gave her peace and freedom she needed: "[Depuis que j'ai ma maison], mon esprit est tellement clair. [...] Quand tu es dans ta zone de confort, tu peux faire autre chose" (Hervé and Laneuville 2017, 51).[37] This positive view of housing that they depicted was grounded in an Inuit concept of autonomy. The women who explained their need for residential autonomy in order to escape the violence, chaos, and discord in the houses that they shared with too many other people, discussed the process of leaving an overcrowded or violent home as a *necessary rupture* that gave them the space to create new healthy relationships. Their search for autonomy was *not* a form of emancipation from Inuit culture but actually a focus on *building* social harmony and protection for their children (Hervé and Laneuville 2017, 54–55). The necessary rupture had to face not only the

[37] English translation by DeepL.com: "Since I've had my house, my mind is so clear. [...] When you're in your own comfort zone, you can do other things."

barriers of the western system, and the fact that there were no houses for them, but also the rejection from their own community members who condemned them for leaving the family or marriage[38]. In fact, the women still valued intergenerational living and healthy marriages. In the new spaces of their own homes, their residential autonomy gave them the place to recreate the valued social relations that they relied on for healing.

Other literature has taken a different angle to try to understand how Inuit values factor into how they make decisions about their living conditions. Specifically, Quebec scholars, Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime (2010) asked why Inuit generally express satisfaction with their communities "in spite of the harsh material living conditions." They asked: "what are the social forces that make them stay"? (A. Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime 2010, 98). This type of questioning is essential to start bridging the gap to understand the somewhat unexpected values placed on other subjective living circumstances regardless of material conditions. In their statistical analysis of 2001 data on Nunavut living conditions, the authors found that Inuit wanted to remain in their communities (A. Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime 2010, 108) even though they had much lower living standards than in the rest of Canada, and where based on the Arctic-wide survey, housing appeared to be one of the most problematic issues for the Nunavimmiut (A. Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime 2010, 101). The authors could only speculate on the reasons, but they chose *not* to explain it as a form of helplessness where the stories of Inuit play out without their involvement in it (2010, 106). Taking a sociological perspective about

[38] The way families react and their values are deeply intertwined with the new Christianity in the north and some of these Christian values can override older Inuit social and familial bonds. I will not explore this aspect in this dissertation, but these issues have been explored in great depth by Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten in *Inuit Shamanism and Christianity: Transitions and Transformations in the Twentieth Century*. McGill-Queen's Native and Northern Series 59. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press (2010).

the behaviour of people, Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime considered that people "choose solutions because they know, or think they know, that is where their best interests lie. These choices are not random, but rational" (A. Morin, Edouard, and Duhaime 2010, 106). The aspects of life in these remote villages that Inuit have expressed favourably are related to the social, such as family and neighbourhood networks that have been established over generations, offering a sense of belonging and mutual support through sharing of resources such as country food, and through this "they persist in living on their land, including in villages only established a few decades ago" (2010, 108). But, they express more dissatisfaction with housing than with other factors such as employment and education opportunities, because housing is determined externally, and they do not have an individual role in it and there is no individual investment they can commit to change the situation. The authors describe this situation as a client relationship where social housing is a consumer product (2010, 107). Yet, Inuit see these remote villages as the place where they have "the best chance to exert the highest degree of control over their personal and domestic reality" (2010, 97).

It is not uncommon to hear the questions posed in the public domain in the South such as, "If it's so bad, why do they stay? Why don't they just leave?" But to ask such questions is to show that one does not understand a concept of home that is not just a nice house, but is a safe place to live, valued in terms of the place, a homeland, and understood in terms of how one's identity is wrapped up in it, and the connection to a territory that one calls home. The literature has demonstrated that the semi-nomadic tradition of the Inuit continues to have cultural and ontological value today in terms of how Inuit relate to the house and to the land around them. Most notably, Inuit relationship with the idea of home does not overlap with the concept of home-ownership and property rights derived from

Western worldviews (even if there are Inuit who wish to own their own houses.) In Brière and Laugrand's (2017) article about the practice of building cabins on the tundra, they investigate the evolution of the contemporary house in the north and domestic space, revealing that Inuit have retained an important set of values associated with the house that is entrenched in a nomadic relationship with the environment and territory.

Geographer Beatrice Collignon has extensively studied the problems embodied in the structure of the dwellings built across Arctic Canada, including the ontological differences in domestic uses of space. With Western-style housing units constructed for Inuit but based on a system of values and ideals radically different from their own, she has examined the uses of these domestic spaces by Inuit to highlight the values, strengths and agency of Inuit (Beatrice Collignon 2001). Archeologist Peter Dawson likewise contributed extensively to the study of the domestic spaces of Inuit dwellings and uses of these Western-style buildings by Inuit families, emphasizing in his work how the spaces reproduce "the various economic, social, political, and ideological institutions of mainstream Euro-Canadian society" (Dawson 2008, 125). Both of these authors recognize how the sudden process of sedentarization did not eliminate important Inuit values and worldviews that continue to be expressed in the home and in their agency across all parts of life. This body of work shows the relevance of traditional Inuit culture as part of Inuit ontology today.

The question of how ideology features into the way housing policy decisions are made has been asked by Tester (2009), who suggested that the confines of the Western liberal democratic tradition needs to be taken into consideration. In a normative argument, he suggests that if Canada's identity as a nation is steadfast in its commitment to international human rights covenants that contain the United Nations Right to Adequate

Housing then it would be crucial to ensure adequate housing to all citizens in order to support "their capacity to participate in all aspects of Canadian society" (Tester 2009, 155). The debates in literature that revolve around ideologies take on two main aspects: how our governing systems based on a belief in democracy and trust in capitalism can allow for the inclusion of citizen and marginalized voices, and/or how a democratic system with ideals of equality can be upheld when it is crushed by market logics that trivialize the idea of the house into a market commodity.

As a result, the discussions about Inuit agency and participation in policy making in the housing process are part of a discussion about how our society works, and in the case of Canada, it is part of an overarching ideology that values a certain form of democracy. Scholars have taken up this angle to examine Inuit housing to demonstrate how framing voice and power in terms of "citizenship participation" has ignored the way our belief in the democratic system has failed us, and failed Inuit. Our Western democratic system is based on the faith that the inclusion of people in our "democratic processes" equates with justice or fairness. Chabot and Duhaime (1998) have shown that to believe that participation in planning processes has given more power to the citizens is to be misled. This is because our democratic system lies within a capitalist economic system, and the participation of Inuit in social housing discussions is more comparable to the participation of users in a "producer-consumer relationship" (Chabot and Duhaime 1998, 443) rather than that of citizens "included in a formal system of democratic representation" (Chabot and Duhaime 1998, 445).

Frank Tester (2009) made the same argument in the Nunavut case, saying that the housing shortage has been framed as an economic problem and the idea of seeing the house as a market commodity continues even under the Nunavut government. Only when

the market falls short of meeting housing needs are other arguments based on our belief in the liberal democratic tradition employed to make the case to improve the Inuit housing situation (Tester 2009, 138–39). It is important to remember that our democratic system is closely bound to a capitalist system. It is this capitalist system that comes up against democratic processes that cause government failure to meet its ethical, moral, and legal obligations, largely due to the overemphasis and value placed on market logics (Tester 2009). Within this capitalist democratic system, Chabot and Duhaime say that "[t]he recognition of users' demands is contingent and depends on the value system of the production agents" (Chabot and Duhaime 1998, 433) which in the case of Inuit housing is the government. Therefore knowing the values and driving ideologies of our Western system is necessary to know how information is received and valued. Chabot and Duhaime conclude that this problem is not only a regional one. Rather, they believe citizenship participation "is being eroded in all democratic societies" (Chabot and Duhaime 1998, 446), implying that this is not only an Indigenous issue, but perhaps a deterioration of democratic principles, and perhaps due to capitalist interests. Yet the fact remains the same, that Indigenous people, and in this case Inuit, suffer the consequences most acutely.

Health research on Inuit housing

The final field of research I will present is what I refer to as the health research related to Inuit housing, though I do not delve into the voluminous body of medical research on specific diseases. I review ideas, critiques, and research approaches found in health and housing surveys conducted in Arctic communities and scholarly research on Inuit health and housing that spans a broad set of themes including overcrowding, mental health, wellbeing, and satisfaction. This is a body of research that is not necessarily

concerned with pinpointing the *reasons* for the persistence of the housing crisis. Rather it aims: to prove *why* it must be resolved; to find new approaches to gathering accurate representative data of Inuit health; to appeal to the better nature of all Canadians by attesting to the suffering caused by the housing crisis; and, to provide clear connections between housing and health to show how most solutions to the problems in the communities absolutely *require* that Inuit have adequate housing first. This is an instrumental body of research to understand the connection between housing and the wellbeing of Inuit in their communities. As this is a central topic of my study, it is one that I will take up in more detail in the final part of my dissertation with suggestions about where we can go from here through the idea of home. Some key research on Inuit health has been conducted by scholars influenced by critical theory who closely consider the effects of colonial attitudes on Inuit health and on Inuit health research itself, though some other scholars bypass this aspect altogether. The research that contributes more fully to a critical body of research on these health and housing issues is also that which provides me with food for thought. It has afforded me novel ways of incorporating these new ideas into my analysis of power relations, and in my path forward.

Firstly, a significant amount of knowledge about Inuit health has been produced through a series of health surveys and housing surveys conducted in various regions across the Canadian Arctic, including Nunavik. Analyses of these surveys have raised problems such as with applying universal health indicators for the Inuit population, the use of terminology that is not culturally-relevant, and comparatively then, the value of Inuit-led surveys. Academic research conducted in the Canadian North prior to the 21st century was often dependent on data gathered by provincial, territorial or federal governments. In 1987

Quebec conducted a *province-wide* health survey that had even completely excluded Nunavik residents.

In 1992, Santé Québec finally conducted a targeted health survey for the population in Nunavik which provided a complete set of health data for the province. The purpose of the 1992 survey was to furnish the provincial MSSS (Ministry of Health and Social Services) and regional government KRCHSS (Kativik Regional Council of Health and Social Services, which is now called the NRBHSS – Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services) with the statistics and numbers necessary to design and deliver health and social programs and services (Québec 1994a).

Some of the analysis of Quebec's 1992 survey uncovered new ways of thinking about Inuit health, mental health, and wellbeing. The authors' analysis presented in the second volume of the report called "Health Status and Its Consequences" delivered an anthropologically-driven interpretation of the data that was intended to provide a more "cultural reading" of the data collected (Québec 1994b, 134). These survey coordinators, authors, and the editor were all employees of Santé Québec at the time. They posed questions about the power relationships characteristic of designing and conducting this kind of survey research *without* collaboration with Inuit. They critiqued the status quo of survey methods of the time showing the need for awareness of unequal power relationships. In the report, the authors asked: "(1) What qualities endogenous to the culture predetermine the results obtained? And (2) What conditions inherent to a dominant society influence its capacity or failure to adapt and evolve?" (Québec 1994b, 134). These are valuable self-reflexive questions. They disclose the researchers' awareness that underlying ideologies could impact the results and analysis, and they had the intent to minimize this "ethnocentric temptation" (Québec 1994b, 135). They were, in their words, "adopting a

systemic approach" in order "to venture beyond the linear, unilateral concept of causality" in order to "comprehend the phenomena of psychological distress, suicidal thoughts and parasuicide through the very cultural parameters of Inuit society while positioning ourselves at the crossroads of Inuit cultural traditions and modern living conditions" (Québec 1994b, 134). These statements demonstrated a growing awareness of the multiplicity of interrelated issues such as social, health, cultural and institutional problems. The dominant society had traditionally set the norms for research, methods, and analysis while those "being studied" have been forced to conform and therefore risk being misunderstood. The methods and research for gathering Inuit health data in Quebec and in Canada have become progressively more aware of this imbalance, with the most recent National Inuit Health Survey announced in 2021 called "*Qanuippitaa*?"[39] to be a fully Inuit-led initiative (NRBHSS 2021). This gradual shift and awareness of the collection and analysis of Inuit health and housing data would take a good thirty years to evolve.

Possibly the first Arctic *housing* needs survey in was conducted in the Northwest Territories, *1992 Northwest Territories Housing Needs Survey*. While distant from the geographic, political, and historical context of Nunavik, it nevertheless provided some foundational data useful for comparison in the northern and Inuit context, as well as raising methodological issues that would need to be improved upon many more times in northern housing research before approaching something akin to cultural-relevance.

In a community health study about the impact of housing on health, scholars Young and Mollins (1996) had relied on the data from the 1992 NWT housing needs survey. Due to significant limitations in the original data, when Young and Mollins calculated factors in

[39] The National Inuit Health Survey was announced for 2021, but is currently being planned for 2023. It has the same name as Quebec's Nunavik Inuit Health Survey conducted in 2004, but they are independent of each other. *Qanuippitaa*? means "how are we?"

SES (socioeconomic status) data they produced surprising results that exhibited a paradoxical relationship between better housing and the increase of house fires. These results were clearly not evidence of a causal relationship, but the authors were able to reveal that "the presence of a counterintuitive relationship, may indicate the insensitivity of the method" (Young and Mollins 1996, 60), essentially suggesting the potential harm that culturally-inappropriate survey data can cause. The housing data was missing key indicators relevant to that population. Moreover, the housing survey did not include any health-related questions; only socio-economic status data had been collected (Young and Mollins 1996, 59). As a result, the findings made associations between factors that actually countered "common sense" knowledge when it suggested that better housing was related to more fires. Through this example, Young and Mollins (1996) recommended that further research on northern housing should reconsider the social, cultural, health and economic context within which housing is understood, and to consider carefully how the terms and indicators for quantitative research are chosen. Finally, in Young and Mollins' (1996) assessment of their results, despite their skewed results, they believed that:

> [w]hile housing has not been shown to be a powerful determinant, particularly when it is considered in conjunction to SES [socioeconomic status], it does not mean that it is not important. From a policy perspective, it should be emphasized that adequate housing is an important *end* in itself (Young and Mollins 1996, 60 original emphasis).

Lauster and Tester's (2010) research on household crowding raised more issues about the ongoing issues caused by outsiders using their own terminologies and universal measurements to gauge Inuit housing conditions. They explained that in research conducted with the general population, the definition of household crowding had been historically based on the belief that *biological needs* trumped any other needs with regards to how crowding affected stress levels and disease. Therefore, the definition of household

overcrowding has been standardized using a biological justification. And yet, they pointed out, the number used to determine crowding, apparently grounded in our "basic human biological needs," has changed over the decades. One must ask then, is it based on biology or culture? As Lauster and Tester (2010) explained, the threshold for "number of persons in a household" in 1940 was two people per room. In 1950, it was 1.5 people per room. And by 1960, the era when housing for Inuit came to the attention of government policy makers, the standard threshold had become one person per room. How had our biological needs changed so drastically and quickly?

Despite this evidence, these measurements had been "conceived in universal terms" to make them convenient and geographically comparable across populations—a useful tool for policy-making purposes (Lauster and Tester 2010, 524). And so, because it was *believed* that the numbers were based on basic *universal biological* needs, there was little room for cultural differences to be taken into consideration. Yet, cultural expectations for Western living standards had clearly played a critical role in changing crowding limits for white, middle class Canadian families in 1940, 1950, and then again in 1960, which then "became standards imposed on the country as a whole" (Lauster and Tester 2010, 525).

The issue regarding the universality of measurements, and of deciding which definitions and indicators to employ, is an ongoing predicament of research in the North. The levels of crowding have impacts on health but also have cultural references and are deeply connected to relational aspects of Inuit wellbeing through the vise of mental health and social relations created within and between domestic spaces. These are issues that are explored in both health research and the type of housing research that focuses on social and cultural needs.

In the quest to cultivate more culturally-relevant research, there have been important precedents and critiques from Indigenous housing research in Australia (such as: Bailie and Wayte 2006; McDonald 2011; Lea and Torzillo 2016; Lea and Pholeros 2010). It is a body of research that has established that housing is a determinant of Indigenous physical and mental health (Riva et al. 2014). The Australian studies have made important connections relevant to the Canadian context and they have endeavored to establish more culturally-relevant indicators in research on health and housing (Ruiz-Castell et al. 2015). Nevertheless, a variety of limiting factors continue to afflict research with Indigenous populations in both Australia and Northern Canada. There are methodological and political obstacles in research (in Australia: Bailie and Wayte 2006, 182; In Quebec, see limitations of the 2004 Inuit Health Survey in Rochette and Blanchet 2007, 37). There are logistical difficulties due to the physical distance between communities (eg. the main challenge for the first ever Inuit health survey conducted in Nunavik was adapting known research approaches to accommodate for the long distances from Montreal to Nunavik and between the Northern Villages, Québec 1994a, v). There is the problem of the high cost of research in remote communities matched with insufficient funding (a limitation experienced in the rehousing project by Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 23). There are frequently low response rates from potential respondents (eg. lower response rate in 2004 health survey in Northern Quebec than in a 1992 survey, Rochette and Blanchet 2007, 37). And last, but not least, as pointed out by Riva et al. (2020), there are the ethical barriers inherent in the methodological process that make it impossible to select control groups because it would create additional suffering for the participants of the control groups who would be selected to live in inadequate living conditions for years during the length of a study, just in order to have a point of comparison (in Northern Canada: Riva, Fletcher, et

al. 2020). A control group is an indispensable measure to help account for confounding variables, but the question of how to create or retrieve such important data remains an ethical challenge. And yet, substantial inroads are being made on all these fronts.

In 2004, an Inuit Health Survey called *Qanuippitaa? How Are We?* was conducted in Nunavik. It was initiated by the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS), and involved having a ship visit all fourteen coastal villages to gather data. Voluntary participants from each village filled out individual, household, and/or confidential surveys and there was also a nutrition and clinical part of the data collection. The study had been designed in collaboration with Nunavik community members and conducted with their oversight (Gray, Richer, and Harper 2016, 253). This was an important development in how research on and with Inuit populations was conducted. However, despite this big methodological step forward, the measurements chosen in the surveys had not been validated with Inuit for cultural relevance. Therefore, in 2004, the Nunavik survey had still relied on measurements for mental health that had been developed for a general population, not Inuit-specific. Consequently, results did not have the capacity to parse out certain contributing stressors that are present in remote northern communities (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 7).

It was evident that the cultural significance of the research was at the forefront of the researchers' attentions. In the introduction to the survey's thematic report called *Mental Health, Social Support, and Community Wellness* there was an insightful passage of the unique cultural and historical context of Inuit life and values, including a recognition that mental health issues that Inuit have been experiencing are linked to "the impact of sedentarization, economic and political marginalization, and the rapidity of culture change"

(Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 2–3).[40] Yet, the capacity to integrate this knowledge into new culturally-relevant data gathering methods had not yet been realized. Some surveys conducted in Nunavik since then such as the Inuit-led *Parnasimautik* consultation process in 2013 have taken other participatory approaches to qualitative data collection that have tackled some more of these shortcomings.

The 2004 Nunavik health survey had collected baseline demographic information from all households surveyed, including some basic information about housing circumstances (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 1). However, it does not appear, based on the 2007 report of the study, that housing conditions were considered *in relation to* the mental health data. From the methodological report, one can see that there were no questions posed apropos the conditions of the home, such as repair needs, presence of mold, utilities, functioning of appliances, ownership of the home, nor about feelings of being crowded, feeling emotionally or physically safe or unsafe, levels of satisfaction with the actual housing conditions, or levels of stress *in the home* (Rochette and Blanchet 2007)[41]. This reflects the same shortcomings as in the Nunavik health survey of 1992. Nevertheless, Kirmayer et al.'s 2007 thematic report claims that the 2004 survey had collected information on "housing, environment, nutrition, and certain health indicators..." and that it had therefore produced "a thorough update of the health and well-being profile of the Inuit population of Nunavik" (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 1).

[40] It is worth noting, and seeing whether there is a trend, in omitting or ignoring or refusing to refer to colonialism or colonization. Is it a trend in health research? A quick word search reveals that the word is not mentioned once in either Rochette et.al.'s 2007 methodological report nor in Kirmayer et.al.'s 2007 report on community wellness.

[41] I should note, however, that I did not have access to the raw data. Since the survey included the addresses of the participants, it is possible that the data could have been cross-referenced with municipal records about housing repairs, age, conditions, and number of official residents based on census data or other sources.

So, while on the one hand, it had been widely acknowledged over the decades that housing for Inuit was a primary concern for health (especially physical health concerns such as respiratory illnesses since as early as the 1950s and 60s), on the other hand, the *feelings* of wellbeing directly related to the state of housing, which may also indicate links to mental health, were not featured in most health research initiatives, especially in province-driven data collection. Data collection should aim to include as many contributing factors as possible. Health effects of poor housing has remained incomplete, as argued by Mylène Riva throughout her extensive research on the issues (Riva et al. 2014).

The data from the 2004 Nunavik statistical health survey have, nonetheless, cascaded into multiple successive analyses that have brought forward new ways of considering how Inuit health may be directly or indirectly related to housing conditions (Riva et al. 2014; Gray, Richer, and Harper 2016; Perreault et al. 2020)[42]. The last fifteen years also set new baselines for research on housing that could build upon the knowledge gained from the 2004 survey results.

Turning for a moment to housing research conducted in Nunavut Territory around the same time we find a slightly different research trajectory. In 2005, Frank Tester conducted research on overcrowding with the Kinngait Harvest Society in the hamlet of Cape Dorset (Kinngait, Nunavut). Frank Tester is a renown scholar in social work and community development with expertise on issues affecting Canada's Arctic and extensive experience working with Inuit as an advocate, researcher and consultant. In my opinion, this study was, and still is, unique and groundbreaking in design and implementation including their collaborative approach, the research training opportunities created for Inuit

[42] For example, results that show that men and women experience emotional and psychological distress differently, in Perreault et al. 2020.

youth, and the type of results garnered. Steered in partnership with Kinngait Elders, youth, and other community members, this research was the first of its kind to have conducted an in-depth examination of "Inuit perceptions and experience with overcrowding and the impact of overcrowding on their personal lives and social relations" (Tester 2006b, 58). Inuit youth were hired as co-researchers and helped design the study questions and interview questions. Moreover, according to Tester, the results of this phenomenological study were consistent with findings and issues that had been uncovered in other national and regional surveys regarding objective and subjective measures of overcrowding (Tester 2006b, 58), such as the rates, reasons, and consequences of overcrowding in Indigenous and Inuit communities in Canada.

Around this time, and perhaps in part due to the government's resolve, a research group based at McGill University led by Mylène Riva, a health geographer and Canada Research Chair in Housing, Community, and Health, have attended to a wide range of health and mental health effects connected to overcrowding in Arctic communities. Until now, much of the health research on household crowding had been focused on respiratory-related illness (Riva et al. 2014, 363). Like Tester's argument for the need for more inclusive research, the recent studies by this McGill research group have taken a social science approach using quantitative data. It is a body of work that has advanced the inquiry by making more direct links between the overall wellness of Inuit and their housing conditions, looking specifically beyond disease factors, and creating designs that include more culturally-specific conceptualizations of housing conditions "in coherence with Inuit culture" in order to work towards a more complete picture of housing and Inuit health (Riva et al. 2014; Riva, Larsen, and Bjerregaard 2014; Ruiz-Castell et al. 2015; Gray,

Richer, and Harper 2016; Pepin et al. 2018; Perreault et al. 2020; Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020).

Examining Nunavik's 2004 health survey results anew, Riva et al. (2014) tested a cross-sectional analysis of the data. They referred to the effects of low levels of control and privacy in overcrowded home environments as factors that contribute to stress levels for Inuit women. They suggested that Inuit women may be more affected by this type of stress trigger than men because "women's social roles still relate to domestic labour and emotional work" and therefore lack of control over the home and reduced privacy have emotional consequences for women, leading to stress, anxiety, depression, and heart disease (Riva et al. 2014, 367)[43]. With this gendered cultural nuance, they show that overcrowded living conditions adversely affect the emotional needs of Inuit women.

Generally, the medical research on health and housing among Inuit has produced solid statistical evidence about the impacts of inadequate housing on physical health of Inuit such as tuberculosis, respiratory illnesses, and hospitalization, and some, like the one above, have produced statistics on mental health of Inuit such as physiological stress levels related to housing (Riva et al. 2014). Other research relating to household crowding has explained the importance of supporting strong social network for offsetting psychosocial health and wellbeing for Inuit in Greenland living in overcrowded conditions (Riva, Larsen, and Bjerregaard 2014). Health research on overcrowding in Inuit dwellings has brought to light psychological distress such as depression (Riva, Larsen, and Bjerregaard 2014; Pepin et al. 2018), with some specific analyses of the impacts of overcrowding on adolescents (Pepin et al. 2018) and women (Perreault et al. 2020) and food security among families

[43] The study suggests that the negative effects of overcrowding for men, on the other hand, is caused by the pressure to provide for a large household (Riva et al. 2014, 367).

with school-aged children (Ruiz-Castell et al. 2015). Wellness, in these studies, has generally been determined by health indicators.

However, sometimes the data has not supported the hypotheses, even expectations based on previous findings which had shown to be reliable assumptions. In these cases, other reasons for the anomalies must be uncovered. For example, Pepin et al.'s (2018) results refuted the three main hypotheses about the relationship between overcrowding and mental health. In this first-ever longitudinal study on the impacts of overcrowding from childhood age to adolescence the findings suggested that Inuit adolescents between the ages of 11 and 18 did not appear to suffer long-term psychological distress due to overcrowding, nor could overcrowding during childhood predict future psychological distress, which was measured as depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts (Pepin et al. 2018).

This was particularly interesting because it revealed the importance and difficulty in parsing out individual causal connections and the value of applying culturally relevant measures, indicators, and methods. In the discussion, the authors Pepin et al (2018) suggested that the research results might be a huge underestimation of the significance of overcrowding for adolescent psychological distress. Results may have been significantly different had overcrowding been measured alongside other housing factors such as housing quality, disrepair, lack of privacy, relationships between household tenants, and more. It would also have revealed other potential co-indicators had these results been measured alongside secondary effects of overcrowding such as how overcrowding might compromise the development of a clear personal identity and role in society (Pepin et al. 2018, 8–9).

The qualitative longitudinal data in this study had been collected through interviews as part of the Nunavik Child Development Study between 2005 and 2016. They had used questions "validated with a North American aboriginal population" and used in other

epidemiological studies with Inuit (2018, 4). Moreover, Pepin et al.'s study showed that one unaccounted factor was the commonly fluctuating living circumstances of households over the span of years in which the study took place. These included movement between households, changing poverty levels, and housing quality, all issues that would need to be accounted for in a longitudinal study. Their findings also conflicted with the researchers' expectations on issues related to gender which had been based on other studies, such as a 2014 study in Greenland also conducted by Mylène Riva's team. Those previous studies had shown that women were more affected by overcrowding than men. Overall, Pepin et al. (2018) confirmed that there is no scientific consensus with regards to how to best measure the effects of household overcrowding (2018, 8).

As we have seen, this was not the first time that methodological issues had been identified as one of the main problems with this kind of research, and with Indigenous research in general. Lauster and Tester's work from 2010 equally established that when cultural and co-influencing factors are left out, we end up with misleading results that fail to properly explain how material inequality affects health and wellbeing (Lauster and Tester 2010). Lauster and Tester had reflected on the disempowerment experienced by Inuit over the decades of government-forced sedentarization which happened alongside material inequality. They insisted that it was important to expose the ongoing colonial policies and impacts that disempower youth today, which might be experienced through housing inequalities such as overcrowding, and which has impacts on psychological distress, but which cannot be easily measured or revealed, as was clearly demonstrated in Pepin et al.'s results. The complexity of the issues related to housing *require* that more nuanced and comprehensive approach are used to establish connections between housing and wellbeing in the North.

Moreover, I believe that the research on mental health has been an area of particular interest with scholars pointing to critical links between the history and effects of colonization and inadequate housing (Perreault et al. 2020; Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020). The outcomes of an extensive research project on rehousing[44] conducted in Nunavut and Nunavik have been key to advancing the field. What has been desperately needed is concrete numbers to prove the link between housing and health. Riva's team had the opportunity in 2014-15 to measure the before and after impacts of rehousing on Inuit health during a large social housing construction initiative of over 400 units, with about half in Nunavut and the other half in eight Nunavik communities. The researchers were able to build upon Australian results from a study regarding the health effects of rehousing conducted in Indigenous communities in 2012. Using longitudinal data, Riva et al.'s (2020) study measured asthma and psychosocial health impacts of rehousing (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 22). The measures included a self-rated health measure, a psychological distress scale (previously used in the 2004 Nunavik Health Survey), a Perceived Stress Scale, and a Mastery scale (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 24). Their results showed that "15–18 months after rehousing, participants presented with significantly reduced scores of psychological distress and perceived stress in daily life, and improved sense of control over their lives" (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 26). Re-housed participants ended up in households with half as many residents as before rehousing (moving from an average of 6.9 people per unit to 3.3 people per unit in the new houses). Comparing these results to those from the Australian study, the authors believed that the significant improvement in their health and mental health assessments were largely due to reduced crowding and its associated impacts

[44] Rehousing interventions were defined as "relocating to a different dwelling–or improvement in indoor housing conditions due to improved structure or housing fabric" (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 22).

(Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 27). This is the kind of study that provides evidence of the direct links between improved housing conditions and overall wellbeing, and more specifically, the connection between housing and having a sense of control over one's life.

In summary, there is an important, if small, body of research that has addressed the ongoing issues related to the process of sedentarization through inadequate housing programs and the impact this has had on Inuit health in Nunavik. The 1992 Santé Québec Inuit Health Survey acknowledged the drastic and immediate effects that the process had had on Inuit culture and lives as well as on their mental health and wellbeing. The authors of the report had questioned the predicament that "in as much as the physical health of the Inuit improved significantly through the transformation of general living conditions, it would be appropriate to question why these changes have had such an adverse effect on the state of their mental health" (Québec 1994b, 136–37). The physical *and* the emotional-psychological health of the individuals, the family, or the larger part of society, have been an area of a concern in housing research. While the introduction of housing programs initially provided improved healthier living conditions compared to the first provisional houses built by Inuit out of scrap materials available in the settlements prior to federal housing programs, it is clear from the research that many other factors besides simplified definitions of health or illness must be studied to determine the multiple confounding factors related to how housing can lead to overall wellbeing. This body of research has provided an idea about the spatial requirements related to a sense of home through a lens of health and wellness. From this starting point, the spatial necessities identified in the research have spoken to the relational needs inside the home. In other words, the relationship between space and family relations are key dimension of healthy living conditions. The spatial needs for mental health are expressed in the literature in both

material terms (the structural aspects of the house such as size, condition, design) and in emotional terms (the mental health outcomes related to spatial constraints such as overcrowding in inadequate living circumstances).

Clearly even health research that has historically been fixed in a more positivist tradition can find ways to become more precise in addressing the particular needs of people with their own cultural, social, spiritual, and emotional worlds. Researchers can extricate themselves from expected methodological norms to innovate and expose new connections between health, housing, and past and ongoing inequalities, disempowerment, and discriminatory policies. And the critical research that has succeeded making links to the process of forced sedentarization, colonial policies, and paternalism are the ones that provide new ways of understanding why power imbalances at the political, regional, and personal level are detrimental to the overall wellbeing of a people, including the problem of creating palpable direct negative health impacts. These research conclusions and speculations are likewise the ones that provide me with a starting point to answer the inevitable question *What should be done?* by expanding upon some of the recent health research on housing that has worked with the concept of *home* (which I will address in Part IV of this dissertation).

Lastly, the health research contributes substantially to the recognition that across Canada, in urban, rural, and remote contexts, all social programs and services targeting Inuit populations, including housing, must engage Inuit stakeholders, must be culturally relevant, and must develop *Inuit-specific* health indicators in order to "envision a system enhancing the mental health and well-being of Inuit individuals and communities" (Pfeifer 2017, 22). One thing has become obvious: the web of interconnected issues in Inuit housing is complex. Health studies have exposed some of the fundamental barriers in our

ability to gather reliable data and relatable contextualized data that can accurately report on the disparity and inequality experienced by Inuit in northern communities. But all in all, the health literature on housing for Inuit in the North, especially the research avenues in the last fifteen years, has provided new, insightful, quantifiable and qualitative expressions of the key housing needs for Inuit.

Chapter 1 Summary

The literature on northern housing has shown a particular trajectory. Early university research on housing in Nunavik included Inuit in participatory research approaches, wanting to support the idea of Inuit "auto-gérance" (self-determination). There has also been valuable critical research for decades that has insisted things must change because the current power relationship maintains control *out* of the hands of Inuit. But it is overall a relatively small body of research, small in comparison to the scholarship from engineering and environmental sciences on the technical issues of building in an Arctic climate and geology. That is where the question of *how* to build houses in the Arctic and *how* to do it efficiently, while saving costs, remains the central concern—technical concerns.[45]

Yet the social science research on Inuit housing has addressed the most important social, cultural, health, and political problems with the housing system that are directly linked to the wellbeing of Inuit. There are several ways that my research will build on and contribute to this body of research. I am taking up the call presented by many early

[45] There are been many studies and reports examining the technical aspects of building in the North, both through university research and commissioned through government agencies. An example of a few through the years: An Arctic Housing Study by Northern Affairs and National Resources (1958), Development Strategy for Guideline Documents for Northern Residential Construction by CMHC (1985), Development of a Guide to the Planning, Design, and Construction of Housing in the North by CMHC (1986), Cost of Delivering Housing in Canada - Northern Archetypes by CMHC (2019); Near-net Zero Buildings in the North Final Report: Arctic Canada Passive House Feasibility Study, revised by CMHC (2020).

scholars of this field in the 1970s who recognized that housing decisions *must* be in the hands of Inuit. This is an essential element of creating social justice.

Research on labour and economy in relation to Inuit housing has exhibited the economic benefits that the housing sector offers communities through skills training, employment, labour, and growth. This aspect of the housing sector brings many opportunities for Inuit entrepreneurship, waged-labour, and overall Inuit involvement in the construction industry. However, the literature also reveals that due to some particular Western ideological views that perceive Inuit as dependents, and housing as social assistance, the housing sector was not actually designed to support autonomy for Inuit; it reinforced instead an unequal power relationship. This forces the question today of whether we continue to treat housing for Inuit as part of a welfare model within our capitalist system, or housing as an avenue for Inuit self-determination. I will be looking at the wording of government housing policies for evidence of this paternalistic tendency in Part II. The critical research on the economics of housing has also demonstrated that housing is not just about shelter but actually can fulfill a host of other needs of the individual and of the community. This is one of the ideas I will build on through the idea of *home* presented in Part IV—showing how through an understanding of housing as *home*, we can see that when done right, a proper housing system responds to social, cultural, economic, and political needs too.

The economic literature reviewed does not answer the question why the housing crisis persists, but rather demonstrates the way a healthier housing sector would help Inuit communities grow. This type of economic growth is, in turn, believed to have the potential to open up avenues for better self-government and Inuit self-determination. While this view and the connections made are convincing, it is not a body of literature that addresses the

obvious: why this prediction has not come to fruition. Colonialism and the impacts of sedentarization are not prominent themes in the economics literature. It is this question that contributes to my thinking and policy analysis in Part II. I consider the contradictions evident when governments *claim* Inuit will benefit from their new policies and programs, and then the reality of the decades-long housing crisis. It is crucial to depart from the limited economic arguments about housing, and to start looking at the many interconnected ways that housing benefits communities and individuals, beyond neoliberal ideas of "growth." What I contribute is a critical assessment of the disconnect between housing policy claims that state they will be creating Inuit "wellbeing," often through economic policies founded in capitalist and paternalistic approaches that equate wellbeing with economic wellbeing.

The body of literature on housing policy and Inuit agency has shown how important it has been for Nunavimmiut to advocate for themselves and insist on being included at the table. They have never been passive recipients of our political processes or of our policies. Quebec policy scholars in particular have known that housing is political. They have said that despite governments claiming that they want to "help" Inuit move towards "auto-gérance," it is this very approach of "help" that maintains the unequal relationship, with its top-down approach. There are scholars that have called the government attitude towards Inuit as condescending, paternalistic and colonial, hindering policy from fulfilling its stated purpose. Policy failed to create living standards equal to the rest of Canadians and has upheld a minimal welfare approach. Scholars such as Gerard Duhaime and Frank Tester have argued that with capitalism brought North, the house became a product. Moreover, several scholars reviewed maintained that participation does not equal power. This critical

perspective has unfortunately not been adopted by many other scholars, however. The reality is that the "inclusion" of Inuit in policy matters is insufficient.

My research will show that despite the many housing forums where Inuit participate, and despite the many joint declarations to work in partnership, housing policies continue to be created in ways that do not provide Inuit with a housing foundation that adequately supports community and individual wellbeing. The imbalance is that Inuit do not have control of policies that are *about them*, which points to a deeper problem in our democracy, touched on by Duhaime. Our Western view of democracy and the individual equates *inclusion* with justice, rather than seeing democracy as a place for building relationships, discussion, debate, and new ideas.

There are two issues here that I address through my research. One is about the fear and aversion to doing things differently in the democratic system we have gotten used to. For example, how to introduce and accept new concepts, ideologies, and perspectives in a politicized discussion, one that is often focused on money and economics, but is in fact founded on a political power imbalance and a fear about the loss of power. This will be addressed in Part III. And the second contribution I make with regards to Inuit agency and policy comes from the idea of *home* that opens up a host of other ways of seeing what housing really means. The idea of *home* includes specific needs including a certain level of control, autonomy, as well as the need to build relations and a sense of belonging—thereby bringing together other visions of participation in housing. This is just one way that the idea of *home* encompasses many different aspects of housing and wellbeing. The question of the limitations of our normative democratic ideals will be addressed further in Part IV.

From the literature on housing and health, we see that accurate and culturally-relevant health research on Inuit housing has been in short supply. More data than ever

before is being gathered by Inuit organizations, through large scale health surveys designed and conducted by Nunavik bodies. And some university research teams are focusing more on Inuit health and socio-cultural determinants of health in relation to housing than ever before, such as through Mylene Riva's research team. This is a relatively new field in health research, which was until recently mainly concerned with the detrimental *consequences* of inadequate housing. The focus has not necessarily been about *why* the housing crisis has persisted for so long, though the results provide crucial data to justify why it must improve. Exciting new health research has explored aspects of *home* in health surveys making important connections between housing, health, wellbeing, and the Inuit relationship to the land such as by Perreault et al. 2020. And some of the new empirical data is feeding broader questions such as that posed by Desbiens (2017) who contemplated whether a new sense of place is being cultivated through the expansion of urban-type of planning in Nunavik, saying that:

> Même si la sédentarisation a modifié la territorialité inuite ..., c'est-à-dire la façon culturelle de vivre le territoire, le milieu bâti—et sa gouvernance—offrent potentiellement des ancrages identitaires et affectifs capables de lier les individus et la communauté au territoire, même si celui-ci est plus restraint (Desbiens 2017, 153).[46]

Research has started to flesh out the complex interconnections between sedentarization, identity, and deteriorating Inuit health and wellbeing showing that there are so many confounding factors at play, that simple, linear explanations of housing and wellbeing will never be sufficient. With the idea of *home* we can deepen our understanding of housing in

[46] English translation by DeepL.com: "Even if sedentarization has modified Inuit territoriality ... (i.e. the cultural way of living on the land) the built environment—and its governance—potentially offer identity and affective anchors capable of binding individuals and the community to the land, even if the latter is more restrictive."

policy-making to see how the territory and the built environment have the potential for creating new identities, meanings, and power relationships.

Only few studies overall have broached questions of the power dimensions at play in Inuit housing, and the Inuit-state relationship. Those that have looked at power dynamics, voice and participation, and the role of governments and policy-makers, have found that despite the ostensibly well-intentioned changes to some of the administrative and institutional arrangements related to housing (through devolution, for example), these have not, in fact, brought about more political power to Inuit. While overall, Inuit do get to "say" more than before (at new roundtables, committees, and opportunities for collaboration and input), they do not have *more of a say* in final decision-making.

What is missing in all of this is to find a new way for all those involved, most importantly for decision-makers, to understand what housing *is*, and what it does, or has the potential to do, for the wellbeing of Inuit and their communities. I suggest that one of the gaps in the housing literature is an examination of contending ideologies and different ontologies that are beset with a different set of values. Through my phronetic research investigation and the analysis of the status of values and interests, I will reveal assumptions upon which I believe housing policies are based, and I will look more closely at how western ideology is reliant on a set of power relationships that *prevents* the inclusion and depth of the meaning of *home*. Unpacking this can reveal the potential of *home* that I advocate.

My contribution will build on these critical understandings of the governments' failed attempts to create actual change in the housing outcomes. Housing has not been addressed as an issue in which the *very question* of self-determination, control, and power can be expressed. Both the house and the housing complex are spaces where the needs of self-

determination, control and power can be met for Inuit. But if there is no ethical and moral foundation for policy-making, then there is also no genuine care for the outcomes of the policy and how it actually affects the targeted population.

We have to look deeper, beyond the surface actions and words, to uncover underlying yet perceptible expressions of values, beliefs, norms, assumptions, and ideologies that drive the process of understanding, that create and maintain structures of power, that limit possible alternatives, and that create fear of change. With these pursuits, I will provide a new answer to the question of why the housing crisis has been so persistent, and offer ways forward. And the way I will get there is by applying a unique approach to my critical analysis of the housing sector in Nunavik, called phronetic research.

Chapter 2 – Theory and Methods: A Phronetic Research Approach

> ***If we are ever to reshape social relations, we must use theory to dig to the roots of our understandings, explore underlying reasoning, systems and structures.***
>
> *Virginia Eubanks 2012 (page 243)*

The purpose of my research is to provide an epistemological reformulation for housing that raises the discussion of Inuit housing to the level of a social justice issue that must be understood in a new way if things are going to change and respond better to Inuit housing needs and wellbeing. I argue that the way housing is managed in Nunavik is stuck in a hegemonic liberal modernist view of the world that is constituted by a colonial, paternalistic, imperial/racist, rational, scientific discourse. Even rights-based arguments that are often used to support social justice claims have limitations since they are part of a masculine liberal view about how society should look and function for the benefit of the individual. While important arguments, they leave no room for other viewpoints or other forms of knowledge. Moreover, the current narrative has the causes of the housing crisis pointed mainly at technical, logistical, and funding shortcomings, and therefore the pursuits for solutions are limited to those domains. While there is a crucial need for material improvement of housing conditions and supply in Nunavik, more care must be given to the relationship in which housing is negotiated, planned, designed, and built in order to respond more fully to the fact that housing is also a social issue, a health issue, an economic issue, a political issue, a cultural issue, and an emotional issue. It is part of the bigger Inuit-state relationship—a relationship in which housing is determined, and a relationship which is affected by housing outcomes.

The choices I have made with regards to finding an appropriate approach for answering the question as to why the housing crisis is so persistent must provide a way of digging into deeper questions beyond the surface or material causes that have been mainly identified in other research. I do this by grounding my approach alongside the shift found in housing studies, Indigenous studies, and critical policy studies, of rejecting the positivist tradition and keeping power front and center. To be fair, a lot of the research I surveyed has indeed looked at several other critical factors and causes of the ongoing housing crisis beyond the physical and material causes. Studies have shown that power between the state and Inuit appears to have remained unchanged despite the evolution of new structures in the Nunavik housing system. Investigations into ongoing power imbalances, rigid ideological beliefs about the nature of our Western society, and how social policy should respond to "needs" have been important contributions to our understanding about the current state of affairs. However, the research has also pointed to the powerful and tenacious role of Inuit agency with their steady level of involvement, the willingness to make use of the structures available to get their point across, the various strategies applied and barriers negotiated to access a greater level of equality and justice in the realm of housing. To build on that, a critical reinterpretation of the housing narrative must be written. In order to accomplish this, I examine *why* and *how* this systemic problem persists in order to reposition our picture of the northern housing system that we have. This will be done with a theoretical framework based on a feminist moral theory that upends the tenacious masculine rational understanding of society such as liberalism, that includes harmful and disingenuous assumptions about political relations, responsibilities, and truth. The approach maintains a critique of the political relationship of the northern housing sector in Nunavik, and it does this by analyzing power. This approach is an ethical

interrogation into power by drawing on two bodies of normative thinking: phronesis and the ethics of care, both of which have a close affinity to feminist thought.

The social sciences have struggled with the dichotomy in the research community between the different methodological approaches of positivism and interpretivism. Schram (2012) claims that we are moving out of this division and into a kind of "post-paradigmatic" state (Schram 2012, 22) into which phronetic research (phronesis) fits or has even influenced. By moving away from positivism, we are moving away from the tenet that social science research is about a search for an ultimate truth, or that it is a cumulative, linear process creating an ever-greater body of knowledge about our social world (Aalbers 2018, 194). Instead, Schram believes "we are now able to see how choosing one method of inquiry over another is not so much the critical issue as whether the research, however conducted, is designed to address the issues with which people are concerned" (Schram 2012, 23).

Critical policy studies is a social science field that has diverged from traditional policy studies due to its critique of the positivist conception of knowledge (Fischer et al. 2015, 1). The value of critical policy studies for my purpose is that it challenges the way policy-making in our modern world seems to be led by what Fischer et al. (2015) refer to as "a governing elite of technical experts – or technocracy – working as a neutral instrument on behalf of human progress" which is seen as a threat to practical knowledge and democracy. And critical policy studies challenge this by uncovering and rejecting underlying assumptions (Fischer et al. 2015, 1). The field of critical policy studies grew out of a concern about the power of these "unknown policy experts" that were influencing policy decisions that did not provide expected results for society. There was a crisis identified in society that "involved a 'crisis of values' that could be approached only through the

common understandings among different social actors interacting with one another" (Fischer et al. 2015, 4).

The geographer Manuel Aalbers has maintained that there has been a stronger positivist tendency in housing policy studies than perhaps formerly conceded. Esssentially, positivist housing policy analysis is bereft of "verstehen" (understanding). He says housing research requires "understanding the meaning of action from the actor's point of view" (Aalbers 2018, 194) because empirical research expands the realm of the knowable and "contributes to showing how we now know a little more about an even bigger unknown social world' (Aalbers 2018, 195). Aalbers (2018) advocates for theory to influence housing research and for researchers to position themselves ontologically and epistemologically (Aalbers 2018, 197). He wants us to "break out of the straightjacket of introduction-theory-methodology-results-discussion (in itself a mainstay of positivist science)" and instead be more open to explicitly (new) theoretical contributions. In this way, housing studies can be "radically open to different conceptualisations of the house, of home, of housing, of housing policy and of theories on housing" (Aalbers 2018, 196). "Policy-makers can define policy relevance, but housing researchers should also define it *independent from* what policy-makers see as relevant" (2018, 197). Moreover, he believes that housing research should influence other social scientists in order to demonstrate the relevance of housing studies. I agree and intend to offer new directions in Inuit housing studies as one of my contributions which is to integrate the idea of home into housing studies and engage with the concept as an epistemological reformulation of the Inuit housing question because a new foundational starting point is needed to placate the persistence of the housing crisis.

In this chapter, I present my theoretical foundation, explaining what has been defined as *phronetic* research, its basis, and its purpose. Then, I will introduce the ethics of

care as the overarching theoretical and ethical framework upon which I rely. The framework is necessary in order to bolster the ethical questioning and deliberating upon which *phronetic* research depends, and upon which a feminist view of the past and current situation can be understood and a future built. I will demonstrate how this approach can be complementary to some Indigenous research theory and methods, and especially how it is an appropriate and favourable approach for a non-Indigenous researcher as myself in my research on Inuit housing.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

This research is an interdisciplinary investigation with an incline towards political questions and power relations. It is positioned within the research fields of housing studies, Inuit-state relations, and policy studies, and I incorporate together ideas, research, and theories from philosophy, moral theory, Indigenous research theory, and a variety of social sciences, specifically political science and critical policy studies, cultural geography, and anthropology using a feminist lens. The historiographies of the social science fields reveal that they have all, at some point, traversed antiquated ideas about the "Other" and a contrived paradigm that idealizes Western knowledge. These same fields and the academic arena have gone through some meaningful changes towards the gradual decolonialization of their fields. Anthropology has grappled with its harmful contributions to the colonial project.[47] Political philosophy has long debated the values of individualism versus

[47] Cultural anthropology has a long history of working side by side with the imperial projects of colonizer states, often hired by governments to accompany multi-year expeditions, which often occurred in Arctic locations. However, there was a shift that happened at the beginning of the 20th century that can be traced back in large part to the influence of the American anthropologist, Franz Boas, and his work in the Arctic. The shift has even been referred to as the "Boas paradigm" which was a shift towards gathering empirical data with detailed descriptions and fieldwork (Edgar and Sedgwick 1999, 96). Franz Boas, renown as the "father" of anthropology, had travelled, studied languages, and interacted with locals, as well as relying on reports and journals from previous expeditioners in which he could identify errors after corroborating with his own

communitarianism through the ideas of justice, cultural difference, and universalism. Moral theory has been influenced in the last few decades by feminism, such as with the development of an ethics of care. And Indigenous research has become a whole field of its own, challenging all the others to consider earnestly *how* research is conducted, what *assumptions* are being made, and what power relations are being played out in the production of knowledge.

Anthropology, especially that conducted by Indigenous scholars, has thus provided us with new ways of thinking about cultural encounter and power relations. These intellectual developments in anthropology are important cues about what to keep in mind when writing about people involved in an encounter between different cultures. With the postcolonial turn, various social science disciplines, including anthropology, ethnography, and human geography have had to become more reflexive. They have had to come to terms with their complicity in empire, and have been forced into a complex critical methodological change which is now more explicitly receptive to ethical understanding. Even in ethnography, with the field of ethnographies of encounter, it focuses specifically on the relationships and connections of the encounter with "a spirit of inquiry that works against colonial legacies in the discipline by placing relational approaches to *power* at the center of ethnographic analysis" (Faier and Rofel 2014, 364). Similar attentiveness to these issues had already been promoted by anthropologist Ruth Benedict decades earlier. A

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experiences, as we can see in his ethnography, *The Central Eskimo* from 1888. His work was considered a modern approach to research for its era (Krupnik 2016). Marcel Mauss was a French anthropologist, student and nephew of Emile Durkheim, who had developed a comparative approach to anthropology. He had also started his career working in the field of "eskimology" writing the text *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo: A Study in Social Morphology* in 1905. Though his seminal text was *The Gift* in 1925, where his work made a theoretical contribution to anthropology and considered the political aspect of intercultural relations (Edgar and Sedgwick 1999, 95). Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead followed suit bringing new approaches and ideas to the field of cultural anthropology and new interpretations of culture. These are just some of the influential early names that worked towards bringing the field of anthropology out of the dark ages of active imperialism.

feminist in her own right, she challenged the researcher to consider his or her own positioning and assumptions. Throughout her life and career she explored the difficulties inherent in the study of other cultures and thus in the clash of cultures. Over 75 years ago, Benedict recognized that, "the study of comparative cultures [...] cannot flourish when men are so defensive about their own way of life that it appears to them to be by definition the sole solution to the world." In terms of the assets needed in a researcher, she said that, "[t]he systematic study of national differences requires a certain generosity as well as a tough-mindedness" (Benedict 2005, 15). She recognized the value of respecting difference (across cultures) and warned of the risks in what we might now call "universalisms." She admitted that this is a difficult task for those who "have staked their hopes on convincing people of every corner of the earth that all the differences between East and West, black and white, Christian and Mohammedan, are superficial and that all mankind is really like-minded." She insisted that "[t]he tough-minded are content that differences should exist. They *respect* differences. Their goal is a world *made safe* for differences" (Benedict 2005, 14–15 emphases mine). This is the ethical foundation upon which I envisage the idea of home as a project of social justice.

Indigenous scholars in anthropology have pushed the question of the researcher's reflexivity even further. Audra Simpson, a political anthropologist from the Mohawk nation at Kahnawà:ke, argued for the need to study an oppressed culture within the context of the dominant culture in order to "change a story that is always being told. [...] the story that settler-colonial nation-states tend to tell about themselves" (Simpson 2014, 177). Kim Tallbear, anthropologist and descendant of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, also turned her gaze toward the institutions of DNA research rather than towards the Indigenous nations that were experiencing negative effects of the new science

(Tallbear 2013).[48] Both of these scholars changed their foci in order to jolt us into understanding the potential for wide-ranging damage and harm that often remains hidden, or not hidden, as the case may be, within arguments of science and rational thinking.

The re-focus by Indigenous and feminist scholars in anthropology made me determined to write something that tells a new story, one in which the gaze is turned on the settler state and actors involved in the Inuit-state relationship—an analysis that would fundamentally challenge our assumptions upon which we express so-called truth and reality. It also requires that the focus be on the political relationship itself, on its points of conflict that I believe are the result of differences in ontologies, values, and knowledge—though I do not believe these are irreconcilable. Through a lens of feminist theory, one can better identify the underlying epistemological, ontological, ideological barriers in the political relationship. To properly contextualize the housing story, therefore, requires zeroing in on concrete policies and interpretations rather than making broad sweeping statements. *Phronetic* research addresses this need by requiring a focus on context and what it calls "situational ethics." Combined with the ethics of care, it makes it necessary to consider the personal, political, and global relevance and applicability of the concept of "caring relations." The following explains how these approaches will accomplish this goal in my narrative.

What is Phronesis and why I use a phronetic research approach

Phronetic research is an approach put forward by Danish planner and economic geographer Bent Flyvbjerg. It is based on Aristotle's concept of *phronesis*, the Greek word

[48] Tallbear's purpose of focusing on the institutions of DNA research was in order to reveal the imposing universals and Western norms of identity-making and beliefs about race in their promotion and conviction about the merits of blood and DNA ancestry. These ideals of Western scientific knowledge were reorganizing how Indigenous nations were latterly defining their identity, nationhood, and tribal belonging.

for "practical wisdom."[49] It challenges the normative essence of political science (Flyvbjerg 2001, 59) by offering a reflexive analysis of social values and power. This approach frames the argument I make in stitching together a broad range of interdisciplinary research on Inuit housing in Nunavik. It is important to point out that phronetic research is neither a theory, nor a method, per se. Nevertheless, Flyvbjerg offers methodological guidelines that he qualified as "cautionary indicators of direction" (2001, 129).

Phronetic research, as I mentioned, has its roots in Aristotle's concept of *phronesis*. Aristotle described a triad of knowledge that included: *episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis*. *Episteme* brought us the modern concepts of epistemology or how we can know what we know. *Techne*—a root word that is evident in the concepts of technology, technical, and technique—refers to the tools we use to know or make things. *Phronesis,* however*,* was not further developed, and no modern equivalent term or concept has ever been advanced in the last two millennia. The argument is that this type of knowledge has been swept aside in our pursuit of science and knowledge.[50] In reviving the merits of *phronesis* as an intellectual pursuit, a gap is filled, one that allows us to better understand the kind of intellectual work that is frequently accomplished in the social sciences.

In order to understand how they are distinct from each other, the three intellectual pursuits can be categorized as follows: *Episteme* is scientific knowledge. It concerns "universals and the production of knowledge which is invariable in time and space." It

[49] Phronetic research was proposed by Bent Flyvbjerg (2001) based on *phronesis* in response to the belief that the social sciences were at a critical point, even almost obsolete, because it could not meet the standards established in the physical sciences for quantitative empirical research. Critics had disagreed with Flyvbjerg's depiction of the extent to which social sciences were being sidelined or were actually at risk (see reviews of his 2001 book).

[50] It is not clear from Flyvbjerg whether this avoidance of phronetic-type of knowledge and research is a problem only in Western academic pursuits, or worldwide. To answer this would require a separate investigation into knowledge production through the centuries and from other philosophies (i.e. Are there other value-based, situational ethics-type research being done in other places that recognize a type of knowledge akin to phronesis?)

relies on analytical rationality (Flyvbjerg 2001, 55). Through the Enlightenment era, this type of scientific pursuit became an ideal in itself, producing knowledge that is believed to be eternal, universal, and context-independent. It is often still viewed as the more valuable, more legitimate, and the only authentic form of scientific knowledge. *Techne* and *phronesis* are distinct from this, and actually have more in common with each other. They are both understood as pragmatic, variable, and context-dependent types of knowledge. *Techne* is art and craft. It concerns the "application of technical knowledge and skills" and uses pragmatic instrumental rationality or "practical rationality" as described by Michel Foucault (2001, 56).

Phronesis, on the other hand, has not been categorized as a science nor as an art; it has generally been translated as "'prudence' or 'practical common sense'" (2001, 56) that relies on value-rationality. Flyvbjerg refers to this type of knowledge as *wisdom*, as in "practical wisdom." In other words, the person drawing on this type of knowledge knows "how to behave in each particular circumstance that can never be equated with or reduced to knowledge of general truths." The belief that there are different types of knowledge is not unique to Flyvbjerg's exploration of Aristotle. Other scholars, such as Ommer et al. (2008) had set up a kind of hierarchy between facts, data, information, knowledge, and finally, wisdom. They claimed knowledge is "ideas that, although they have been pondered at length, are still embedded in social institutions, structures, and cultures, and thus subject to the perceptions, misperceptions, limitations of understanding, biases, and ideologies of a specific society" (Ommer, Coward, and Parrish 2008, 21). There is uncertainty in *knowledge*, whereas *wisdom* contains the capacity to judge "rightly in matter relating to life

and conduct" (Ommer, Coward, and Parrish 2008, 22).[51] These authors believe that wisdom is essential for decision-making when those deciders, such as in policy-making, have to defend their decisions and cannot just use theoretical knowledge. They agree that science can give us the technical know-how, but that we also need to reflect on what is wrong, and "what we do not know". This is where ethics comes in.

For Aristotle, a society works best when all three intellectual virtues (*episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis*) are effectively employed through "science, art/crafts, and ethics" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 59–60). If the natural sciences take care of epistemic knowledge, then social science can have both, or either, a *techne* or *phronetic* goal. It is important to make clear which one is being pursued because a *techne* goal often employs an instrumental rationality that tackles "social, cultural, demographic, and administrative problems," whereas a *phronetic* goal uses value-rationality where there are "real problems with a material foundation that one can fight for or against" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 62). These are, of course, the very goals embedded in social justice issues. Moreover, it also has a stake in one's conduct (p.70), which is what then points to praxis. If one believes that human behaviour is not a result of merely "rule-governed acts," then it also cannot be reduced to predictive theory which is a central goal in the natural sciences. Thus, social and political problems, which are indeed a result of our human behaviour, need to be understood through context-dependent, practical knowledge.

Phronesis, then, is an ethical practice of knowledge that relies on the deliberation of a set of values geared toward praxis: in Flyvbjerg's words, it is "oriented towards action using practical value-rationality" (2001, 57). To understand what *phronesis* means in a research agenda, we must have guidance for the following things: 1) understanding how to consider

[51] This definition of wisdom comes from the Oxford Dictionary as cited in Ommer, et. al. 2008.

social and historical context in the analysis; 2) guidance on how to use one's judgment in an ethical way that is context-relevant, which is accomplished by working on understanding the situational ethics, and, I propose, by following an ethics of care; 3) knowledge of where and how to gain an understanding of the appropriate set of values upon which to proceed, which is only made possible by observing value-rational questions that Flyvbjerg has put forward; and 4) an analysis of power in a way that does not rely on universals or rules that one is prone to resort to. While "power" is a fraught term, my analysis will draw on some of Michel Foucault's later writings.

Phronetic social science is not focused on using specific types of data nor on a particular research method. Instead, it has the purpose of "producing research that can enhance phronesis by increasing understanding in specific contexts" (Schram 2012, 19) which is accomplished by enquiring "into the critical assessment of values, norms and structures of power and domination, and an understanding that the social world has a historical and narrative structure" (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 81). As such, this means that the result of phronetic research is itself a means towards social justice because with the tool of understanding of values there is a greater opportunity to engage in praxis and justice.

Using phronesis as a research approach, however, must rely on the trials and applications by other scholars because this is not a proscribed research method or tool for analysis. Discussions of other applications of phronetic research bring new ways of understanding the potential of this approach. The way that phronesis interacts with feminist thought was expounded upon in an applied research study by Virginia Eubanks (2012).[52]

[52] Eubanks (2012), working with a diverse group of marginalized women on the question of their access to technology, found that their values and needs expressed that having access to technology would not bring about justice nor make their lives better. A straight forward goal of the researcher was to "close the digital divide" for these low-income women. But the research led to their realization that the issues at hand was not a

Her research showed, through a feminist lens to interrogate the structures of power, that the real issues that the low-income women in her study were dealing with were not material access to services, but rather problems with access to justice, structural inequality, structural barriers that prevented them from being able to make decisions to improve their families' conditions, and media that defined them as lazy and unworthy which they had started internalizing in their identity. Through the phronetic feminist lens Eubanks could also better understand the privileged position of her own view of things and the assumptions upon which she had formulated her initial research question. These were insightful outcomes emphasizing agency, ethics, and the importance of justice. It was also the outcome of eight years of action-oriented work which is not a research method I have been able recreate. However, there are several unexpected areas of similarity between these themes and my research on Inuit housing. It seems that using a phronetic research approach can move beyond the material inquiry of "how to have more houses" to investigate instead: *how the lack of access to adequate housing is a signpost of barriers to justice, equality, and wellbeing*. It can also locate the disparities in power between Inuit and the state through a close reading of what Inuit are demanding in their policy papers, that can help uncover the assumptions and ideologies of state stakeholders that usually create the foundation of policy-making and thereby the basis of the Inuit-state relationship.

To apply *phronesis*, it is of utmost importance to respect the effects and

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lack of skills, but rather about "hidden inequalities of the information economy, the relationship between technology and state violence, and the role that information rights play in supporting or undercutting economic human rights" (Eubanks 2012, 232). Another revelation that the research brought up was the self-blame that a lot of these low-income women had felt, seeing many of their problems as individual failure. This was reinforced by the fact that community organizations tended to focus on the development of skills, job training, budgeting, and that the media tended to label people on welfare as "lazy, unintelligent and fraudulent" but the research helped them see their experiences "within larger political and economic developments" and that the things they were struggling with were in fact "the failures of a broken and dysfunctional social system" (Eubanks 2012, 235–36).

consequences of the specific context. Value-rationality relies on being aware of a common set of values relevant to the specific reference group to which a researcher refers (Flyvbjerg 2001, 130). The type of context that is most esteemed in phronetic research is a socially and historically conditioned context. However, it is not accomplished by simply pronouncing the historical events that came prior, which may or may not have influenced the present conditions. The research must integrate a body of knowledge that seeks to understand the relationships between the past and the present. In order to do that effectively the details are often more important than the bigger picture. It means that one must be willing to let go of "predefined elements," such as rules and universals, to allow the actual setting and particulars to come to the forefront. Despite shedding predetermined universals in the practice of value-rationality, it does not preclude the extrapolation of some generalizations from phronetic research. In fact, the belief is that the generalizations can be even more useful (practical) *because* they are based on concrete examples.

Because of this, Flyvbjerg indicates that the *choice* of study is key to the capacity to generalize from one's findings. A strategic case study selection is recommended in order to have "*the power of the good example*" behind any generalization (Flyvbjerg 2001, 77 original emphasis). What I have selected as my research subject is not a case study, but a critical policy analysis that is framed by the specific political and geographic region of Nunavik. This study of Inuit housing in Nunavik was chosen for three principal reasons. One is that the region is relatively under-studied compared to other Inuit regions especially compared to Nunavut which too often amongst settler scholars appears to stand in for the entire Inuit experience. Two, it is unique because it falls under the jurisdiction of a province (Quebec) that has identified itself as politically and culturally distinct from the rest of Canada. Because of this, there are complex relations between the national and provincial

levels of government that are consequential. Three, the Inuit of Nunavik are signatories of the first modern Indigenous-Canadian treaty, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), alongside Canada, Quebec, and Cree signatories. The impacts of the 1975 treaty loom large in all past and future policy and funding decisions in Nunavik. The JBNQA frames a central part of the historical, social, and political context of economic decisions, including housing. And yet, although this context may differ from the other Inuit territories in Canada (i.e., Nunatsiavut in Labrador, Nunavut Territory, and Inuvialiut in Northwest Territories), Inuit housing in Nunavik suffers from just as many, and often more, difficulties and shortages as these other Arctic and subarctic regions. Therefore, the realities on the ground and the political, social, and historical context must be closely examined. The result will provide an important contribution to the larger Inuit housing dilemma.

Situational ethics and ethics of care

If phronesis points toward ethics, how should the latter best be understood? The historical and social context must be key to the analysis (or critique) and it is based on a "situational ethics." Aristotle refers to this as "ethics in relation to social and political praxis, that is, the relationship you have to society when you act" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 55). Flyvbjerg maintains that the similarities between Aristotle's *phronesis* and Foucault's ethics are substantial, almost all-embracing. He says, "Foucault explicitly defines his ethics as the work involved in this type of 'thinking differently,' and he defines the ethical subject as the person carrying out such work with a view to creating new social forms" (2001, 112). The ethics of Foucault's philosophy can be summed up in the idea that one must not be willing

to deceive, even oneself.[53]

But what is a "situational ethics" that Flyvbjerg says is key to phronetic research? It is an applied ethics that has been described synonymously with contextualism (Flyvbjerg 2001, 130) and "context-dependent judgment" (2001, 136). It is thus an ethics that is not related to religion, civil law, or science (2001, 54), but runs counter to relativism *and* to foundationalism. It does not imply that there are no "norms" with which to ground the analysis. Rather, for Foucault "norms are based on historical and personal context, and they are shared with many people around the world. The norms cannot be given a universal grounding independent of those people and that context" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 100).

This is a good place to start, but in my opinion, Flyvbjerg does not sufficiently elaborate *how* to consider the role that situational ethics plays in an analysis and reinterpretation. Moreover, there is another problem that needs to be addressed. Flyvbjerg's reliance on Aristotle's philosophy means that ethics accompany the concept of the person as an *individual* (Held 2006, 52). This foundation requires a revision, particularly for thinking about applying *phronesis* in an Indigenous research context. While there are various alternative and subversive theories in Western philosophy that do not hinge on the so-called universal value of "the individual," it is in many, if not most, Indigenous ontologies that the person as a *relational being* comprises the idea of the self (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012). Respectively, Inuit ways of seeing place central importance on social relationships and mutual interdependence. So, while Foucault may have extended his ethical equilibrium to include one's responsibility towards society, for my purpose of

[53] There is a quotation on which this claim is based found in Paul Rabinow's "Introduction" to *Michel Foucault: Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth.* He explains that Foucault's precursor was clearly Nietzsche, who had said that the moral ground is not attained when we decide we cannot deceive others, but rather, when we recognize and practice a "will to truth" that can be summed up in the statement: "I will not deceive, even myself" (Rabinow 1997, xxx).

analyzing the relations between "peoples," in the political context, I extend the phronetic approach to include the "ethics of care" as advanced by philosopher Virginia Held in which she describes the need for "caring relations." In a feminist ethics of care, "persons are seen as 'relational,'" rather than as the self-sufficient individuals of traditional liberal theory" (Held 2006, 119) which provides a basis for inter-cultural ethics.

The ethics of care is a feminist approach to morality that has been called a "moral epistemology" (Held 2006, 11). It challenges "the image of the independent, autonomous, rational individual" through a recognition that real relations and mutual dependence are central to human life (2006, 13 and 119). Its fundamental basis "appeals to the universal experience of caring. Every conscious human being has been cared for as a child and can see the value in the care that shaped him or her; every thinking person can recognize the moral worth of the caring relations that gave him or her a future. The ethics of care builds on experience that all persons share, though they have often been unaware of its embedded values and implications"[54] (Held 2006, 21). Like *phronesis*, the ethics of care rejects abstraction, generality, and rule-worship, reason over emotion, and independence over mutual interdependence; "it conflicts with the requirement usually made by moral theories that moral judgments be universalizeable" (Held 2006, 11). Held describes it as part of a "postpatriarchal society" and a practice that cannot be performed under male domination (Held 2006, 19), or any gendered hierarchy that one presumes.

The ethics of care is thus both a value and a practice. The value of care has been considered by many feminist scholars who have explored how care and caring relations

[54] I insert here my only hesitation about the foundational tenet of the ethics of care claiming that we all have a universal experience of care. This must be viewed as an ideal. Although I am sure there can be supportive claims explaining that even if a parent does not form the caring relationship, there must have been *someone* in the child's life that helped bring him or her into adulthood. It is also in this case difficult to know how much each person shares in common with another. The potential of this shared understanding is nevertheless a stimulating foundation for discourse ethics and dialogue and recognition of our mutual interdependence.

have "the capacity to shape new *persons* with ever more advanced understandings of culture and society" (Held 2006, 32 original emphasis). Joan Tronto consigns care to a political concept that could "change our sense of political goals and provide us with additional ways to think politically and strategically" (author Tronto quoted in Held 2006, 130). Likewise, Held claims that "the ethics of care as it has developed is most certainly not limited to the sphere of family and personal relations. When its social and political implications are understood, it is a radical ethic calling for a profound restructuring of society. And it has the resources for dealing with power and violence" (Held 2006, 19).

Selma Sevenhuijsen advocates for the ability to listen, for the "ability and willingness to 'see' and to 'hear' needs, and to take responsibility for these needs being met" (author Sevenhuijsen quoted in Held 2006, 34). The ethics of care therefore also challenges conventional ideas of justice because situational contextualized "care" can sometimes override or even conflict with universal rules of justice. Other tensions that the ethics of care has the potential to intensify are for example the strain between "friendship and impartiality" and "loyalty and universality." It allows for, and values, emotions. For example, anger can motivate a reinterpretation of a wrong in an unjust situation (Held 2006, 10–11). Similarly, rights are given second seat in an ethics of care. Human rights are not ignored, but in a reinterpretation of government, we may see government as much more than the protector of rights (Held 2006, 119).

Held takes this idea one step further by looking at values. She broaches the issues of both the government's value of protecting individual citizens (through rights), and the government's value it places on market norms (by seeing society through an economic lens). She says that "from the point of view of the ethics of care we can say that fairness and the maximizing of individual utility should not be our only or always our overriding moral

consideration" (Held 2006, 120). She says:

> If we understand care as an important value and framework of interpretation for government as well as for the sphere of the personal, we will approach many of the issues involved in the relation between government and the economy differently from those for whom government should be only the protector of rights or the maximize of preference satisfaction. We can see how government should foster caring connections between persons and limits on the markets that undermine them (Held 2006, 119).

This is one of the more compelling parts about the ethics of care. It is that practices of interdependence and the wellbeing *of the relation* go beyond the personal, the family, and the household: interdependence and wellbeing extend to society and its political structures.[55] And further, Held argues, when the wellbeing of the relation is extended to political, social, legal institutions, it calls for the restructuring of those institutions (Held 2006, 130). The ethics of care is transformative. For my research, this type of understanding and perspective also buttresses the idea of *home* that I put forward in my final chapter by going far beyond the family and household levels that are often assumed to be the main focus of "home." Home likewise suggests the potential to transform the existing social and political structures and their assumptions that may be identified as injurious in the housing complex.

The ethics of care as Held has put forward also considers how care and justice work together. By putting more weight on understanding the *wellbeing of the relation*, rather than merely on the individuals within the relation, it challenges individualist notions of fairness, rights, and justice. The overarching argument in the ethics of care is that if we ignore the value and practice of care, we cannot be heading towards civil society. For the

[55] This is Virginia Held's particular contribution to the concept of ethics of care in her 2006 text *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global.* This view is the flip side of more familiar feminist arguments that prompt us to think about how public values of justice and equality should be integrated into the family and household level (Held 2006, 130).

purpose of my research this underlying understanding is key to analyzing, judging, and then transforming the relations upon which the housing emergency rests. Only then can we include a new vision for housing that can be framed in the idea of *home* which can include housing rights, Indigenous rights, and respect for the mutual interdependence enshrined in a caring relation between the state and Nunavimmiut.

With the ethics of care as the philosophical framework for the analysis of the Inuit-state relationship as it has been manifested in the housing crisis, I can deliberate on whether the behaviour of the state in policy-making is evidence of foils to care such as paternalism, discrimination, colonialism, or greed. Within an ethics of care, we can better understand the real harm of these beliefs and practices. Ethics of care offers guideposts for a method, rather than strict normative criteria. Nevertheless, Held has held up some of its intertwined values as "sensitivity, empathy, responsiveness, and taking responsibility" (Held 2006, 119) which I take to be conditions of engagement for my research agenda. I will also link these to the ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous people further on in this chapter.

Values and truth in phronetic research

Another key part of the phronetic research approach is the focus on values. Values provide normative standards against which actions are judged; they are more than empirical descriptions of practices as being either good or bad (Held 2006, 38). *Phronesis* concerns the analysis of values (Flyvbjerg 2001, 57). Phronetic research, therefore, "is to perform analyses and derive interpretations of the status of values and interests in societies or social organizations aimed at social change" (Flyvbjerg 2011b, 33). To accomplish this, one poses value-rational questions to explore new interpretations of situations and relations studied. Flyvbjerg (2001) casts three classic "Aristotelian" value-rational questions and also adds a

question about power.[56] These questions are the foundational questions that form the narrative I construct:

1. Where are we going?
2. Is it desirable?
3. What should be done?

\+ Who gains, who loses, and by which mechanisms of power?
(Flyvbjerg 2001, 130 and 145)

But how do we establish what has been determined as true from the outset? What matters and what does not matter? And how restricted are solutions due to the limits of those truths? Flyvbjerg once again relies on Foucault to unscramble the complexity in examining how "truth" plays out in economic and political battles. He requires us to consider "the types of discourse which society accepts and allows to operate as true; the mechanisms which make it possible to distinguish between true and false propositions; techniques and procedures regarded as valuable in the production of truth for determining the status for those who concern themselves with determining what is true" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 125–26). This is important because truth is attached to power, because debates do not revolve around who's claim is more true, but rather around "the *status* of truth and the economic and political role it plays" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 125 emphasis mine). Foucault suggests that most political problems can be pared down to the basic "problem of truth" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 126).

However, for my purposes, I have chosen to refer to what he calls "discourses" and "truths" by using a single simplified term that I find more directly depicts what I am trying to identify in my analysis: I call them assumptions, or *underlying assumptions*. These are beliefs that are taken as "truths." They are present in discussions, generally applied unquestioningly as a predetermination for what is of value and true for everyone involved.

[56] I will explain how I address the question of power in my research in the next section.

That includes determining what is valuable and true for others. However, they can be probed with simple questions I will pose, such as: "Upon which assumptions are you basing that claim?" and; "What assumptions are you making about me and what you think is valuable to me when you make that statement?" Left undisclosed, these assumptions create the very limits and barriers within a dialogue or debate that bind the statements made, frame the parameters of discussions, govern decisions, silence other voices, perspectives, and knowledge, and finally restrict solutions, agreements, and programs.

Furthermore, locating these underlying assumptions, or identifying omissions, can help in understanding the values inherent in certain statements. When uncovering these assumptions being made by certain players in power, it can also be understood as part of the mechanism for maintaining power. These include assumptions made about the values of other stakeholders involved, or assumptions about the kinds of structures that apply and are taken for granted as appropriate, such as certain governing structures or consultation processes, which limit the policies, and assumptions about what kind of outcomes these policies or strategies will have on the stakeholders.

Guiding questions in an analysis of power

As already intimated, the question of power will be at the center of my analysis.[57] Flyvbjerg (2001) had incorporated the question of power into the list of basic value-based questions (i.e., who gains, who loses, and by which mechanisms of power?). It demands the exploration and deliberation about who is leading and guiding discussions, who benefits, and moreover, *how* this is accomplished. Foucault argues that analysis needs to challenge

[57] Placing power at the center of phronetic research is the main component that Bent Flyvbjerg contributed in what he considers a necessary contemporary elaboration of how Aristotle's concept of *phronesis* can contribute to social science and specifically political science research today.

abuses of power,[58] and Flyvbjerg accepts this approach as part of phronetic research. He says, "any form of government – pluralist or totalitarian – must be subjected to analysis and critique based on a will not to be dominated, on voicing concerns in public, and on withholding consent about anything that appears to be unacceptable" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 100). The ethics of care that frames my analytical approach is likewise a critique of domination (Held 2006, 55).

But what do I mean when I use the word "power" in my analysis of a political relationship? Power has been at the heart of debates in social sciences and critical theory. In phronetic research, a few central theories have come through, relying mainly on Foucault's concepts of power, which shows us that "power is inseparable from its effects" and "is only visible in its effects" (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 73 and 74). Discussions of power in phronetic research are also influenced by Steven Lukes and others. Lukes (2006) provided a three-dimensional view of power[59] which contrasts with liberal views, but positions power as "prohibitory, negative and restrictive" (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 70), whereas Flyvbjerg sees power as productive, in line with Foucault's concept. Lukes qualified hegemonic power saying that it is confined in the behavioural characteristics of organizations, not in the state of mind of individuals, which he explains in the example that if people "'act as if they could improve their material conditions within the confines of capitalism' they are consenting to capitalism" (Lukes (2006) quoted in Clegg and Pitsis

[58] Foucault may have been accused of disallowing the concept of "abuse" in his concept of power (i.e. by Habermas), but he has been quoted using the expression "every abuse of power" (see Flyvbjerg footnote 66 p.185).

[59] A more radical view of power was offered by Steven Lukes in *Power: A Radical View* (1974). It is referred to a three-dimensional view of power cause it builds on prior conceptions that he calls one-dimensional view and two-dimensional view. One dimensional view was to see power as something observable, that happens between actors linked in a causal relationship where one is attempting to get the other to do something they would not otherwise do (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 68–69).

2012, 70).[60] In the field of critical policy studies there has been the same debate about the interpretation of power as summarized by Timothy Luke in the *Handbook of Critical Policy Studies* (Luke 2015, 151–67). I have relied on Flyvbjerg's description of power as a starting point, in order to pursue a phronetic research approach. He defines power with a six-part characterisation, as follows:

> (1) Power is seen as productive and positive and not only as restrictive and negative.
> (2) Power is viewed as a dense net of omnipresent relations and not only as localized in 'centers' and institutions, or as an entity one can 'possess.'
> (3) The concept of power is seen as ultradynamic, power is not only something one appropriates, but also something one reappropriates and exercises in a constant back-and-forth movement in relations of strength, tactics, and strategies.
> (4) Knowledge of power, truth and power, rationality and power are analytically inseparable from each other; power produces knowledge, and knowledge produces power.
> (5) The central question is how power is exercised, and not only who has power, and why they have it; the focus is on process in addition to structure.
> (6) Power is studied with a point of departure in small questions, 'flat and empirical,' not only, nor primarily, with a point of departure in 'big questions'" (2001, 131–32).

In order to engage in the work of revealing and reinterpreting power relations in any given

[60] I would like to clarify that I do not think of this description and example of hegemony as a precursor to an often linked idea from Marx about the dominated having a "false consciousness." This idea implies that people are not even able to know their own interests, which is a theoretical position that also assumes that someone else looking in knows what their "real" interests would be if they were not so blinded by dominance (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 70). Moreover, this would come too close, in my opinion, to another theory that suggests Indigenous people have adopted a kind of "internalized colonialism." This has been theorized in part by various Indigenous scholars such as Taiaiake Alfred (2009) but especially by Glen Coulthard in *Red Skin White Masks* (2014). Referring to Franz Fanon's ideas in *Black Skin White Masks* (1952), Coulthard believes colonial systems of governance rely on a kind of "internalization" by the colonized, or what Fanon called a "psycho-affective" attachment to recognition by the colonizer (Coulthard 2014, 26 and 31). It is, in my opinion, an uncomfortable and inappropriate theoretical argument to make as a member of the white, middle-class, settler population. To be further discussed, it must be deliberated by persons who identify as belonging to a group that has been colonized. Moreover, in my study, I am not analyzing the identity or source of the positions Inuit have taken in the policy context. And lastly, if there are signs of Inuit acquiescing to, even adopting, dominant values, ideologies, or identities (such as capitalism) it is, in my opinion, often caused not by passiveness or unconscious action, but agreeing and finding solutions during crisis, emergency conditions (such as in housing) and/or due to an understanding that one either must compromise or leave empty handed (as in the way negotiations are often conducted under pressure and time constraints), and is therefore, not the same as internalized colonialism.

situation, Flyvbjerg (2001) poses the following questions about power and its outcomes:

> Who gains, and who loses? Through what kinds of power relations? What possibilities are available to change existing power relations? And is it desirable to do so? Of what kinds of power relations are those asking these questions themselves a part? [...and] What 'governmental rationalities' are at work when those who govern govern?" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 131).[61]

The goal in phronetic research is to reinterpret what is going on in terms of ethics, and to suggest alternatives so that future actions (i.e., praxis) can occur in new ways. The goal is not to replace existing power-players with new players who will recreate the same dominant or unequal patterns in the same institutions, government, or groups studied. This parallels feminist critiques of some versions of the concepts of equality and equal rights in that the goal is not to simply replace the positions men have upheld with women in those same positions. It is to reconfigure and often topple the entire relationships of power (even if Foucault would not see this as possible, since there is always power).

Foucault sheds another light on the relationship between power and ethical conduct inside his concept of "governmentality." This "refers to the connection between power as the regulation of others and a relationship with oneself. In other words, government is the connection between ethics and politics. One governs one's own conduct, while government guides the conduct of others. Government is the conduct of conduct," as Foucault famously called it (Simons 1995, 36). Foucault elaborated that a relationship of power is "the relationship in which one wishes to direct the behavior of another" (Foucault 1987, 122), and relationships of power "can operate between individuals, in the bosom of the family, in an educational relationship, in the political body, etc." To put it mildly, the

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[61] I argue that these "government rationalities" that he refers to also parallel my idea that there are always "underlying assumptions" being made about what is apparently rational, normal, appropriate, civilized, and perhaps even universal, if not at least universal-*ized* for what people consider to be a "civilized" Western society – which we can assume we all strive towards being (sarcasm).

"analysis of relations of power constitutes a very complex field" (Foucault 1987, 114). While the analysis may be complex, the definition of power Foucault offers is relatively neutral in that it does not suggest that power relationships are "evil" or negative relationships. Rather than saying that power is an evil, Foucault insists that "power is strategic games" (Foucault 1987, 129). The purpose of the analysis of relationships of power is to determine how to "allow these games of power to be played with a minimum of domination" (Foucault 1987, 129).[62] He says, "I don't believe there can be a society without relations of power, if you understand them as means by which individuals try to conduct, to determine the behavior of others" (Foucault 1987, 129). Held (2006) likewise agrees that "differences of actual power are inevitable in public as well as in personal contexts" (Held 2006, 56).

This link between power and governance is one of the theoretical guides for me. By recognizing power, challenging it, and understanding how government is constituted by these "strategic games of power" I can move towards the essential question I want to tackle in the housing context which is first to understand better why the crisis is so persistent, and then to see ways in which housing could be governed in a better way—in an ethical way—that it would be more relevant to the people concerned, for Inuit, and for the settler state.

Held's ethics of care offers a way of evaluating relations, in this case political relations, in terms of whether they are "caring relations" (Held 2006, 55). Relations are about interdependence, or as Foucault says, they are relationship or games of power that are present in all societies. In that framing, Inuit-State affairs are indeed an interdependent

[62] This is also how Foucault says he differs slightly from Habermas because he does not believe there can be a "Utopia" where the absence of relationships of power can exist.

relationship; they are not a one-way formula of dependency.[63] Through the lens of caring, one can understand how "liberal ideas of self-sufficiency mask these facts of dependency and interdependence" (2006, 55). "Noticing interdependencies, rather than thinking only or largely in terms of independent individuals and their individual circumstances is one of the central aspects of an ethics of care" (2006, 53). Through the ethical lens of care we can evaluate relations in terms of trust (trust is inherently a relation) (Held 2006, 56), justice (Held 2006, 42), and by using the values of sensitivity, attentiveness, and responding to needs (Held 2006, 39) in order to care together for the mutual wellbeing of members and their environment in the interest of forming a social entity (2006, 43).

Therefore, seeing personal and political relationships of power in the Inuit-state relationship through both Foucault's understanding of power relationships and Held's ethics of care means that we can evaluate the governance and politics of housing within this Inuit-state relationship. Since the inevitable power relationships are about directing the behaviour of others, as Foucault claims, the "directing" must be done with a "minimum of domination." With the ethics of care promoted by Held, we can evaluate the relations of power by incorporating the concept of "caring relations" to establish what kind of values (e.g. justice, trust, responding to needs, sensitivity, openness, etc.) are being expressed in these encounters. This is where the phronetic approach, guided by value-rational questions and power-related "how" questions, will help escape from the circularity embodied in Foucault's otherwise important concept of power. Introducing an ethics of care to this encounter would do more than just reduce domination (expressed in behaviours such as

[63] At a minimum, I define the interdependence of the relationship between Inuit and the state in terms of the JBNQA which is an agreement that has formed a political, legal, economic, and social relationship and a bond. There are other venues that can also be explored for how this relationship reflects an interdependent relationship, such as sharing a joint history on the same territory, or managing the different layers of jurisdiction across this vast territory.

paternalistic, colonialist, or discriminatory ones), because care as described by Held requires reflection about the values of sensitivity, empathy,[64] responsiveness, and taking responsibility which inherently would reduce harm and improve the wellbeing of the relationship.

Lastly, in my analysis of power, it will be important not to divide arguments into "good" and "bad" categories such as saying there are "accepted and excluded discourses" or "dominant and dominated discourses" or "successful and fallacious discourses" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 123). Instead, I will turn to these more searching "how" question, which I argue are necessary to get at a deeper understanding of these complex relationships of power:

> What are the most immediate and the most local power relations operating, and how do they operate? How has the active exercise of power in the relations being investigated affected the possibilities for the further exercise of power, with the resulting reinforcement of certain power relations and the attenuation of others? How are power relations linked together, according to what logic and strategy? How have these relations made certain rationalities possible and others impossible, and how do the rationalities support or oppose the power relations? How can the games of power be played differently? (Flyvbjerg 2001, 123)

By posing these kinds of question in the housing discourse in Nunavik, I attempt to make clear that I am *not* redefining what Inuit want or need in terms of housing, because that is not my role nor my goal—it would run the inevitable risk of my own assumptions and biases leading the results, paradoxically undermining the ethical position I am trying to take. Instead, I want to uncover the social, political, cultural, and economic relationships of power that have been in place that have created imbalances in discussions, policies, and programs for Inuit housing which have in turn thwarted open dialogue, alternative

[64] It is important not to equate empathy with compassion or altruism that Held argues are "virtues" that can have negative effects (find ref pg). Empathy is a value that I believe can be seen as a mode of engagement.

solutions, Inuit knowledge, and ultimately, from Inuit taking the lead in their own affairs.[65] In Part I (Chapters 3 and 4) of this thesis on the history of Inuit-state relations will show that Nunavimmiut have been concerned and aware of imbalances in power and dominance in the Inuit-state relationship for decades, and even over a century. They know that the consequences of this have been dire for their wellbeing and for the housing outcomes in Nunavik.

Ethics, knowledge, and Indigenous research methodologies

Finally, this dissertation falls under the umbrella of Indigenous research. Therefore, it is imperative that I address Indigenous research methodologies and research ethics. In the following section, I identify four central components of Indigenous research as has been put forward by Indigenous scholars: research conducted in the interest of decolonization, research guided by ethical conduct, research built on an awareness of the production of knowledge, and research that responds to the call by Indigenous people and scholars for better collaborative work and equitable partnerships. Then I address how I have attempted to find research approaches and techniques for my study that respect these critical aspects of Indigenous research.

First of all, Indigenous research today is by definition a decolonial project. Research methodologies widely endorsed by Indigenous scholars for over twenty years require collaboration, partnership, and inclusion for research on Indigenous topics. These approaches have been passionately cultivated by Indigenous scholars and by some non-Indigenous scholars. Indigenous research methodologies, or "decolonizing methodologies"

[65] This implies a certain interpretation of that half of the relationship, the Inuit perspective, which I have claimed I am not focusing on. But, obviously there is a "crisis" because Inuit have told us there is. Therefore what I try to do instead of "interpret" that part of the relationship, is to listen to what Inuit have been saying about their demands and the harm being done, as they have presented in their policies, statements, and reports.

as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) calls them, should provoke "revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation" (Smith 2012, xii). Her work leans strongly in favour of collaboration and for research to be conducted by and with Indigenous people. However, the first half of her trailblazing text first published in 1999 had a broader appeal and message to *all* researchers. She engages most thoroughly with the causes, symptoms, consequences, and remedies of decolonization, describing it in the following ways and in connection to different levels of relationships. Decolonization, she writes, is "a process which engages with imperialism and colonialism at multiple levels" that for researchers involves "having a more critical understanding of the underlying assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices" (Smith 2012, 21). It also demands Indigenous researchers occupy alternate histories and transform colonized views of their history which requires critiquing, revisiting, and reclaiming Western holds on history (2012, 36). Even though, of course, only Indigenous people can "reclaim" history for themselves, I believe the sentiment upon which this call is based should apply to all researchers. This addresses how researchers can begin decolonizing their work.

Research agencies across Canada have endeavoured to follow suit adopting and evolving their ethical research standards and policies which is, of course, an ongoing process.[66] SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council) considers

[66] The process throughout the agencies has been gradual and progressive. In response to the growing awareness of unequal power relations between researchers and research subjects, the ACUNS, the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, was a leader in insisting for proper ethical standards as early as 1982 (Béatrice Collignon 2016). It introduced guidelines for conducting ethical research with humans, with an emphasis on research partnerships in its 1998 version (Castleden, Morgan, and Lamb 2012). The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) followed suit, in conjunction with the other two national funding bodies, publishing the first Tri-Council policy on ethical research with humans in 1998 (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC 1998). SSHRC took the initiative further in 2002, publishing a report stating that Aboriginal research was in the midst of a paradigm shift away from Canada's colonial legacy

"Aboriginal research" as research conducted *by* and *with* Aboriginal people (Government of Canada 2012). Yet, Indigenous scholars themselves mostly talk about Indigenous research methods in reference to their use *by* Indigenous scholars and students (Smith 2012; Wilson 2008; Absolon 2011). Although this can at times leave non-Indigenous scholars unsure of how to proceed (an uncertainty that I am sure is productive in forcing self-awareness and reflection about our motives), it is at the same time reassuring to read authors such as Margaret Kovach who speak to scholars of all backgrounds who seek to honour Indigenous knowledge systems because she believes there is a new "generation seeking ways to understand the world without harming it" (Kovach 2009, 11).

Ultimately, decolonization of knowledge and of politics must include the resolve that Indigenous people regain power over their own issues, needs, and solutions. Decolonization is a complex, involved, long-term process in which all of society should engage. But overall, decolonization in research primarily requires a reframing of relationships. To do so, it requires that research methods attend to the importance of relationships (Wilson 2008; Kovach 2009; Smith 2012). It must also deliberate on the real consequences of the long political history of Indigenous-state relations. In terms of the

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towards an Aboriginal paradigm "emphasizing the theme of decolonizing research and connected directly to Indigenous knowledge and community needs" (SSHRC, McNaughton, and Rock 2002, 15). The National Aboriginal Health Organization addressed the issue of knowledge misappropriation and cultural misrepresentation by designing the OCAP principles: "ownership, control, access, and possession" to foster community empowerment (Castleden, Morgan, and Lamb 2012, 165). Then in 2010 (and updated again in 2014), the Tri-Council policy was revised to include Chapter 9 specifically addressing research involving Aboriginal peoples in Canada, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC 2014). It provided a framework for ethical conduct of research involving Indigenous peoples that was intended to be a continually evolving policy to respond to the ongoing efforts of Indigenous people and communities to manage and preserve their collective knowledge (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC 2014, 109). Different funding agencies have offered slightly different frameworks for ethical principles of research. For example, the four R's are often mentioned: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility. And recurring themes in Indigenous research ethics are: protection, participation, and partnership (Ball and Janyst 2008, 34). In the meantime, Indigenous communities and nations have started writing down their own ethical codes of conduct for research to ensure their own checks and balances when researchers approach them (Castleden, Morgan, and Lamb 2012).

larger decolonizing project of settler society, Smith (2012) explains that decolonization is "the formal process of handing over the instruments of government, [which] is now recognized as a long-term process involving bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power" (Smith 2012, 101). Decolonization is also what is needed for the goals of self-determination. Self-determination in a research agenda can become a goal of social justice "expressed through and across a wide range of psychological social, cultural and economic terrains." It involves transformation, healing, and mobilization (Smith 2012, 120).

Partnerships, collaborative research, and co-production of knowledge are research ideals that have, in innumerable cases, been welcomed and which have produced meaningful work and important outcomes. However, authors de Leeuw et.al. (2012) have brought up concerns regarding the ways these approaches are being framed as a "best practices." It may shut down critique and entrench certain limited types of research approaches, that they argue may not be appropriate for all circumstances (de Leeuw, Cameron, and Greenwood 2012, 191). For example, guidelines for research with Inuit communities suggest that there are situations whereby certain levels of community involvement may not be appropriate or respectful depending on the time commitment required and the interest in the project by community members (ITK and NRI 2006). De Leeuw et. al. (2012) also warn against insensitivity and disturbing families during times of crisis and tragedy (de Leeuw, Cameron, and Greenwood 2012, 187). The issue surrounding the desire to identify best practices is part of the ongoing tendency by Western researchers to want a level of certainty and methodological clarity in order to continue their academic pursuits. The ethical dilemma raised comes from the complexity of fulfilling what are supposed to be institutional and university ethical guidelines that respond to demands

by Indigenous scholars, whereas in practice the research can place a burden on the Indigenous communities themselves, once again imposing Western needs over the immediate needs of the community.

In addition to some of these dilemmas regarding participatory research mentioned above, I dare say that there is work that needs to be done on the part of analytical, theoretical, and documentary research that may not have to be participatory *at the initial stages*. I suggest that this kind of work can provide the foundation for critically important future collaborative work, further analysis, and engagement at the local community level. The question I have posed myself is: How can this type of analytical documentary historical work, that is the subject of my dissertation, be conducted ethically if it is not in partnership with the community? What kind of guidance is there for conducting historical, analytical, and theoretical work that contributes to a small part of the larger decolonizing project? While it has been argued that no method can actually guarantee decolonization (de Leeuw, Cameron, and Greenwood 2012), there are obviously more ideal and less ideal approaches.

One partial response I can provide to address the potential problems in my research is related to the subject I have chosen. While the topic is Inuit housing in Nunavik, I have chosen to place my attention on the white, Euro-Canadian, government stakeholders and decision-makers. I centre my critique on their statements, claims, decisions, structures, and use of knowledge in the policy-making process. While this is indeed a story of encounter, where Inuit and government meet, I have refused to "explain" Inuit wishes, desires, perspectives, or worldviews. The analysis is thus somewhat (and unavoidably) one-sided, though it is influenced by prior research conducted with Inuit and Indigenous communities on issues of homelessness and on housing, and it relies heavily on texts and commentary

about the politics of the relations written by Inuit leaders. The question of "how" I will go about my analysis of this subject was addressed through my description of the phronetic research approach. The framework based on ethics and a focus on caring for the relationship, and provides a new rigorous critical inquiry into the relationships of power.

Another response to the question of decolonization is about the use of an approach based on feminist thought, even if it is borne out of the Western academic institution. Indigenous scholars Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (2014) believe there are schools of thought that likely have compatible intellectual and political objectives that could contribute to the decolonization of knowledge and research. They suggest that Marxist, feminist, queer, and postcolonial theories would likely provide the most compatible avenues (Simpson and Smith 2014). Shawn Wilson, a Cree scholar from Manitoba, also agrees that some Western theory and methods overlap with the Indigenous research paradigm such as feminist theory, relational psychology, and in PAR (participatory action research) methods (Wilson 2008, 16). And Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) states that feminist and critical methodologies have informed Indigenous scholars and methods (Smith 2012, 4). Smith strongly promotes the need for praxis in the goal of systemic change (Smith 2012, xiii).

Virginia Held's theory of ethics of care is also firmly placed as a critique of dominant views of society. Likewise, I believe that Foucault's approach[67] to analyzing relationships of power has potential to be compatible. It allows for the analysis of the relationship between institutions that represent a people, and the examination, even delegitimization, of institutional structures, the outcome of which has the potential to reveal and unravel the persistence of dominance in the housing complex.

[67] Michel Foucault has been referred to as a structuralist or a post-modernist, but he himself had rejected these labels.

Finally, one of my goals is to better understand the way knowledge in the housing policy context is valued and how that stimulates the outcomes in the political, social and economic decisions that are made. Indigenous research methodologies are concerned with this same general question about the valuation of knowledge. I believe, as scholar Fikret Berkes has stated, that "knowledge is contingent upon being formed, validated and adapted to changing circumstances" (Berkes 2009, 153). This is his view of the co-production of knowledge. While my research comprises a stage that has not yet actively involved Inuit participants, it remains part of a larger process in the production of knowledge, putting together the groundwork and contextualization of the history and politics of housing, in order for it to become a (hopefully) useful body of work to feed into the other phases that would require collaborative research on housing.

In summary, I would like to return to the way the various methods and perspectives I have presented here actually overlap and provide a complementary foundation for critique. They all have recognized that there is much more to knowing than scientific inquiry can provide. Knowledge is also not the same as searching for universals or "truth." Knowledge is a uniquely human value and practice that has been explored, theorized, and categorized for millennia. Aristotle differentiated between *episteme*, *techne*, and *phronesis* and emphasized the importance and value of all three types of knowledge. Held's philosophy differentiates itself from scientific knowledge by locating "the conscious moral agent" (Held 2006, 73) which I argue is essentially illuminating a different kind of knowledge, one that can reveal the potential for humans to find the emotions that inform our knowledge in order to practice care. Foucault, in his infinite inquiry into the workings of power has had to ask: "How are we constituted as subjects of our own knowledge? How are we constituted as subjects who exercise or submit to power relations? How are we constituted as moral

subjects of our own actions?" These questions of his are answered through analyses of the interconnection between what he calls "the axis of knowledge, the axis of power, [and] the axis of ethics" (Foucault 1997, 318). Shawn Wilson explains knowledge in relation to research paradigms. For him, a research paradigm is a set of "underlying beliefs or assumptions upon which research is based" that consists of "the interrelated concepts of ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology" (Wilson 2008, 33). Axiology, Wilson says, is the ethics and morals that *guide* the research. Again, we are dealing with a concept of a type of knowledge that is based on ethics about how to behave. These philosophies and research approaches show that the relationship between what we believe, how we know, and how we behave are deeply and dialectically related to each other. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) wrote a seminal text with vast insights into the problems with Western knowledge system, beliefs, truths, and the colonizing effects these have had on Indigenous populations around the world. Her call to decolonize knowledge is to draw on our ethical responsibility to discredit the past classification and framing of knowledge that has given it a (false) authority on truth (Smith 2012, 70). I contend that the similarities between Indigenous research methodologies and the feminist theory of knowledge[68] and critical methods I have chosen are significant and expedient for writing a critical reinterpretation of the existing housing story that can fulfill a few of the demands from Indigenous research approaches.

Knowledge is a dynamic process, and this research is a process of knowledge

[68] Other feminist theories of knowledge that I could include would be Donna Haraway's concept of "situated knowledges" that expand the need for knowledge to be contextualized, reflexive, and transformative (not her words). She says "situated knowledges are particularly powerful tools to produce maps of consciousness for people who have been inscribed within the marked categories of race and sex that have been so exuberantly produced in the histories of masculinist, racist, and colonialist dominations. Situated knowledges are always *marked* knowledges; they are re-markings, reorientatings, of the great maps that globalized the heterogeneous body of the world in the history of masculinist capitalism and colonialism" (Haraway 1991, 111).

production. It is this *process* that I want to focus on, rather than viewing the outcome as knowledge *content*. This dissertation is not meant to be a final text on the subject. Wilson (2008) says that ownership of knowledge is based on the belief that knowledge belongs to the cosmos to which we belong, and it is a connection to everyone and everything in the world, and in which we are just the interpreters (Wilson 2008, 38). The *phronetic* approach acknowledges that the purpose of a narrative and reinterpretation is to provide the best argument one can provide *for now*, until a better interpretation comes along (Flyvbjerg 2011a, 36). With the foundation of this story of housing in Nunavik, and by considering the idea of *home* as a future direction that I put forward in my final chapter, many new interpretations and solutions can be derived in future dialogues with and by Nunavimmiut to identify their own priorities for housing to increase their wellbeing.

Methods

The form of my research is a narrative analysis. Flyvbjerg says a good narrative should not leave the reader asking "So what?" because "the narrative has already supplied the answer before the question is asked. The narrative itself is the answer"(Flyvbjerg 2001, 136). It is worth noting that he acknowledges that no one is wise enough to provide final or complete answers to the four value-rational questions, one can only create partial answers to the questions (Flyvbjerg 2001, 61) and therefore, the goal of such a narrative is just to offer a new "better" interpretation based on claims of validity.

My data set: documents consulted

As the phronetic approach endorses, for historical studies, materials are found in either "archives, annals, and individual documents" (Flyvbjerg 2001, 133) with the goal of getting "close to reality," which Foucault described and called a " *Wirkliche Historie* (real

history)" (2001, 133). Bent Flyvberg's phronetic research investigating planning in the city of Aalborg, was a project that spanned years creating a narrative based on a "dedicated empirical enquiry in official documents, media reports, unofficial enquiries, surveys and whatever sources of information could be accessed" (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 67). My research brings forward examples from the past that demonstrate the longevity and recurrence of the problem I am describing today because "the century-long view [can] allow for the influence on current practices of traditions with long historical roots." (Flyvbjerg 2001, 137). The social and historical context is part of the larger narrative of what I refer to as a dialogue between Inuit and the state, or between Inuit institutions and state departments—each elected as the governing structures to represent and find answers for the people's rights and needs.

In terms of the breadth of policies that I have chosen to look at, I am influenced by the field of both housing studies and Inuit studies. Aalbers (2018) makes a distinction between two different kinds of policies that are relevant to housing studies: "*housing policies defined as such* and *de facto housing policies*" though he admits that there is no clear limit as to how wide the reach of "de facto housing policies" might span (Aalbers 2018, 195). I have defined a set of policies that I believe have relatively direct consequences on housing outcomes in Canada's Arctic and sub-Arctic, and therefore many of the policies I have chosen, such as northern development policies, homelessness policies, or poverty reduction policies, I will call "*de facto* housing policies." Also, because I am looking specifically at how housing policies affect Inuit and how the Inuit-state relationship affects housing, I also include policies related to Canada's and Quebec's Indigenous policies and strategies, as well as Inuit-state agreements and accords because they likewise have an effect

on housing outcomes in Nunavik. For a list of documents consulted please refer to Appendix A.

I have selected only publicly available documents. These represent the public face of the institutions involved in housing. Their statements and content are subject to public scrutiny and therefore, I believe, they are carefully written to present a tone that speaks to their public. This could mean that they, both, include wording and statements that are superfluous to the content of the policy in order to smooth out the message (in order to "spin" the contents for public appeal and agreement), or omit explaining certain realities or issues or shortcomings in order to avoid criticism or responsibility. This makes the public document an interesting object of examination, giving me a chance to read the tone and implications of the requests and of the promises actually included—I attempt to read the message that is intended for the public, the image the institution is trying to maintain and promote. And I do this by interpreting these messages as an expression of their values as well as unpacking evidence of their underlying assumptions (i.e. what is said and what is not being said). This is the public demonstration of power that they are assuming. The documents sourced have been grouped into three categories: federal institutions, provincial institutions, and Nunavik institutions and the national Inuit association.

Nunavik and Inuit perspectives:

For the perspective from Inuit of Nunavik, I have consulted public statements, consultations documents, research reports, media, and Inuit organizations' annual reports and newsletters. These include the annual reports from Makivik Corporation, the Kativik Regional Government, the JBNQA. This also includes Parnasimautik report, the Plan Nunavik, the declaration of Inuit principles, and submissions by Inuit organizations to governments during policy consultation processes.

Regarding the relationship between Inuit and Canada, I refer to reports, submissions by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and agreements and partnerships made between Canada and ITK in relation to the national housing strategy and to the Inuit-Crown relationship.

Federal:

Federal policies that directly address housing in Canada, and specific policies addressing Arctic and northern development, and federal policies that address Canada's relationship with Indigenous people in general, and with Inuit in particular, and finally other policies that have less direct connection to housing construction, but relate to quality of life and Inuit wellbeing, such as homelessness policies, poverty reduction, seniors, planning, etc. Policies in my data source include nation-wide strategies and action plans, because these are the expression of policy. Some of the supporting documents that I also look at are reports and research conducted by other state institutions that I believe contribute to government intentions and understanding, such as the Senate report on Inuit housing (2017), the Royal Commission on Aborigianl Peoples (1996), and JBNQA. I also look at partnership agreements that relate to the evolving status of the relationship between Canada and Inuit itself and the commitments made to each other, as well as funding agreements that touch on housing construction in Nunavik or funding agreements regarding other forms of support connected to quality of life such as community development and northern development. I look at policies and partnership agreements listed above from 2010 to the present (2022). Sometimes I have included older iterations of similar government commitments and actions to provide context for subsequent iteration, especially in terms of the evolution of ideas and changes in the state approaches and values. And in some cases, there are agreements and reports that were produced prior to 2010 that are still very pertinent sources revealing information and recommendations (such as in

RCAP), or establishing the legally-binding condition of the current relationship (such as in JBNQA).

Provincial:

The same types of documents have been consulted from the provincial level to analyze the housing relationship and the political relationship between Quebec and the Nunavimmiut. For the provincial perspective, I haven examined the annual reports of the Société d'habitation du Québec since it the body tasked with housing in the province. It is a way of establishing how the Quebec government reports on housing programs, funding, and outcomes in the province, including Nunavik.

I have included Inuit perspective as seen through documents produced by Indigenous and Inuit organizations. This is arguably a limiting factor in research addressing Inuit issues; There is a valid argument about the limited degree with which Inuit organizations can and do represent all Inuit,[69] or even "every day" Inuit. It is a criticism that sometimes comes from accusations towards Inuit leaders, who although in positions of power through elections, are not always seen to be representative or properly representing Nunavimmiut. A second critique might be that my data solely relies on the written word, whereas experience, conversations, and oral histories are invaluable sources of knowledge that align with Indigenous research methods.

However, I chose this data set for three reasons: 1) Indigenous and Inuit official statements, reports, and publications represent a certain level of agreement and support from a significant percentage of the population, by the supporters of the organizations that

[69] For example, Janet Tamalik McGrath (2018), who presented a new conceptual framework called the "Qaggiq Model" rooted in Inuktut methodology, said that she has "observed a disconnect between the individual and community realm and that of the current institutions in the North" (McGrath 2018, 197) . This is not the only disconnect observed by Inuit scholars and community members, there is also critique of what Inuit have referred to as an "Inuit elite" that are not properly representing the interests of all Inuit.

Nunavik beneficiaries see as their representatives, spokespersons, or negotiators; 2) the documents from Inuit organizations frequently include direct quotes by Inuit leaders or community members which brings their voice and opinions forward; 3) these documents are usually produced through an elaborate process that can include meetings, negotiations, consultations with community members, surveys, research and analysis of the issues being addressed; they are often written by more than one author; and they have been reviewed, edited, and verified by others in the organization prior to publishing, which arguably affords them a perspective representative of a number of Inuit;[70] 4) the documents also reflects a kind of "conversation" between Inuit organizations and governments, in which position papers, consultations, reports, and policies are worked out in writing and over time; and 5) the documents represent, at a minimum, the *official* positions that display the intentions, promises, and views of both Inuit and governments, if not the views of *all* individual Nunavimmiut.

Finally, in order to start answering the essential questions of the phronetic research approach and the "how" questions of power, I will treat the documents as follows. I will:

- establish the organization that produced it and what processes and consultations were involved;
- explain why I have identified this policy as relevant to Inuit housing as a "*de facto* housing policy";
- establish whether it is a new policy or a renewal, and compare changes;

[70] I cannot make a full comparison of the value between interview data and documentary data, but as an argument in my favour, one might say that interview data can sometimes merely represent the opinions or thoughts of a single individual at one particular point in time, and by someone who may not have been given the time to reflect on the questions, conversations, or data, and who may have responded very differently on another day. Although qualitative type of data ideally through collaborative research methods, and through interviews or observation is highly valued, sought after, and is seen as the essence of qualitative social science research in certain fields such as human geography, anthropology, and sociology, to name a few, it is often just a snapshot in time, or a collection of many spontaneous snapshots in time, rather than being necessarily representative of a larger view or interpretation of events or positions. I propose that there is value in both types of qualitative data analysis.

- identify what appears as the driving force that lead to the creation of the policy, strategic plan, or action plan. I refer to this as "the impetus" for developing policy (what conditions changed? what societal need was it designed to answer?)

- establish the overall approach that was taken to answer the above "need";

- establish (in the case of document produced by non-Inuit institutions) whether and how Indigenous or Inuit issues are referred to or integrated into the design of the policy or strategy;

- explore if the concept of wellbeing is used, in what context, what kind of associations, promises, assurances, descriptions, or demands are being made in relation to wellbeing in order to uncover assumptions about how housing creates wellbeing, and about what wellbeing means for Inuit;

- place the policies and reports produced by all three categories (federal, provincial, Nunavik and Inuit) into a chronological order (in as much as is possible) to establish what I refer to as a kind of dialogue between institutions, players, peoples that are in a relationship of ongoing negotiation, tension, and partnership; and,

- analyze the quality and responsive of this "dialogue" in terms of definitions, actions, promises, and what this tells us in terms of power, ideologies, the relationship, trust, etc.

Chapter 2 Summary

I close with Kovach's words encouraging non-Indigenous researchers to continue doing work in a "good" way. Her words are what I aspire to as I hope that my work can bring value to the housing conversation and endeavour to do no harm.

> *The greatest ally of Indigenous research will be those non-Indigenous "methodologies from the margins" that do not hide from but embrace the political nature of research. The sustained autonomy but continued alliance between such approaches is critical* (Kovach 2005, 33).

PART 1: Where have we been? Where are we going with Inuit housing?

Introduction to Part 1

Answering the foundational phronetic question *Where are we going?* sets the stage for the context necessary for an analysis of power that will follow. However, the question *where are we going?* must be conjoined with a historical view looking at *where have we been?* Historical context is a key tenet of *phronesis* as Bent Flyvbjerg describes it. Common sense and practical wisdom must be guided by knowledge of the actual conditions and past experiences of the people involved, to understand better their own reference points and history. In Chapter 4 I will present *where we are going in terms of housing* but first, I present *where we have been* in Chapter 3, to understand Inuit housing as part of a larger process of forced sedentarization and the context of the Inuit-state relationship, to understand why, perhaps, Inuit have grown to trust or mistrust the federal and/or the provincial governments due to a multitude of past experiences, traumas, and paternalistic and disrespectful actions.

Chapter 3: Nunavik history up until the 1950s: Inuit-white relations and a gradual process of sedentarization

When the land north of the 55th parallel called Rupert's Land[71] was officially transferred to the Province of Quebec over 100 years ago, in 1912, it was *not* on the radar of the Nunavimmiut. It would not be part of the mental and geographical world of Inuit for many more decades. Simply put, they were not consulted or informed of anything that transpired between the federal and provincial governments at that time. Moreover, the only government they had been dealing with during the years prior to this, and would continue to for almost another 50 years afterwards, was Canada. It was with the federal government that they had built their new political skills and relationship with the South. It was only in the 1960s and 70s that the provincial government finally started to pull up its socks and consider its responsibility towards the Indigenous people living in the northern territories. Inuit now had to start negotiating with two levels of governments. What was already a fraught and unequal political relationship became an even more complex situation for them, heightened by the ever-rising tensions between Canada and Quebec over questions of federalism and French language rights. In these conditions, Inuit found themselves negotiating and fighting for their own political survival and wellbeing. It was also in those middle years of the 20th century that the desperate need for a new form of housing became necessary for the Nunavimmiut (the Inuit of Nunavik).

This is the story of the gradual enmeshing of Inuit and southern people which played out at many levels. Interactions occurred on the personal levels, and the effects were felt on

[71] In my case, I am only referring to the part of Rupert's Land that was in present day Quebec, but Rupert's Land extended across land that included part of present day Quebec, Ontario, Nunavut, the three prairie provinces, and even some American states. It was to encompass the Hudson Bay watershed and was given the name by King Charles II in 1670 (https://www.uwinnipeg.ca/rupertsland/about-us/what-is-rupertsland.html).

a societal level. Ideas collided, ways of life collided, worldviews collided, and differing needs, desires, and goals collided. This complex past, with repeated traumas experienced at the personal and community levels, still resonates today, both in the minds and hearts of Inuit, and in the country's memory and recognition of its colonial past. Inuit still talk about these events. They have demanded reparations for various unwanted government actions. They have asked for apologies. They have talked about the intergenerational trauma and the ongoing repercussions of past actions that continue to have physical, social, economic, emotional, and psychological effects on them today. The federal and provincial governments, representing the people of Canada, have had to start coming to terms with the past. They have responded with recent apologies, commissions, inquiries, and acts of reconciliation on a diversity of issues. They acknowledge in recent policies that it is necessary to "continue to redress past wrongs, acknowledge harm and raise awareness" (Canada 2019a, 52). Only with this historical context can one begin to place today's issues that Inuit face, especially that of housing, into proper context. Therefore, in this chapter, I return to many of the interactions, events, snapshots, that have occurred in the past in order to bring more understanding to Inuit-state relationship today. It will help shed light on why we might have to consider other barriers besides legal, institutional, logistical or physical barriers in today's Inuit housing negotiations and system. It will help explain the importance of taking into account *feelings* and *emotions* including the lack of mutual trust and respect, feelings of resentment and refusal, recollections of past hopes and promises, retentions of pain and trauma, unanswered requests and demands, expected duties and roles, and perhaps even occasional celebrations. It is with this kind of emotional knowledge that an ethical path forward can begin.

This is a story of sedentarization, where over decades Nunavimmiut who had for centuries been living semi-nomadic lives, were actively encouraged—even forced—by government representatives to start living sedentary lives and moving to the new coastal settlements forming around Northern Quebec, on the Hudson Bay, Hudson Straight, and Ungava Bay coasts. Inuit housing is a self-determination issue, a cultural issue, and a policy issue that is part of the larger political Inuit-state relationship with its long history. The Inuit-state relationship evolved out of the associations Inuit had with whites, outsiders, southerners, for several centuries, long before official government intervention began. Housing is actually one of the final measures, if not the apex, that established the current structure, both material and political, of the existing Inuit-state relationship. It is the central material indicator of rapid cultural change among the Inuit. Western-style housing is both the culmination, the culprit, and a central cause of ongoing injustice. While the structure of the Northern Village (NV) may be here to stay, the process of sedentarization as an experience of loss is an ongoing process today that factors strongly in to how "at home" Inuit feel in their houses in Inuit Nunangat. In many ways, sedentarization was and is another form of colonization.

The scholarship has shown that national interests have driven many northern policy initiatives, especially after the Second World War and during the Cold War. Canada needed to be recognized has having sovereignty over the Arctic region[72]. There were also other interests at play prior to this time. Economic interests from trading companies such as HBC can explain capitalist interests in the North already prior to the 1950s (Hastings 1985). These all linked them now to the rest of the world as their livelihoods became part

[72] Much has been written about Arctic sovereignty and Canada's role and actions to assert control in face of American threats from the northwestern (Alaska) border, or on the shores of the potential northwest passage, or in High Arctic outposts where Russians and other foreign states could establish a presence.

of an increasingly globalized North. But in the early 20th century, the federal government was still trying to determine how it could most benefit from (or be least burdened by) its relationship with the Inuit population. Tracing back over the Acts passed, the court cases adjudicated, the policies and programs implemented, and the resistance by Inuit, shows us what kind of relationship the federal government was attempting to establish. Many refer to the government's attitude in first half of the 20th century as a "laissez-faire" approach to Inuit in the North. But there was still government intervention; "laissez-faire" does not mean Inuit were "free of control" from the government. Laissez-faire included controlled interactions and narrowly defined forms of support, such as providing only specific kinds of rations during famines as determined by the government. Sometimes this included only ammunition rather than flour in order to "force" Inuit back onto the land—to "let them be" Inuit—so that they would not become dependent. These were unilateral decisions by a state that were responding to the state's own political and economic needs, and responding in part to the state's public image of how they were acting on, or flouting, the needs of Inuit.

Quebec Boundaries Extension Act 1912

The transfer of lands from the Northwest Territories to Quebec on April 3rd, 1912[73] is still viewed by Inuit today as the day that would "forever change the lives of Nunavik Inuit" (Nungak 2017, 23). Zebedee Nungak, originally from Puvirnituq, called it "the work of pure colonialism" and "a blueprint for governments forcing subservience on Inuit

[73] Coincidentally, April 3rd 1912 is the day my maternal grandmother was born in Berlin, a family member in Germany with whom I was close until her last day on April 5th 2014. I have taken the habit of connecting the timeline of government control over Inuit in Quebec to my own family's history, its generational changes, emigrations, and the stories that I have recorded about the wars years, in order to have a better sense of time and consciousness about how recently things evolved in the North while my own life, and that of my parents and grandparents, were unfolding over in Europe and then in Canada when each of my parents immigrated to Montreal in the 1960s, during the early years of government housing programs.

subjects" (Nungak 2017, 23–24). It was the legal document upon which all future negotiations between Canada and Quebec regarding Nunavik would be based, negotiations from which Inuit would be excluded until 1974, which only changed upon their insistence to be at the table. It was called *An Act respecting the extension of the Province of Quebec by the annexation of Ungava* (also referred to as the *Quebec Boundaries Extension Act*) and it transferred parts of Rupert's Land to the province of Quebec, from federal to provincial jurisdiction.

The Indian Act, Amendment 1924

Prior to the *Quebec Boundaries Extension Act*, however, the *Indian Act* had already been passed in 1876. It was, and remains, a federal law that determines the status of First Nations in Canada and is notorious for its objective to assimilate Indigenous people into Euro-Canadian society. It did not make reference to Métis or Inuit at that time, and therefore the question as to whether Inuit were viewed by the state as Canadian citizens or as wards of the state was never made clear. The first time that Inuit were mentioned in Canadian legislation was in 1924. The *Indian Act* was amended to include Inuit as the responsibility of the Canada's Department of Indian Affairs, though it did not describe them as wards of the state as it did First Nations. Rather it defined them as Canadian citizens (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 6). This amendment was repealed in 1930 upon which Inuit affairs were administered from the desk of the North-west Territories Council in Ottawa.[74]

[74] For a full picture of the different government bodies that administered Inuit affairs over the past century, see Bonesteel 2008 Appendix B, p.165-166. It changed hands many times.

Supreme Court decision *Re: Eskimos*

The jurisdictional status of Nunavik was exceptional. They were the only Inuit at the time in a territory that was under provincial jurisdiction. This led to a dispute between Canada and Quebec regarding who had responsibility and who should pay for the welfare of the Nunavimmiut (Mackinnon 1984 Chapter 3).[75] The federal cost of providing relief measures to impoverished Inuit in Quebec and the subsequent reimbursements that Canada demanded from the Quebec government resulted in Quebec rejecting any responsibility for the care of the Inuit in the early 1930s (Morantz 2010, 64). This dispute between the federal and provincial governments was eventually brought to the Supreme Court. The 1939 Supreme Court case *Re: Eskimos* turned to the references upon which the *British North America Act* (*B.N.A. Act*) was specified. It had established the foundations for the transfer of Rupert's Land and of the North-west Territory to the Queen on July 1st, 1867. The court case also relied on the accounts of Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) officials where they described their "relations and conduct towards the aborigines" because as a trading company they also "possessed considerable powers of government and administration" which included defining and referring to the "Esquimaux" as "Indians" or "aborigines" in their documents (Borrows and Rotman 1998, 442). The 1939 Supreme Court judgment determined that Inuit were "Indians" insomuch that they fell under section s. 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, but they were not status Indians as defined by the *Indian Act* section 4(1) (Vowel 2016, 28; Borrows and Rotman 1998, 446). As part of the Dominion of Canada, it would be the Parliament of Canada that "should have full power

[75] Although the name "Nunavik" for this territory, and the term "Nunavimmiut" for the people of Nunavik, only came into common usage much later, it is the term I have chosen to use to refer to Inuit in this region, even when talking about the past, rather than applying the terms found in the documents of the era: "Nouveau-Quebec" or "Northern Quebec."

and authority to legislate for the future welfare and good government of the territory" (Borrows and Rotman 1998, 443), and "it will be the duty of the Government to make adequate provisions for the protection of the Indian Tribes, whose interest and *well being* are involved in the transfer" (Borrows and Rotman 1998, 442 emphasis mine). Therefore, through the decision of the *Re: Eskimos* case, it was clarified that according to the unilateral decisions of the imperial powers of the colonizers in the 19th century, the federal government had exclusive legislative responsibility for the Inuit. Based on their own Western terms and judicial structures, they had decided that Canada was responsible to protect the "*interest and well being*" of Inuit in 1939. And, as Thierry Rodon put it: "Once again, the Inuit were not informed of this decision, and since the federal government had little to do with them, life went on much as before" (Rodon 2014, 94–95).

Trading posts HBC and Frères Reveillon

The economic, political, and judicial disputes occurring between the different governments were not always mirrored in the more direct relations Inuit had with southerners living in the North. There were economic and spiritual relationships that brought Inuit closer to trading posts, missionary posts, and other stations, including those set up by explorers or scientists.[76] There were also emergency situations such as disease and famine that brought Inuit closer to non-Inuit installations. Out of necessity, Inuit families were known to set up camp closer to some of these white persons' sites (eg. trading

[76] There is even a story of the manner in which an observation ship with Canadian anthropologists stationed for two winters at the coast near Kangiqsujuaq from 1884 to 1886 was likely the cause of a change in the usual annual mobilizations and travel of the local Inuit groups. They had created a larger than usual winter camp near the ship resulting in Inuit abandoning some of their other customary sites where they would have normally overwintered.

posts, missions, RCMP posts, or the American base) especially when they were being negatively affected by the availability of game which caused hunger and desperation.

Fig. 2 Map of Nunavik

Source: Makivvik Corporation at https://www.makivvik.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/nunavik1.gif

Trade activities between Inuit and non-Inuit was central to the long-term ongoing contact between the North and southern Euro-Canadian interests. In the 1800s, the Hudson Bay Company (HBC) activities in Nunavik were focused on the Richmond Gulf, the coast that stretches between present day Kuujjuarapik to Inukjuak with Umiujaq in the middle (Morantz 2010, 1). There was also an HBC post in Fort Chimo (Kuujjuaq) that had

opened, closed, and reopened several times since 1830, due to the changing supply and demand of products destined for Europe. HBC was interested in Inuit trade for fox skins, caribou hides, seal and whale oil, salted salmon (Morantz 2010, 15–16), and sealskin boots (kamiks) that they traded to the English and Crees (2010, 21).

At this time, company officials already had a condescending tone towards Inuit (compared to their relations with Cree), viewing Inuit who preferred living off caribou as "indolent" because they did not engage in trade or see the value of trapping "fur animals" (Morantz 2010, 15). The company believed the Inuit were in need of encouragement to change their behaviours, and so it was "intent on creating in the Inuit a desire for the company's dry goods" (Morantz 2010, 24). The company strategically opened and closed certain posts to bring them "'more under our own [HBC] control'" (quote from HBC archival records in Morantz 2010, 26). This early contact between whites and Inuit was driven by far away market forces, not national interests, but the means were similar: a demand for Inuit to behave in a way that meets capitalist interests. There are endless examples of whites expressing condescending views of Inuit throughout the centuries, as Toby Morantz has presented in her extensive histories of Inuit–Euro-Canadian relations of the Hudson Bay region and of the Ungava Bay region (Morantz 2010; 2016).

Trading posts also afforded seasonal employment for a few Inuit to provision the post with meat and fish, and for Inuit women to provide Western-style cleaning and cooking services for the whites (Morantz 2010, 27). The relationship between Inuit and the various trading posts and later company stores are a large part of the story of Inuit-white relations. It was also the way that government received information, from reports by the HBC managers who described Inuit conditions and individual personality traits. The role

of these company employees and managers was significant in forming opinions and actions by the state.

Whaling

The contact between Inuit and whites through the whaling industry was also part of the larger trade relationship with HBC in Nunavik. Inuit in Richmond Gulf of the Hudson Coast had been hunting whales for centuries, having perfected unique hunting techniques, but now Inuit hunted whales as part of their trade relationship by selling the valuable blubber oil to the HBC. This was unlike the British whale fishery in Lancaster Sound from 1820s to 1840s which did not involve much or only sporadic contact with Inuit (Stevenson 1997, 73). Whaling in the Hudson Coast created a trade relation that was at its height in the Richmond Gulf in 1860 (Morantz 2010, 25). Hunting activities that Inuit engaged in for trade purposes had the effect of reducing their own subsistence activities by the fact that the trade hunt would have taken them away from prosperous locations of country foods, or would have taken up their time during the season of subsistence hunting. These gradual changes in practices brought Inuit families more frequently to outposts for trade purposes.

Missionairies and churches

Religion also played a role in the early process of sedentarization in the North. Traditionally, Inuit were animists. They believed every object contained a spirit. A shaman, as an intermediary between the supernatural and the community, would have been called upon to consult or control the spirit world when individual healing was needed or when community misfortunes such as bad weather, famine, absence of game, or epidemics needed to be allayed. The relationship between the community and the shaman was

complex and sometimes ambiguous, yet it was a religion and cosmology that directed Inuit beliefs and practices based on a deep respect for the strong forces of nature that surrounded them (Morantz 2010; Saladin d'Anglure 2013). Despite these fundamental beliefs, Christianity overtook Inuit spirituality in a relatively short period of time principally in the 1920s (Vowel 2016, 56).[77] Some Jesuits may have accompanied the first Arctic expeditions in the 17th century. However, Christian missionaries only arrived to settle in Nunavik after the 1850s (Hervé 2015, 194–95), when some HBC trading posts had already been established. It was introduced in the Hudson Coast first, and then in the Ungava region (Morantz 2016, 83). Moravian missions had been present on the Labrador coast since the 1800s, but never succeeded in setting up for long-term in the Ungava Coast. It was mainly protestant missionaries from the Church Missionary Society in England that had formed missions near HBC posts in Ungava Bay and Hudson Bay in the early twentieth century. A few Anglican missions also established themselves in Nunavik (Hervé 2015, 201), for example, the mission in Fort Chimo established in 1905 became linked to the Anglican Church's Diocese of the Arctic in 1933 (Morantz 2016, 83). In order to establish influence over the Inuit to convert them to Christianity, the missionaries focused on converting Inuit who were in positions of leadership (Morantz 2016, 83; Hervé 2015, 195). With the growing number of followers, and the aid that the missions provided to the people, such as provisions, medical services, and schooling, Inuit started to spend more time closer to the various churches that were built over the decades, and around which small settlements formed.

[77] Métis author and public intellectual, Chelsea Vowel, recommends film: *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen* (2006) directed by Zaccharias Kunuk regarding the process of Christianity replacing Inuit spirituality (Vowel 2016, 56).

Starvation, poverty, relief

While the churches had their eye on the Inuit in the early part of the 20th century, the region saw little government attention paid to the Inuit except for minimal provisions from the south such as some food rations and ammunition. These distributions would be authorized by an RCMP constable who would visit posts once a year and give permission to the HBC and Reveillon Frères to provide hand outs under the program "S&D rations (sickness and destitute)" (Morantz 2010, 66). However, some government relief had already been provided in Ungava in 1892-93 when they delivered some rations to Inuit who were starving due to the caribou changing their migration route (Morantz 2016, 138). Government aid has been described by historians as "a token amount" put in place "simply to prove Canadian jurisdiction over the North" (Mackinnon 1984 Chapter 2.)

The relationship between the federal government and the Nunavimmiut began in earnest during a more sweeping and difficult period of starvation from the 1930s to the 1950s (Morantz 2016, 133). Provisions from the government to Inuit during the years of the Depression were delivered annually through the HBC ship to each community, and then distributed by HBC agents. In these years, Inuit experienced hardship due to a scarcity of animals combined with a drop in the price of furs in Europe at the same time. Many families suffered through periods of poverty and hunger through these decades. Dependence on some of these rations grew out of necessity and illness. Therefore, some Inuit families remained closer to the posts for longer periods of time than they traditionally would have, with the hopes of receiving extra rations for their survival.

Personal stories recorded by Inuit who remember this time describe difficult relations with the HBC agents, especially for those who were not seen as esteemed hunters

by the HBC manager: "even those who were not young were refused supplies if they were not known to be good trappers" (comment by Inuit man paraphrased by Morantz 2016, 146). Some HBC agents were considerate, while there were others "who weren't too good to us, [...] [w]e'd be hungry for days" (Morantz 2016, 146). Another Inuk said they "ignored even starving Inuit if they had nothing to sell. However a manager would get up in the middle of the night to give food to a trapper with pelts to sell" (Morantz 2016, 146). Many Inuit are recorded to have starved to death, even those living close to the posts. It is clear that this kind of experience would not help create a trusting, respectful foundation for a future civil or political relationship between Inuit and the state.

An American military base

Other experiences with southerners in the North were not as contentious or difficult for Inuit. Nunavimmiut who had spent time near the American base located five miles from Fort Chimo (Kuujjuaq) on the Ungava Coast from 1941 to 1950 describe the interaction fondly. They saw the military base as a secure haven with resources to alleviate the starvation and death many families had faced in years prior, and especially in 1940. The base was a presence that "saved a lot of people" and "gave food and much help before the government came" (Morantz 2016, 147). During the base's most intensive responsibilities receiving thousands of servicemen and wounded soldiers from the Second World War from 1941 to 1945, several dozen Inuit were employed and received payments in cash for the first time. The base attracted Inuit families from other parts of Ungava who settled in the vicinity even if they were not employed there (Morantz 2016, 147). The presence of Americans witnessing the state of Inuit living conditions and health also triggered the impetus for the Canadian government to be more hands-on in the lives of

Inuit from the 1940s onwards. Once again, it was the risk of sullying the government's public and international image that motivated its actions and attention to Inuit needs—not an honest sense of care or ethical responsibility.

Disc numbers

It was at this moment that the federal government decided to take account of the situation in the North. In 1941, the Canada census exposed the poverty among the Nunavimmiut, and it has been argued that such images humiliated the government and forced it to act by having a greater presence in the North (Tester 2006a, 244; Morantz 2016, 149). The census was the first time the Inuit were being "counted." Without consistent Inuit family names, the government decided that it would instead employ a system of numbering each Inuk with coin sized leather or pressed fiber "discs" that they were required to have with them at all times, often worn around their neck. The E-numbers (Eskimo numbers) included a letter and number system, labeled "Eskimo identification." This system remained in place until 1968[78] when everyone was given a family name, though among the Nunavimmiut, many had already been using family names for a few generations (Morantz 2016, 149). The identification system was used to keep track of distribution of federal relief to Inuit. Commonly, Inuit expressed dislike of this system of identification, with some destroying the discs and many refusing to wear them (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 38).

The 1940s was a decade of the government bringing more services to the North including welfare support. The new Indian and Northern Health Service of the federal

[78] A Library and Archives online blog states that the disc numbering system was used longer in Quebec than in other Arctic regions, past the year 1972. Source: https://thediscoverblog.com/2016/06/22/the-inuit-disc-numbers-and-project-surname/

Department of National Health and Welfare had set up two ways to provide income relief through a *Universal Family Allowance* program which appeared in Nunavik in 1947 and an *Old Age Pension* program in 1949. From 1945 through to 1970, all Inuit across Canada's North were required to identify themselves to the territorial, provincial, or federal governments with their disc numbers, but in Nunavik, the system was used a few years longer because it was not in the jurisdiction of the NWT government like the rest of the Arctic (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 39). Through these programs, families were given credits at their closest HBC store to access food and other items from an approved list. The approved list was made to ensure that the provisions they received encouraged subsistence living, including ammunition and certain predetermined kinds of rations. This was how the government had determined how to respond to the needs of Inuit. Even though this assistance has been considered part of the tail-end of the government's "laissez-faire" approach, whereby it has been seen as a form of support for their subsistence livelihoods, it would be a mistake to see this program as benign. While the E-number system did not officially force settlement, nor did the welfare programs, they both gave the government a much greater handle on the location and movement of individuals, and provided a level of control that could and would be successively increased.

Policy of dispersal and acculturation

Overall, the 1940s and 1950s can be characterized for its rather contradictory set of state actions towards the Nunavimmiut. There were indications of both a desire to control and a habit of neglect, two tendencies that have been referred to as a policy of dispersion and a policy of acculturation (Mackinnon 1984). This interplay between these two tendencies by government characterized the middle of the 20th century, but has remained

evident onwards to the present. On the one hand, there was the image of state negligence of the Inuit that the government had to address. The presence of American military bases in the North had brought this reality to the world stage. Suddenly Canadian sovereignty was being examined and challenged because of its lack of presence in the North. The policies that ensued appeared to be largely geared towards clearing up this image by clarifying that the Canadian government was indeed responsible for Indigenous people that lived on "their" sovereign territories. On the other hand, based on official documents and reports, scholars have argued that despite the state being involved in providing some welfare for Inuit, the government was still at this time encouraging a "policy of dispersal," encouraging Inuit to continue to rely on their subsistence livelihoods (Damas 2002). These types of policies came out of an expressed fear that Inuit would become dependent on the state and this would create a long-term economic burden for the government. It is a period that I describe as the state's "façade" of care towards the Inuit, driven by national interests and economic reluctance. Though without a doubt, if the ghosts of past Northern administrators and officials could talk, they would surely object vehemently to this portrayal that their actions were anything but well-intentioned.[79] Even if officials sometimes mentioned that encouraging subsistence living was in the interest of Inuit wellbeing, it is not obvious that this is what motivated government actions. Civil servants and politicians did not believe that the cost for providing support to Inuit would garner public support (Mackinnon 1984 Chapter 3). What does become evident at this time was the paternalistic and condescending tone the government and some officials expressed about the Inuit in

[79] My reference to the idea of "ghosts" of officials-past is a reference to Mark Abley's book *Conversations with a Dead Man: The Legacy of Duncan Campbell Scott* (2013) where the author imagines himself debating with the ghost of Duncan Campbell Scott, deputy superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, to try to make sense of the devastating policies towards Indigenous people that Scott was involved in designing and implementing (Abley 2013).

terms of their living conditions, abilities, capacities, and values.

The lack of consultation with Inuit regarding their needs and the lack of acknowledgement of any of their own societal organizing principles led to many misdirected and even lethal policies and programs during this period of rapid transition to sedentary life in settlements. Policies in the mid-1950s "were intended to improve Inuit standards of living and acculturate Inuit to southern Canadian culture" (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 11). There is a paradox in the conflicting statements made by officials that ranged from encouraging, even forcing, subsistence living for the wellbeing of Inuit, and at the same time encouraging wage labour, government education (to replace the education offered by the missionaries), and generally a Western lifestyle for what they thought would bring improvement of their standards of living. The opinions of the state were highly influenced by what RCMP officers reported and what administrators and northern agents had to say. While some agents and officers in the North have been reportedly sympathetic, based on their written comments, Inuit found it confusing to encounter some that were really nice and many others that were utterly hostile towards them (Mackinnon 1984 chapter 4). Some Inuit even became fearful of RCMP officers due to the role they had in the community (Hervé 2015, 211). In the "The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo," distributed among Inuit to "learn" their own customs and knowledge as well as the new ones being imposed on them, there is even a photo included of an RCMP officer and an Inuk man with the caption "R.C.M.Police: the Eskimo's friend" (Canada 1949, 57).

Fig. 3 R.C.M.Police. The Eskimo's Friend

Source: *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo* (Canada 1949, 20b)

Without evidence of consultations and open honest respectful discussion between Inuit and government representatives, it is hard to believe that officials could have developed a genuine understanding to provide culturally appropriate approaches to address the wellbeing of Inuit during these changing times. In fact, there is much evidence in the written accounts of government officials of their economic motivations for Western-style solutions, as shown with this explanation in Bonesteel (2008): "Acculturation of Inuit to southern Canadian wage labour culture was intended to improve standards of living toward the Canadian Government's goal of Inuit participation at a middle class level in the socioeconomic system, 'thereby reliev[ing] the nation of a major welfare burden.'" (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 12). Top-down, paternalistic, patronizing, Euro-centric opinions of what was best for Inuit may have been the only way whites knew how to judge the world around them at the time. But this is a flimsy excuse conceding our past

"irreversible" biases. Moreover, it does not explain why the imposition of Western values and forced participation in socio-economic systems from the south continue to frame the "best" options for Inuit *today*.

High Arctic Relocation

Trust plays a big role in the relationship between Inuit and officials, especially considering how Inuit should trust government processes or promises. One of the more extreme examples of the unwritten "policy of dispersal" was a federal program known as the High Arctic Relocation program. Some Nunavimmiut families were moved (either forcibly or deceptively)[80] from the Hudson Coast to a location further north, more than 2000 kilometers away. This process could be called dispersal—trying to move families away from posts and bases in order to avoid dependency behaviours. One justification for moving them was that the land could no longer support the growing Inuit population and that there was a scarcity of game in the Inukjuak region, causing extreme hunger and dependency among the Inuit. The relocation program was seen as being in their self-interest and providing them with the freedom to live off the land again.[81] However, it is also known that the families dropped off in the High Arctic barren and foreign landscape were also under more observation. The state began intervening more and more into the lives of

[80] The argument of whether this was a project of forced relocation and whether there was deceit in the information Inuit were given about the project was addressed by Tester and Kulchyski (1994): "While Inuit may have agreed to the relocation, there were obvious misunderstandings about what this meant, about the possibilities of returning to Inukjuak, and even where they were actually going. Noting the deference for authority that characterized Inuit in their relations with non-Native authority figures at the time, it is clear that those relocated were not strictly 'volunteers'" (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 143)

[81] There are extensive records and discussions about this argument that relocating Inuit to the High Arctic was going to give them access to more game. However, it has also been found that there was no basis to believe game was abundant in the places they were sent. And there are many problems with the government assuming that Inuit should just feel "at home" wherever in the Arctic they find themselves, *and* should be able to make a living there without any knowledge of that region, the landscape, climate, living at a higher latitude (i.e. minimal daylight in the winter), and game and migration patterns. These issues have been discussed in great detail in both Tester and Kulchyski (1994) and Marcus (1995).

Inuit using "rational principles and serial logic" (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 7). The relocation program was "believed to afford Inuit an opportunity to pursue their traditional lifestyle under the surveillance of state officials—especially the RCMP" (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 7). But research into the relocation experiment exposed the attitude and the basic lack of concern by these same government agents, administrators, and RCMP officers regarding Inuit living conditions and their overall wellbeing.

During the relocation of Inuit from Inukjuak (Port Harrison)[82] in 1953 to Grise Fiord (Craig Harbour) and Resolute Bay which is in present day Nunavut, staple supplies were provided such as tea, tobacco, flour, sugar, and milk. But they were made available to Inuit in only minimal quantities, as per the intentions of the government agents. The officers' response to Inuit demands for more supplies was that Inuit were "becoming lazy and dependent on store-bought rations rather than relying on hunting to provide food" (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 200). Tester and Kulchyski (1994) reveal evidence that the attitudes of the RCMP officers had shaped federal government policy based on paternalistic and racist attitudes towards the Inuit (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 200). These influences, combined with what Tester and Kulchyski have described as conventional views on welfare, work, and dependency relations, could also be identified in their disregard for the housing needs of the relocated families. The manner in which Inuit were housed was only nominally referred to. Shelter often appears to be a secondary concern in the planning and record keeping of the regional administrators.

[82] When referring to place names in the Arctic and sub-Arctic, I will always attempt to use the current place name, followed by brackets indicating either 1) the former place name, 2) different Inuktitut spelling of a place name when it appears significantly different, or 3) the settlers' place name in relation to the historical period which is being discussed.

For example, in the fall of 1953, Doug Wilkinson, a Northern Service Officer, filmed the landing from the ship, the *C.D.Howe*, of four relocated Inuit families and their dog and supplies at Resolute Bay. During a personal interview conducted with him in 1991, he described the events he witnessed as follows: "There was stuff piled everywhere, and I saw a couple of tents put up for temporary shelter ... The whole thing was a smozzle from beginning to end. On the other hand, I think you have to remember that back in those days, no one really knew differently about that sort of thing. Everyone thought the Eskimo could live in their land anywhere" (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 148). This white man's bias that clearly continued into the 90s was exposed alongside the sanctioned "good intentions" of governments and officials who like to diminish responsibility and claim ignorance to the needs of "other" people.

Secrecy and mistrust abounded, when other factors that *could* have been disclosed to the Inuit, were not. These included things such as what the relocation process would be like, that it was an "experiment," that the families would be separated into three different camps upon arrival (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 141), and that they would place restrictions on hunting quotas (Tester and Kulchyski 1994, 156, 162) despite having told Inuit of abundant game, thereby limiting hunting from which Inuit were *expected* to survive. Moreover, the government actually failed to monitor the wellbeing of the relocated Inuit in any systematic way. The portrayal that "anywhere in the Arctic" was the same as being on "their land" in the Inukjuak region reveals a recurring ignorance about the value of the territorial knowledge of the Inuit which was part of their survival. For Inuit, it is an example of an extreme form of loss through the separation of home, family, and land. In *Relocating Eden* (1995), Alan Rudolph Marcus explored themes such as "a sense of place" and perceptions of "homeland" in the context of nomadism that had still been the way of

life for many at the time of the Inukjuak relocations in the mid 1950s (Marcus 1995). He described the relocation as a project of social reform, a geopolitical experiment, and a depopulation experiment. It is a key example of what can go wrong when idealism guides government officials with *assumptions* about an "ideal, 'traditional' Inuit society" upon which to base policy decisions. They saw the meaning of "homeland" as a "paradise" with the "prospect of moral redemption" and created policy to return a group of people to the Arctic (Marcus 1995, 214–17).

Some RCMP officers involved with the relocation at the time even recognized that the so-called "rehabilitation project" had an altruistic element as well as a punitive element (Marcus 1995, 217). Marcus argued that an integral part of the experiment was the idea was that "place could transform a people" (Marcus 1995, 102). It demonstrated that taking on a deterministic approach with the wrong intentions can result in extreme suffering and death. The ideology of the white administrators and officials who viewed Inuit as welfare dependents that were a drain on the state meant that they discouraged Inuit from having access to any non-traditional practices, including refusing to initially provide houses in the new location. The government had the desire to reduce growing economic dependence of Inuit on so-called "handouts." I believe that in order to do this, administrators and officials had to invent their own idea of North as a paradise for Inuit to justify government policies and actions. It was imagined as a limitless interchangeable northern space in which Inuit could create their home. The lack of understanding about how meaning, identity, and society is created in a place and how it relates to the spaces around it was a critical misunderstanding about "home," and detrimental to the victims of this policy. The High Arctic Relocation is a flagrant example of the disregard for the humanity of Inuit with their own sense of home, territory, identity, social relations, and knowledge. This event had been

subject to an official government apology in 2010, but there are still repercussions and intergenerational trauma for the families that were involved. The very need for an apology is proof that the trauma many Nunavimmiut have from this decades-old government policy that caused generations of repercussions and engendered severe mistrust in the Inuit-state relationship is still a topic requiring healing and recognition when engaging in future policy-making.

Tuberculosis epidemic

Other forms of forced relocation or removal of Inuit from their communities came with the onset of transmissible diseases that Inuit were being exposed to, such as influenza and measles. These diseases sometimes led to the decimation of entire families. It was devastating. But so was the invasive controlling intervention by the state during the traumatic scourge of tuberculosis (TB) in Nunavik and other Arctic regions. There were two diametrically opposed approaches taken by government that evinced much harm. On the one hand, government did not do enough to reduce the harms, while it also intervened in much too distressing ways that caused widespread trauma for generations to come. In operating their medical solutions, they were ill-informed about Inuit approaches to health and especially about their social and relational needs. The government forced compliance to contain the spread of TB, even chasing down Inuit on the land by helicopter to get them tested for TB.[83]

[83] Writing this during the current Covid-19 epidemic which has made its way to remote Inuit communities across the Arctic, as well as a recent TB outbreak in Nunavik, it brings new light to the ongoing relevance of the TB history today. The way that medical intervention occurs, and the "trust me" approaches of healthcare providers must be considered in relation to this history, especially for those that have any living memory of what happened to their family members during past TB testing, evacuations, separations, disappearances, and death. There are still anonymous graves near southern sanitoriums where Inuit were hospitalized, and there are still Inuit family members that never returned North and were never accounted for. A lot of the blame for

The way TB was handled was another contribution to the process of sedentarization. The E-discs were used to identify any Inuit who had not shown up for the annual TB testing. Any Inuit, mothers, fathers, children, infants, found positive during the TB test, often conducted on a ship, would be abruptly evacuated, not permitted to leave the ship to say good-bye to family members before they set sail to far away sanatoriums in the south (Morantz 2010). In some communities such as Puvirnituq, more than 70 Inuit were transported by air to southern facilities in Hamilton or Moose Factory in 1956, and in 1957 another 70 were brought to Moose Factory (Qumaq 2010, 85). From these southern sanatoriums, there are many accounts of Inuit suffering under difficult foreign circumstances, language barriers, insensitivities to their needs and the loss of contact with their families and communities. Returning sometimes up to six or seven years later, they were often weak and dislocated. They needed to rely on food rations, clothing, and medical services in the growing settlements. Historian Toby Morantz maintains that this was a major factor in the sedentarization of Inuit (Morantz 2010, 73), including the many other related Inuit who would have spent years in the settlements awaiting news from disappeared loved ones, and in some cases never tracing their final fate at all.

Schooling

Western education of Inuit had another direct impact on the settlement of Inuit around the growing new communities across Nunavik. Various forms of schooling had already existed prior to government schools, offered by the missionaries who often taught basic literary skills alongside religious education. Government took up the education of

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the spread of disease was placed on Inuit living conditions in the past, and this problem remains highly pertinent in an era where current government Covid-19 recommendations are to isolate if one has a positive Covid test—an impossibility in communities with a housing shortage and extreme overcrowding.

Inuit more systematically in the mid 1950s. The purpose of pushing education for Inuit was justified so that they could function better in the Canadian civil society and learn what was needed to land Western-style employment. It was the mission to "civilize" them, and in this sense, a form of assimilation (F. Lévesque 2008, 448).

While the first single classroom schoolhouse was set up in Fort Chimo (Kuujjjuaq) in 1949, the schools in other communities were not established until the 1960s (Morantz 2016, 202). By 1963, the Kuujjuaq school had six classrooms from Grade 1 to Grade 8 with 128 students (Morantz 2016, 206). Between the years 1954 to 1963, the number of children in school across Nunavik went up from 135 to 1,685, albeit with low attendance levels (Morantz 2016, 207).

Once government schools were established, Inuit were expected to send their kids on a daily basis. Parents did not want to be separated from their children, and so other family members came to settle near the schools, staying in the communities during the school year. The expectation by government for children to be in school was re-in-forced (i.e. forced) by withholding government family allowance payments if the children were not attending daily school (Morantz 2016, 203). Some children stayed in the settlement with other families while their parents were out hunting or trapping.

There is a stark contradiction between the policy that required children attend day schools in Nunavik (which resulted in their families spending more time in the settlements), and the decision not to have residential schools for Inuit because it was viewed as not suitable since "the children should not be moved from their own way of life for long periods of time, 'if we wish the Eskimos to live their lives as hunters...To be good Eskimos they must be good hunters. Otherwise, 'the government it is certain, will be called upon to give relief'" (Morantz 2016, 208). When in fact, forcing families to settle around

the schools for their children's education in order to receive family allowances had detrimental impacts on their ability to secure a traditional livelihood and to teach the children on the land. This paradox seemed to be lost on government officials who were caught in the impossibility to simultaneously satisfy its intentions to control a people on their land and economic objective to not be left financially on the hook to pay for its sedentarization efforts.

Further training after primary schooling was made available to some selected exceptional Nunavimmiut students to go to a residential vocational school in Churchill, Yellowknife and for a few exceptions in Ottawa. All options for them were outside of Nunavik. The Churchill Vocational Center was opened in 1964 (Morantz 2016, 209), and many Nunavimmiut in governmental or influential positions today talk about their educational experience in these far away places and the difficulties during their experiences there.[84] Often stories related to the hardship of being away from family and their homes.

RCMP and the Sûreté Québec

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had been present in Nunavik long before the province assumed policing duties. There was an RCMP division in Port Burwell in Killiniq Island in 1920-1935 (with the purpose of patrolling passing ships in the interest of establishing Canadian sovereignty after WWI) (Morantz 2016, 144–45). These officers visited other posts and Inuit camps along the Ungava Coast by dog team each year. The post moved to Port Harrison (Inukjuak) on the Hudson Coast in 1935 (2016, 144–45;

[84] See for example: the account of Sheila Watt-Cloutier from Kuujjuaq who spent two years in a Nova Scotia schooling at age 10, then a further three years in Churchill, Manitoba (McComber and Partridge 2010, 159) and Zebedee Nunangak from Puvirnituq and Kangirsuk who spent six years of schooling in Ottawa, and Adamie Kalingo from Salluit who was sent to Ottawa at age 12 for schooling (Avataq Cultural Institute 2012, 117–20). All are leaders and have spent their lives promoting and protecting Inuit culture, language and values.

Hervé 2015, 209). The RCMP set up another Ungava post in Fort Chimo in 1942, a year after the American base had been established.

RCMP officers played many roles, including being the only federal agents present in the North before the government ship started making its annual rounds along the coast (2016, 144–45). In 1943, RCMP were given the role of deciding who would receive relief, though Morantz (2016) suggests that they likely determined which Inuit would receive government rations based on their discussions with the local HBC agent who would then be given directives to hand out the government rations (Morantz 2016, 139 and 145).

A Western justice system was imposed on Inuit in the early 20th century, which some scholars dubiously believe was welcomed by Inuit (Morantz 2016, 220). For criminal misdemeanours, offenders were usually brought further North to serve out their sentence away from their communities, such as in Iqaluit (Morantz 2016, 222). By the middle of the 1900s, RCMP withheld some actions against the criminally accused because of an awareness that the province should be handling such cases. Quebec provincial police took over the role of policing in 1961 (Duhaime 1985, 56), opening a station in Fort Chimo (Kuujjuaq) that oversaw the communities of Kangiqsualujjuaq, Tasiujaq, Kangirsuk, Quaqtaq, and Kangiqsujuaq. Later they opened a division in Kuujjuarapik (Great Whale River) to handle policing on the Hudson Coast (Morantz 2016, 221–22; Hervé 2015, 210). The main duties of the Sureté Québec was to deal with crime. The accused Inuit were sent to holding cells in Kuujjuaq or further south in Amos, Quebec. Court appearances were held in Montreal or Quebec City, and sometimes in itinerant courts in the North (Morantz 2016, p.222). Inuit rarely had cultural translators to understand the system they were being put through.

The dog slaughter

At the very end of this first phase of sedentarization, strategies led by the government to compel obeisance became even more blatant, with one of the most disturbing events being the slaughter of the Inuit sled dogs, *qimmiit*. The 1950s and 60s are often remembered by Nunavimmiut for the tragedy that was the sudden, shocking, and incapacitating slaying of their sled dogs—their centuries-old mode of transportation used to cross their territory for their subsistence hunt during the snowy months. It is remembered by Inuit as executed by RCMP officers, HBC employees, and government agents (Hervé 2015, 211). These were acts of violence enacted with purpose. However, it is precisely the purpose of the killings that has been the issue of dispute between the perpetrators and the victims. Governments have claimed for years that it was done to reduce transmission of diseases and reduce accidents, though no such policy has ever been made public. Others are quite certain that there was an unwritten policy which had allowed southerners living in the North to believe that they had the authority over Inuit livelihoods to commit these deeds systematically across all communities. As a result of these unanswered questions, two Inuit organizations, one in Nunavut and the Makivik Corporation in Nunavik, have conducted their own investigations and made claims against the governments for the harm and trauma that this hidden policy permanently caused Inuit society as a whole. Anthropologist Francis Lévesque has written extensively on this topic, arguing that the acts conducted were done in a context of colonial enterprise with the objective to create a North similar to the South (F. Lévesque 2008, ii).

For Inuit today, the dog slaughter remains an important part of the Inuit-state history because it represents the colonial beginnings upon which the relationship is founded. It is remembered with pain and anger, and has prompted Inuit to take up claims against the

government today (F. Lévesque 2008, 445). In Lévesque's (2008) research, he explained that in order to understand why Inuit have made claims against the government today for a loss that was mostly borne by their forefathers, it is important to see it from their eyes: the collective memory of those events are still a significant source of trauma today that cause emotional, economic, and cultural harm. In fact, Lévesque argued that it is not the monetary impetus as many will accuse them of (F. Lévesque 2008, 459). Inuit interviewed and Inuit organizations argue that those events are the vital evidence that the state had moved from its policy of "laissez-faire" that contextualized the first half of the 20th century, to a policy of assimilation that started in the 1950s and 60s (F. Lévesque 2008, 83). Retired Honourable Judge Jean-Jacques Croteau stated in his report to Makivik and the Quebec Government that:

> police forces actions and behaviours went overboard. It was beyond understanding. The officers displayed a total lack of awareness of Inuit fundamental rights, of their culture and the importance of the dogs for their subsistence. The behaviour of the police officers, [...] could not be ignored by the federal and provincial civil administrations...(Croteau 2009, 22).

Croteau finally declared in 2009 that "there was a breach on the part of Canada and Quebec of their fiduciary obligations towards the Inuit" (Croteau 2009, 22). The federal government has since apologized for the dog slaughter to the Inuit of Qikiqtani, Nunavut, in 2019, but not to the Inuit of Nunavik.

This fact and argument is another example of the way the historical, multi-pronged process of sedentarization of Nunavimmiut remains a current and relevant subject today. It is one that is evolving and being played out in the emotional, economic, and cultural relationship Inuit are building with the state today. I also read this history as part of their search for truth and respect that is necessary to locate a better relationship in the future.

Moreover, there has frequently been a difference in the way the federal or the provincial governments respond to such claims about past actions. Up until 2005, Quebec had still remained silent on dog slaughter issue, whereas the federal government had engaged in it at some level (F. Lévesque 2008, 461). There remain great differences in negotiating tactics and expectations of Inuit depending on which level of government they have needed to engage with in order to be heard.

Inuit dwellings until the 1950s

As the history has shown, many of the new lengthier settlements of Inuit families—beyond the seasonal settlements that were part of their traditional routines[85]—were initially connected to trade relations with whites. The reasons others continued to settle later was connected to secondary effects of their relations with southerners such as diseases, food shortages, and famine. However, despite the opportunities that the presence of trading posts and missionaries had created, many, if not most, Inuit continued to live semi-nomadic lifestyles, living in their traditional dwellings that varied with the seasons. These

[85] It is worth noting that in the past, before any forms of sedentary life had permeated Inuit worldviews, many (if not all) Inuit had the practice of living in larger groups together in small settlements during the winter months, as described in detail by Bernard Saladin d'Anglure (2013) in his research in the early 1960s with the Taqramiut in the Kangiqsujuaq area. He describes the "winter villages," as he calls them, that were traditional before and into the late 19th century (Saladin d'Anglure 2013, 186). The villages were made of snow houses made in the thick snow, including a large snow house called *illuvigaq* and other snow houses, some of which were connected to each other through their porches or directly through the main room. The composition of the winter villages were not defined by family bands (i.e. their usual system of social organization and relations). They could be up to 30 to 60 individuals made up of one to three family bands. The various settlements would be only a few hours travel between them by dogsled (186). Saladin d'Anglure describes the social relations of the village as a very complex kinship composition which did not only include direct blood relations or only the family group, but also often relations based on friendship or proximity (187). This description of the Taqramiut traditional winter village contains many elements of the concept of home that I will discuss in my final chapter, including meeting material, relational, emotional, and spiritual needs such as: by a dwelling that fulfilled the physical needs in that particular climate and was built as to the knowledge and location chosen of their own accord, creating a sense of belonging through the sharing of winter activities, entertainment and resources, safety in groups during the harsh dark season, through an intricate choice of relations and proximity to each other based on deep friendship and day-to-day work cooperation (188) and through a spiritual sense of home connected to the land, location, and worldview of spirits and the natural world in which they lived and survived the winter months. However, these larger winter camps were no longer part of the landscape according to Inuit elders who were interviewed by Saladin d'Anglure in the 1960s.

dwellings were not permanent dwellings. They were designed for mobility and speed for setting up the dwelling. There was the instantly identifiable igloo, an almost legendary symbol of the North. Inuit also travelled with tents made of skins for large parts of the year. And there was also an "intermediate form between tents and igloos for spring and fall" (Saladin d'Anglure 2013, 92).[86] Canvas tents became a preference when stoves became available through trade and when they could afford fuel in the 1920s (Morantz 2016, 215). Tents described in the 1950s were:

> canvas bell tents guyed by fifteen ropes tied to heavy stones, with a circular door and measuring twelve feet by twenty feet, peaking at seven to nine feet. The contents of one such household tent included a variety of clothing and utensils, two sewing machines, a stove, and a seal-oil cooking lamp (Morantz 2016, 215).

In the colder climates such as around Kangiqsujuaq and Quaqtaq in Ungava, it has been noted that snow houses (igloos) were still common until the late 1950s. Anthropologist Louis-Jacques Dorais said that the year 1960-61 was the last time a family spent the winter in a snow house (Morantz 2016, 215). On the Hudson Coast, Tamusi Qumaq from Puvirnituq, wrote that after 1960 "je n'ai jamais dû construire d'igloo pour y vivre, car pa la suite, nous avons toujours vécu dans des maisons de bois"[87] (Qumaq 2010, 88). However, on the Belcher Islands in Richmond Gulf, igloos were still used as a primary form of shelter up until the 1960s (Morantz 2010, 82).

When people started to spend longer periods of time around trading posts, spanning several seasons, they looked for other materials with which to build semi-permanent

[86] Bernard Saladin d'Anglure describes in great detail the different types of snow houses and summer tents that Inuit had traditionally used on the Ungava Bay region. The structures differed based on whether the structure was used while travelling, or for longer periods, and the number of individuals it was meant to house. He describes the choices Inuit made about location, moving dwellings, and the fluid but gendered responsibility of building or maintaining dwellings (for details, see Saladin d'Anglure 2013, 92–95). Many architects and archeologists have also conducted research on traditional Inuit dwellings.

[87] English translation by DeepL.com: "I never had to build an igloo to live in, because afterwards we always lived in wooden houses."

dwellings. Discarded scraps of wood, canvas, and tarpaper found around the posts, the American base, and the missions were the materials used to build little cabins for a more semi-settled lifestyle. The government referred condescendingly to these as "shacks" (Canada 1960) and at times had even ordered the dismantling of some settlements because they were seen as unhygienic and contributing to illness. Traditional tents had previously always been moved regularly and were therefore associated with healthier living spaces (Morantz 2016, 215). There has been much disparagement expressed towards these first non-traditional dwellings that Inuit built. Both at that time, and still today. These expressions of derision and disdain for the manner in which Inuit have lived at different times in recent history has trickled down and can be found in the housing discourse today, including regarding that way Inuit have often chosen to live in the Western-style housing today.

The next part of the housing story, starting from the mid-1950s, begins when the government had to come to terms with the results of their own interventions in Inuit lives. The events leading to sedentarization mentioned above, the promotion of waged-labour for Inuit, and the government requirement for a Western-style education for Inuit children in the North had created a new essential need for which government was in large part responsible: the need for permanent housing. The next part is the story that starts with the beginnings of official government housing programs in Nunavik from 1950 to 1975.

Chapter 4: Nunavik housing history and state relations - 1950s onwards

1950-1975: The first housing programs

The most intense period of change for Inuit society on every level was in the 1950s. It was a far-reaching period of transition in Nunavik, a move from living for the most part a subsistence life on the land to living more-or-less sedentary lives in villages. It coincided with the complete shift from a policy of laissez-faire to a policy of assimilation. The federal government played a central role in enforcing and finalizing sedentarization. It established centers of communication, medical, and education services which the provincial government eventually took over during this twenty-five-year phase.

Tamusi Qumaq (b.1914-1993), hunter, fisher, trapper, and political person, has set the year 1953 as *the* turning point when the federal government started paying attention to Inuit. He remarked on the old age pensions, disability benefits, and family allowances that were now being systematically distributed once-a-month through the Hudson Bay Company. He also saw the many other economic, health, cultural, and social changes from this decade having created the shift, including the tuberculosis evacuations, low fox hunt numbers with the associated hunger and starvation experienced by families, and then the promotion of Inuit sculptures for export by the HBC agents which supported an income for gifted sculptors (Qumaq 2010, 81–82). Gérard Duhaime (1985) considers 1957 as the year that the government's position changed more formally because it was the year that the government started ensuring that there were enough school teachers and nurses stationed at each community so that by 1963 there was at least one of each in nine of the existing ten villages (Duhaime 1985, 30). By 1964, the Quebec started sending government representatives to the North too.

This chapter follows the story of government housing as the central pivot point in amalgamating all Nunavimmiut into community life across fourteen villages. In the 1950s there were a few experimental housing projects conducted in Nunavik. They were steered by southerners, but they were not part of the new government housing programs. For example, Qumaq (2010) recounts how, in the year 1958, there were materials made available to Inuit to build their own houses, but it is not clear if he is referring to an experimental housing project from the government that would have provided these metal housing kits up to the Hudson Coast:

> Cette année-là, on érigea des petites maisons à Puvirnituq. Elles n'étaient pas bien isolées, mais étaient revêtues de feuilles de metal. Les familles qui devaient aller les habiter devaient construire ces maisons elles-mêmes. Elles devaient les isoler avec de l'herbe ou du gazon de placage. Comme l'interieur était revêtu de feuilles de metal, les habitants devaient constamment en enlever la condensation en hiver[88] (Qumaq 2010, 85–86).

The year 1959 marked the first government housing program, which is the reason I define the entire decades of the 50s as a transition phase that culminated into the first formal housing program by the federal government.

Experimental housing project in Puvirnituq 1958

A experimental housing project in Puvirnituq (Povungnituk) in 1958 to build nine dwellings for Inuit reveals an interesting attempt to combine traditional building techniques and southern building materials, allowing Inuit to introduce some of their own methods to build their new homes (see Figures 3 and 4). A report written by an unnamed southern administrator with photographs explains that Inuit should continue to build their own

[88] English translation by DeepL.com: "That year, small houses were built in Puvirnituq. They were not well insulated, but were covered with metal sheets. The families who were to live in them had to build the houses themselves. They had to insulate them with grass or sod. As the interior was lined with sheet metal, the inhabitants had to constantly remove condensation in winter."

houses and also determine themselves where they should be placed. The ability of the future homeowners to pay for their house was factored into the decision-making by the Inuit themselves. The author described the building site selection process as being guided by existing family relations. What is interesting about this report is that the administrator suggested that this experiment was a success, stating:

> The housing program was on a level that was entirely acceptable by the Eskimos. They are hoping it will be carried on and extended to other camps of the area. Their acceptance is exemplified by the decisions of two of the men, Levi and Shamasha. Both these men were to be employed by the Department of Public Words at $15.50 per ten-hour day. They declined this offer in favour of working on the Eskimo houses for $3 for a sixteen-hour day. Levi's reason was that he wished to learn how to build this type of house so that he can erect similar buildings at his own camp next year. Shamasha, a good metal worker, wanted to continue working with the aluminum sheeting so that all houses would be well finished.

He concluded to say that the program should be extended so these people can build more similar houses.

Comments from Puvirnimmiut are found in the report. They had been disappointed by former government actions. With regards to the dwelling built with peat-sod exterior

walls on a frame building and a plywood roof that was believed to be "very easy to heat," the official reports: "The comments of the Povungnetuk Eskimos among themselves about this type of construction were to the effect that this was the only sensible thing they had ever seen done by a Government official." This comment is telling of the opinions and agency of the Inuit at the time. Any belief that Inuit had been passive, helpless, "primitive," or lacked a critical understanding of what was needed for themselves and for the relationship with the officials, must be abandoned. This one comment projects a level in Inuit knowledge and know-how that we associate with their construction of "traditional" dwellings (tent, igloo), but often refuse to associate with constructions made of southern materials.

Fig 4. Povungnituk 1958 – sod wall being built.
Image from LAC: Housing project at Povungnituk. R216-967-2-E

Fig 5. Povungnituk 1958 - sod wall around the wooden lining of one of the houses
Image from LAC: Housing project at Povungnituk. R216-967-2-E

Eskimo Housing Loan Program 1959

By the time the first houses delivered from the South were introduced to Nunavik, it has been noted that Inuit accepted and welcomed the federal housing provision**.** The *Eskimo Housing Loan Program* was the first low-income housing policy introduced by the federal government. It was seen as necessary and essential due to "the increasing concentration of Eskimos in more-or-less permanent communities, attracted by health and education services and wage employment available" (Canada 1960, 67). The goal was to upgrade Inuit housing to reduce the adverse effects Inuit were experiencing with regards to the health, diseases, and the high infant mortality, according to the 1960 *Eskimo Mortality and Housing* report (Canada 1960, 67). Canada was the main actor in northern territorial development at the time (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 88). It has been argued that with this program the federal government reproduced its legitimacy in the Arctic (Duhaime 1985, 10). In the Nunavik case, it meant that this first rudimentary housing program would have

the effect of once again reinforcing the *federal* government's legitimacy in Quebec since the provincial government still had no presence in the northern territory at that time.

The first design built through this program and up until 1965 was the "illukallack" (see Fig. 7 on page 185.). These have been referred to as matchbox houses (des boîtes d'allumettes) (Duhaime 1985, 44; Qumaq 2010, 89). These first housing options were viewed by Inuit to be too small and they were almost always overcrowded (Morantz 2016, 216). They were one-room buildings without running water or electricity (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 88). There were multiple inadequacies in the structure related to warmth, quality, and size—twelve by twenty feet, or 22 square meters (Duhaime 1985, 46). Although inadequately conceived of in the South, the consequences of its inadequacies were not attributed to the quality of the structures, but rather were blamed on the way Inuit lived in them. Government officials had accused Inuit of "camping" in their houses (Morantz 2010, 99) thereby mistreating them in some manner which resulted in ill-health. Within a year of introducing this house model to the Arctic, the program was highly criticized in a report submitted to the federal department by a principal health officer for the federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and National Resources, Dr. John Willis (Willis 1960). However, this criticism did not see the light of day and was essentially brushed under the carpet. Duhaime (1985) unearthed the report in his research in the 1980s only to discover that the problems identified as early as 1960 continued to be the same concerns that were repeated in subsequent housing programs and reiterated in subsequent reports (Duhaime 1985, 43). In the 1960 report, Willis had clearly identified that housing was directly related to improving Inuit wellbeing (i.e. "bien-être"). As Duhaime reports, Willis also "vigourously condemned"

> les maisons à chapente rigide, 'mauvaises imitations de la maison familiale détachée', qui imposent des conditions pitoyables à leurs habitants. [Willis] déplore l'obligation d'acheter les maisons, charge financière beaucoup trop lourde pour la plupart des Inuit et propose de la remplacer par la location systématique. Selon lui, l'exïguité des lieux et l'absence d'installations sanitaires sont inexcusables; il prévoit que ce programme, loin de vaincre les graves problèmes de santé, provoquera l'éclosion de causes nouvelles de morbidité et de mortalité, diarrhea par exemple. Il écrit: 'Si le gouvernement désire réduire les coûts des soins médicaux, de l'hospitalisation et des programmes de bien-être dans le Nord, il doit à la base améliorer le logement' (Duhaime 1985, 43; Willis 1960, 9).[89]

Experts and administrators in the 1960s were already making connections between the quality of the housing and the wellbeing of Inuit, even if these were mainly about their physical wellbeing.

Tamusi Qumaq recounted his experiences in Puvirnituq of building these first structures delivered by the government:

> En 1960, 10 petites maisons y furent construites. Les family qui allaient vivre dans ces maisons devaient les assembler elles-mêmes. J'ai construit la mienne cette année-là. [...] Nous nous sommes adaptés aux materiaux de l'homme blanc. Mais nous devons payer un loyer, sinon, on peut nous jeter à la porte. Ce sont là les coutumes de l'homme blanc. [...] En 1961 [...] on construisit d'autres nouvelles maisons, qui étaient de meilleure qualité que les précédents et qui avaient de meilleures poêles. Mais elles n'avaient pas de cloisons à l'interieur. Les familles devaient toujours construire elles-mêmes les maisons dans lesquelles elles allaient s'installer, mais comme ces dernières étaient préfabriquées, il n'y avait pas beaucoup de clouage à faire pour les assembler. Cela ne prenait pas beaucoup de temps. On appelait ces maisons des 'boîtes d'allumettes' [matchbox]"[90] (Qumaq 2010, 88–89).

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[89] English translation by DeepL.com: "rigid frame houses, 'poor imitations of the detached family home', which impose pitiful conditions on their inhabitants. [Willis] deplores the obligation to buy houses, a financial burden far too heavy for most Inuit, and suggests replacing it with systematic renting. In his opinion, the extreme location and lack of sanitary facilities are inexcusable; he predicts that this program, far from overcoming serious health problems, will lead to the emergence of new causes of morbidity and mortality, such as diarrhea. He writes: 'If the government wants to reduce the costs of its medical care, hospitalization and welfare programs in the north, let it improve housing for one thing.'"

[90] English translation by DeepL.com: "In 1960, 10 small houses were built. The families who were to live in them had to assemble them themselves. I built mine that year. [...] We've adapted to the white man's materials. But we have to pay rent, otherwise we can be thrown out. These are the customs of the white man. [...] In 1961 [...] more new houses were built, of better quality than their predecessors, with better stoves. But they had no partitions inside. The families still had to build the houses themselves, but as they were

Experimental housing designs in the 1950s and 60s

The government's policy towards housing needs at this time reveals a range of approaches and experiments. This was a time when the Inuit[91] way of life was described by most southern administrators and RCMP officers as "primitive," yet there was also, somewhat surprisingly, an eagerness to allow Inuit to make their own decisions about building approaches and design with materials they were being afforded through shipped materials. In the 1950s and 60s, there was a wide range of differences between what Inuit were building for themselves, what they were asking for, and what was being offered for purchase by the federal government. For example, in Grise Fiord, Northwest Territories in 1959, where Inukjuak families had been relocated to, materials for four rigid-frame houses were shipped with construction blueprints. However, it was reported by the Supervisor of the Co-operatives that the Inuit families desired to build smaller houses, thereby leaving leftover materials that were being used to build more houses in the following year in conjunction with the shipment of materials for nine new houses.[92] The desire for these smaller houses appeared to be somewhat driven by heating needs (or heating costs) as well as the fact that they had smaller families. However, their design objectives could also be appreciated as an echo of the single room dwelling originating from the concepts of various traditional Inuit dwellings. Nevertheless, in the same year, an Inuk in 1960 in Baker Lake put in a request for a house with "three bedrooms, a kitchen-living room, a bathroom and

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prefabricated, there wasn't much nailing to do to assemble them. It didn't take much time. These houses were called 'matchboxes.'"

[91] When referring to different Indigenous peoples, I will use the current accepted names, followed by brackets indicating either 1) the former colonial labels as indicated in a particular document or text being referenced, 2) different Inuktitut spellings, or 3) the settlers' naming custom in relation to the historical period which is being discussed.

[92] Source: (Library and Archives Canada, G85-D-3-a. Volume/box number: 676. File number: A25-3-18, Memo for R. Jenness, Ottawa, May 27, 1960).

storage" after having built his daughter a smaller house the year before. The Administrator asked the regional administrator whether they can offer him something bigger than the standard 16'x16'.[93] What influenced the man in Baker Lake to want to build a three-bedroom house is not clear, but it indicates that experience in building smaller rigid-frame houses could quickly shift desires away from smaller and single-room dwellings towards more Western-style constructs with spaces separated by walls. Generalizations about what kind of housing Inuit preferred at this initial period of sedentarization cannot be made. At best, we can see that the house design requests of Inuit fluctuated significantly across space and time.

Housing as welfare

In order for Inuit to be "allowed" to participate in this first housing loan program, they went through rigorous scrutiny from officials who would determine whether the individual or the family could afford the building materials for a house. It included a time-consuming process of verifying every request and payment through the Federal Treasury Board in Ottawa. Housing was also provided to some Inuit as welfare. Therefore, in some of the communities, alongside what was a combination of traditional tents, sod houses, dwellings that whites referred to as shacks built of recuperated materials and the new houses made with purchased materials from the south, there were also some houses allotted by the government for what they called welfare cases. For example, in 1960, a "welfare problem" in Grise Fiord—where several years prior Nunavimmiut had been relocated to—described a widowed mother of three children who seemed to cope well with her income but could never have been able to afford a house outright. It was decided by

[93] Source: (Library and Archives Canada, RG85-D-3-a. Vol/box: 676. File: A25-3-18 part 1, Memorandum for the Regional Administrator - Churchill, Baker Lake, July 8, 1960)

government representatives that she would be given a house that had been officially reserved for "welfare purposes," and therefore she should "be allowed to take possession of her house free of any charge."[94] Therefore, at that time, the idea of welfare for Inuit existed during the intensive period of sedentarization, and some houses were reserved at no cost for select Inuit at that time.

Quebec appears in "Nouveau-Québec" 1960-64

Before the next federal housing program was introduced, the provincial government had finally made an appearance in northern Quebec. 1964 was the year Quebec started asserting its presence in Nunavik. From decades of denying their responsibility towards the people living "in Quebec" since 1912, now the province suddenly made its mark by renaming the region "Nouveau-Québec" and renaming Inuit settlements with several French names and references (Nungak 2017). However, the responsibility for housing in Nunavik did not change hands from federal control, and would not until 1980 (Duhaime 1985, 55). Duhaime (1985) revealed that Inuit had spurned the transfer of control from federal to provincial authorities. In his view of events, it took fifteen years for the provincial government to really start claiming its legitimacy among the Nunavimmiut (Duhaime 1985, 10). In reading Zebedee Nungak's political history of Nunavik written in 2017, one gets the impression that some hostile feelings still remain today towards the provincial government (Nungak 2017).[95]

[94] A few things are not clear from this correspondence memo sent to the Director in Ottawa in 1960. I do not know what kind of conditions the mother and her children had been living in prior to this date, whether she had personally requested support for housing or whether the administrator had identified the need himself, and whether she was one of the Inuit from Inukjuak relocated in either 1953 or 1955, although the latter is most likely the case. (RG85-D-3-a. box 676. File: A25-3-18, part 1. Document: Memo for the Director, Ottawa, May 25, 1960).

[95] Although, as I will show in the policy analysis in Chapter 7, it is not always the provincial government that is the target of Inuit animus, it shifted between provincial and federal governments over the years.

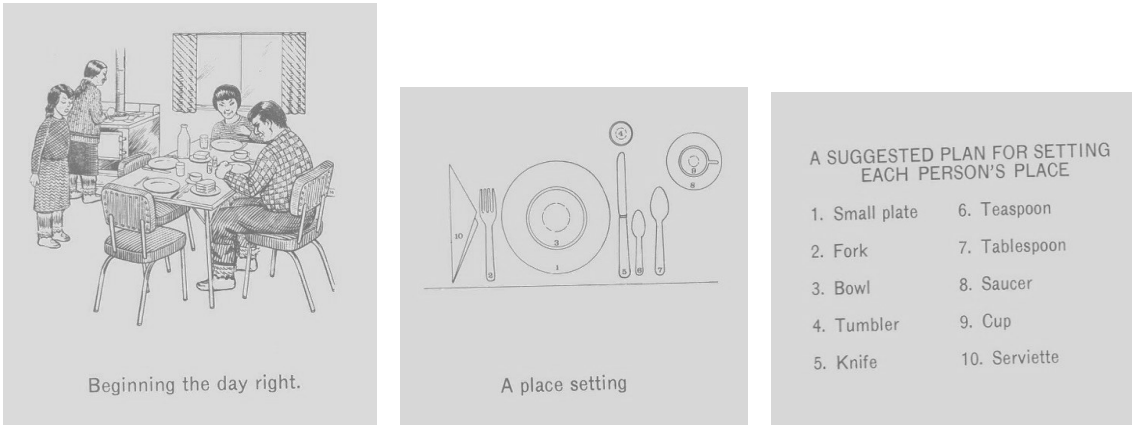
Eskimo Rental Housing Program 1965

In 1965, the federal government had decided that communities across Canada's North were not going to benefit from any sustained economic development unless the housing situation was resolved (Duhaime 1985, 44). So, they designed the next housing program, the *Eskimo Rental Housing Program*, based on multiple studies that were meant to improve on some of the problems with the 1959 program (Duhaime 1985, 44). The main modification was economic: to make housing more affordable for Inuit by eliminating the system requiring Inuit borrow money to purchase and build their own house. The new government program was going to be a rental program with the houses owned by the government. It included a government buy-back component so that previously purchased homes could be reassigned as rentals. As the only program that would be available in Nunavik from now on, the difference was significant for some Inuit. It is clear from some Inuit who were asked their opinions during a conference in Igloolik in 1967 that they were highly disappointed that they could no longer build the houses nor own them. Several Inuit, namely John Towtoonie and George Tanuyark, exhibited trepidation regarding this new program that would bring in southern workers to build houses for Inuit who "were qualified to erect the new houses under the supervision of a qualified man" (Demeule 1967, 17–18, 28). But these houses were intended to remain "the property of the government," and thereby, the government would control the construction process, and Inuit would become tenants (Demeule 1967, 18). All new houses built in the Arctic settlements would be rental houses.

The other new feature of this government housing program was the introduction of an adult education component for Inuit called the "Housing Education Program," financed by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). It comprised of four

phases, each phase associated with a different parts of the allocation, habitation, and management of the rental housing stock (Canada 1968b). Southern supervisors and Adult Educators were posted for three to six month in communities that would receive housing stock (Demeule 1967, 23). They would host meetings or classes, help Inuit move in, learn to use the utilities, appliances, Western cooking methods, learn about nutrition, the rent collection system, and Educators would supply renters with booklets[96] about how to live in the new houses (Canada 1970).

Fig. 6 Images found in the 1970 booklets "Living in the New Houses"



Source: Living in the New Houses, (Canada 1970, 24, 28–29)

They would also teach Inuit how to run their new Local Housing Authority (Demeule 1967).[97] Some Inuit agreed that they needed to adapt to new ways and they welcomed these "home economists" in their settlements (Demeule 1967, 26) though this cannot be taken as a universal sentiment. Problems with the quality of the housing stock, however, remained.

[96] These booklets from 1970 as one would see them today can only be interpreted as extremely condescending and paternalistic. Although I have not conducted a full analysis of the content of this publication, it is undoubtedly an overt form of assimilation through housing meant to convince Inuit about "right and wrong ways" to live in the houses and how to set a table or how to "begin the day right" with all four members of the family sitting around a table eating a Western-style breakfast .

[97] One year later the Local Housing Authority would be referred to as the Housing Association (Canada 1968b, 3)

The rental program offered six new bigger models to replace the #370 *illukallack* (matchbox) design. They included designs #396, #397, #439, #436, ##451 and #455 (see Fig. 4), with the most prominent design being the #455. These models may have been bigger, with two or three separate bedrooms, but the houses built between1965 and 1966 with this program did not yet have electricity nor running water. They were equipped with a separate WC, though without running water, and were heated with an oil heating appliance (Duhaime 1985, 45). By 1966, the new three-bedroom houses included services such as "fuel oil for heating and cooking, electricity, water and garbage and sewage pick-up" (Canada 1968a, 5). Inuit living in these residences had many ideas for improvement, and even provided a list of twelve recommendations to improve the Rental Housing Program during an Adult Housing Education Conference held in Igloolik in April 1967 (Demeule 1967, 30–31).

Fig. 7 Federal housing designs built in Northern Quebec

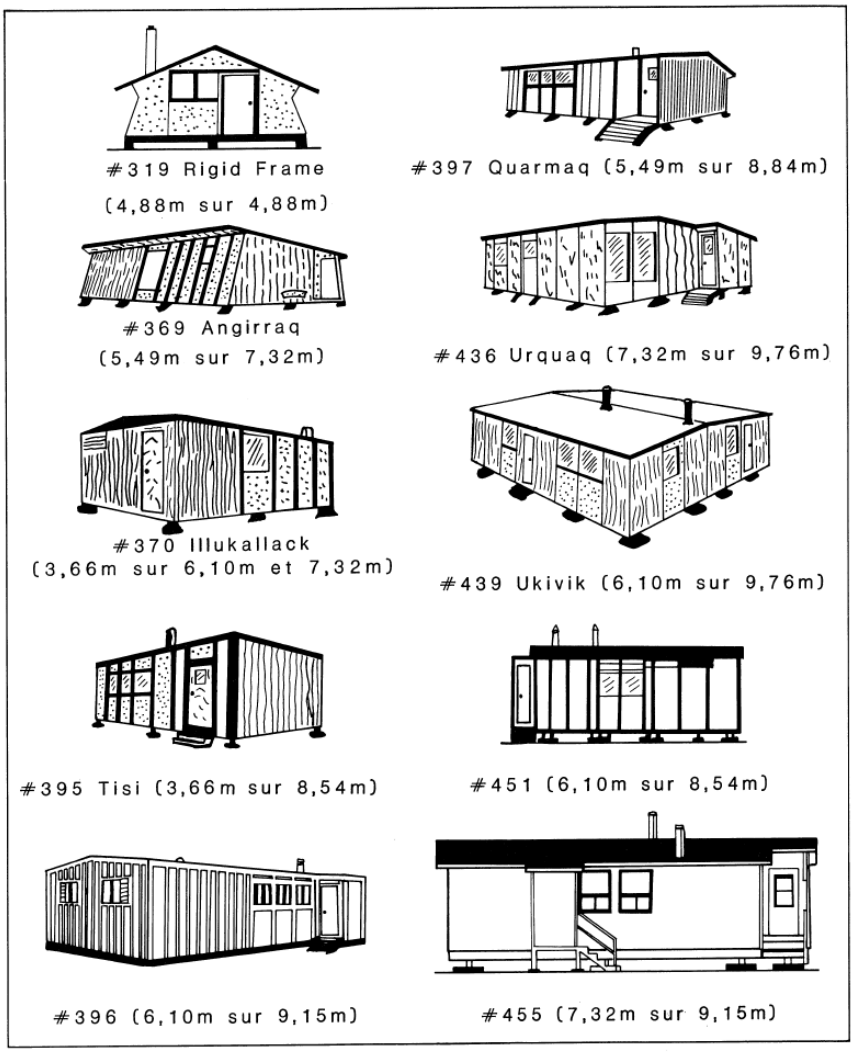


Figure 18. Maisons construites par le gouvernement fédéral pour les Inuit du Nouveau-Québec. Sources: A.I.K., 1973; Bigué & Pageau, 1980; Canada, D.I.A.N.D., 1972. La traduction des noms en inuktitut nous a été aimablement fournie par Louis-Jacques Dorais.

source: Duhaime 1985, p. 46

Critiques of government housing in the North

Two formal reports from government officials about the Inuit housing process provided invaluable critiques. Willis' report from 1960 *Northern Housing and Health* and Thomas and Thompson's 1972 report *Eskimo Housing As Planned Cultural Change* had brought up serious issues for consideration and reflection about how the federal

government was handling the housing crisis in the North. John S. Willis began his report by asking the reader to imagine a lay person from southern Canada visiting a northern hamlet on Baffin Island. Upon realizing how completely unaffordable it would be to live there, he should see more clearly the hand southerners have in creating the problems in these northern "Canadian" communities: "If he does visit, he will find private citizens but he will find most of them living in tumbledown buildings, even shacks, and he will be appalled at the way the Eskimos and Indians live (unless of course he fails to realize that they are Canadian citizens too)" (Willis 1960, 1). Despite what has been said of the white male Northern Services Officer in the North—their reputations ranging from mostly intimidating (Hervé 2015) to some who were kind and considerate—there is also evidence that some officers knew where the problems originated because of what they were hearing from Inuit residents. Some suggested alternative avenues to alleviate the growing problems. When John S. Willis wrote his report, he was quite clear about the problems Inuit were facing with regards to their housing predicament. He raised the issue of the ignorance of the every day Canadian citizen regarding the conditions in the North. The problem was with the government's intent to "settle" the North, with the "high sounding statements" from the press and from government about their work in the North. He says: "If the Eskimos and Indians are to <u>live</u> as first class citizens – not simply be <u>called</u> first class citizens by well meaning fellow Canadians – they must have decent housing, comparable with that enjoyed by other Canadians." He said, "glowing accounts in the press about the attributes of these "first Canadians" will not erase the fact that many of them are not housed as well as many Canadian cattle" (Willis 1960, 1).

Thomas and Thompson's (1972) report also provided a scathing critique of how the government had handled their role in the North. At the end they offered not

recommendations but an earnest set of questions for the government with the hope "to induce an effort at clarification of the government's present position" (Thomas and Thompson 1972, 24). They found the government acted in ways that were "inconsistent" (1972, 23), "paternalistic" (1972, 20), guided by southern ideology and values (1972, 24), and based on an assumption that Inuit life patterns and social values had assimilated to southern cultural values (1972, 13). These resulted in misguided programs and policies. The authors accused the government of not having a clear concept as to the role it wanted to have in the North, nor the role it hoped Inuit would have for their housing (1972, 24). They said the government had purposely manufactured the need for Inuit to live in Western-style housing and lead western habits with waged employment, and then had not acted to fulfill that need.

The questions Thomas and Thompson (1972) posed to government were cutting, and are, I believe, still relevant today. They posed questions on the following issues: how policy is directed and how it is based on certain values; the conflict in which administrators find themselves with regards to their role and the pressure to "show results" to their supervisors during performance reviews; problems with the larger bureaucratic system; the problematic view that Inuit are incapable of handling administrative positions; the perpetuating myths about Inuit being incompetent or "not yet ready to assume responsibility"; and the government goals for assimilation into general Canadian society without a space for Inuit to "have a voice in the matter" (1972, 24–25). These problems spelled out decades ago in order to raise awareness to the federal government show the persistence of the housing crisis in its historical context with the corresponding action and inaction by the federal government.

Northern Rental Housing Program 1968

Three years after the launch of the *Eskimo Rental Housing Program*, it would be renamed the *Northern Rental Housing Program*. This would allow the Cree—who equally faced housing difficulties and lived side by side with Inuit in Kuujjuarapik (Whapmagoostui in the Cree language)—to access the program since they could not have benefitted from the previous "Eskimo" program.[98] Despite being launched in 1965, it would take until 1968 for the Nunavik Inuit to benefit from the federal program. Five hundred lodgings would be constructed in Nunavik between 1968 to 1973 through this five-year housing program (Duhaime 1985, 45).[99]

The construction of these houses distributed across each of the eleven villages[100] was what had established the new physical space of the NVs that is still recreated today . The institutionalization of housing alongside other new services such as schools, nursing stations, stores, and churches transformed the settlement landscape into a village, and the spatial changes created a type of village that was much closer to the image of French-Canadian community where the community forms around the church (Duhaime 1985, 11). Northern scholar, Gerard Duhaime, described how the placement of the houses—which traditionally had been spread out along the seafront—was now focused inland in new "residential" sectors of the village, with units built in dense rows that resembled southern suburbs, and with a central focus on an increasing number of institutionalized activities such as the Co-op, HBC store, federal and provincial administrative offices, community

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[98] A program that was associated with the 1968 *Northern Rental Housing Program*, called the *Northern Rental Purchase Program* was available by the federal government across the Arctic but is said not to have been accessed in Nunavik (Duhaime 1985, 45).

[99] There is no mention of the Adult Education Program being implemented in Nunavik in the 1968 Interim Report of the Housing Education Program (Canada 1968b).

[100] At this point in time, Akulivik, Umiujaq, and Aupaluk had not yet been formed as permanent settlements or NVs, nor where the government was involved in construction.

council offices, the school, etc. (Duhaime 1985, 49). The locations of the new dwellings were chosen by southern federal administrators in distinctly new patterns that did not mimic or respect the locations Inuit had themselves chosen to construct their own dwellings. Prior to this program, whether tents, "shacks," or the first "matchbox houses," Inuit had had a choice in the placement of their dwellings. The earlier times have been described as a form of freedom, with an "informal, organic, spontaneous" planning approach (French original: "non planifié, organique, spontané" (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 88). But with the 1965 program, the logic of social and territorial relations that had guided Inuit in their choices was brazenly snubbed and silenced. Duhaime encapsulates this approach to housing: "cette politique [the housing program and education program of 1965 to 1973] illustre le role de la maison comme outil majeur d'integration des Inuit à la société dominante" (Duhaime 1985, 54).

Société d'habitation Québec 1967

In 1967, the province created the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ). This happened at a time when some of Quebec's cities were facing a shortage of suitable housing. Launching such as organization might appear contrary to the strongly held belief that housing is a market commodity and part of the private sector (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 3). However, there was a housing crisis in the South. And Quebec did not look favourably at municipalities making direct agreements with the federal government to avail themselves of funds for housing. The new SHQ became the intermediary for these agreements and worked with the CMHC in the first years (Québec 1992, 19). With the induction of this new organization, there was now permission to intervene in housing for its

citizens. It would play a central role, working with municipalities, dealing with renovations, and fighting poverty.

First houses built by Québec for Inuit 1968

The first housing for Inuit offered through a Québec program was built in Tasiujaq in 1967-68 (Duhaime 1985, 57). Québec had been in negotiations with the federal government since 1962 to take over control of Inuit affairs in order to establish its presence across the whole province. Quebec wanted to identify its role in the North in contrast to objectives of the federal government. Since Canada had a view of centralization, and was undermining services in the smaller communities to encourage Inuit to move to the larger settlements, Quebec introduced the opposite strategy. The federal government had not even foreseen the establishment of Tasiujaq, even hoping Ivujivik and Quaqtaq would be closed as outposts, and so by establishing Quebec-funded houses, as well as other infrastructure and services in Tasiujaq, a place where many families in Kuujjuaq wished to return to, Quebec was demonstrating its commitment to support Inuit, something that Inuit may have doubted and pushed against since Quebec did not come with the amount of political and financial power as Canada. Quebec needed to assert its legitimacy in "Nouveau-Québec." The houses built by Québec did not differ in any significant ways from what Canada had been providing to date. Seven houses were built in Tasiujaq and three more were built in other villages (Duhaime 1985, 56–57). The principles of the federal northern rental housing program were essentially being provided by Quebec. However, the full transfer of responsibilities from Canada to Quebec was not fully accepted by Inuit. They held skepticism regarding Quebec's motivations and capacity to support

them financially. There was also some who were thinking about what their own form of government could look like (Duhaime 1985, 59).

Nunaturliq experimental housing project in Puvirnituq 1972

During these political tensions between Inuit and the two governments, the research sector sparked an interest in housing for Inuit. A new experimental housing project called *Nunaturliq* was lead by Laval University in partnership with CMHC. This collaborative project engaged directly with Nunavimmiut. The goal was to develop housing designs properly suited for Inuit life and culture as well as creating a model that Inuit would eventually build and control themselves. Three houses for three Inuit households were built in Puvirnituq as a result of this pilot project.[101] However, the ideas developed through this project were not adopted by government housing approaches.

New politics of development leading up to the JBNQA 1971-1975

The denial by Quebec of any responsibility towards the northern residents in the 1950s and 60s, including the lack of housing programs, may have been a blessing in disguise because once the provincial government did finally look North, it only saw economic opportunities across the landscape. It is fair to say that the government's interest in the North did not stem from a sense of duty towards Inuit or Cree. Even the obligation to negotiate the surrender of land rights that was part of the 1898 and 1912 land transfers had not resonated with the government until it was finally forced to in order to undertake the hydroelectric development project (Y. Turcotte 2019). Provincial housing programs were all but non-existent at that time, but the new presence of southern Quebecers in the North made a big impact. Inuit would be required to speak up on a political level to

[101] More detail and critique about *Nunaturliq* has been provided in the literature review (Chapter 1).

mitigate the negative impacts of Quebec's development plans on them. This was their new reality, without really having had much contact or any benefits from this government to date.

In 1971, the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA) was formed. In 1972, the NQIA joined forces with the Cree to the south, in Eeyou Istchee, to fight for their rights over these unceded territories. Together, they would begin negotiations with the Quebec government, the federal government, and the three companies involved, over the proposal to build the James Bay hydroelectric complex that would flood a large part of Cree and Inuit territory (RCAP 1996b, 303). In 1972, after an injunction was granted to halt construction of the dam, Premier Robert Bourassa announced that he would negotiate with the Cree and Inuit (Duhaime 1985, 60). The end result of these negotiations would create the first modern-day treaty in Canada between Indigenous people and the state, called the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA), signed on November 11th, 1975.

This treaty-making process had forced the Inuit of this northern region of Canada to start thinking seriously about how to articulate their own political voice. Likewise, to consider how to create a unified voice. The ensuing discussions, debates, and tensions amongst the Nunavimmiut was a product of many strong Inuit personalities (Nungak 2017, 45). Diverging opinions abounded. How were Inuit to move forward as a whole society within the rapid cultural change, development pressures, and new political relations that they were facing? The social and cultural impacts of the proposal of this hydroelectric project has been described as marking "an end to one era of rapid change and usher[ing] in a new one" (Morantz 2010, 306).

1975-2000: Housing after the JBNQA

During the next twenty-five years, the current municipal structure and life in the Northern Villages (NVs) was fully entrenched across the fourteen communities as it is basically known today. To determine where we are going with Inuit housing today is to understand the way the Inuit-state relationship evolved during this time. This period saw a continuum of negotiations between Inuit and governments, new agreements being signed, processes of devolution, and more. Yet these changes did not, arguably, tip the the balance of power in favour of Inuit control, something Inuit had been demanding and expecting in order to gain a better hold over their own wellbeing. It comprised a period of a lot of flux, cultural change, and difficult political relations between Nunavimmiut and their frequently feuding state counterparts: the provincial and federal governments. While there were several benefits and constructive relations that arose out of the JBNQA, there has also been compelling evidence showing that many expectations and many commitments made to the Inuit have gone unfulfilled. Housing is a grave example of this miscarriage of justice. The continual housing crisis has resulted in ongoing hardship in NVs for Inuit. Despite having a new political structure, a new municipal structure, and a new bureaucratic structure, housing needs had to be advanced and tirelessly fought for by the Nunavimmiut back then just as much as now. Overall, these new structures of governance had not provided Inuit with gains. They had even more work to do to keep their housing needs a top priority.

Perhaps one explanation could be that the signing of the JBNQA came just years after discussions around the White Paper (1969), a policy of assimilation which had proposed to do away with the *Indian Act* and eliminate all treaties on the premise that Indigenous (and Inuit) people in Canada were on their way to full assimilation into Canadian society and no longer needed special status or protections. This idea had been

ardently promoted over the previous decades by ethnologist and special consultant to Canada's Indian Affairs Branch, Diamond Jenness (1886-1969), who had spent many years displaying his pessimism about the future of the Arctic peoples (Cairns 2000, 54–55). The White Paper was withdrawn in 1970 due to an ongoing backlash, but the sentiment regarding the need to assimilate and to eliminate Indigenous peoples lingered in the Canadian mindset. Despite that, and due to the determination of the Cree and the Inuit to have a voice, Canada and Quebec were forced to negotiate with them in order to proceed with their new hydroelectric project. Unfortunately, the manner in which Aboriginal rights were "extinguished" through the JBNQA, in large measure contributes to the ongoing contention by Inuit regarding the unjust impacts of this modern treaty today.

On a institutional level, the JBNQA resulted in the formation of three main Nunavik regional governing bodies, namely, the Kativik Regional Government (KRG), the Makivik Corporation (Makivik), and the Kativik School Board (KSB). With such regional bodies in place, there were now administrative and governing bodies in Nunavik to which responsibilities could be transferred from Ottawa, Montreal or Quebec in order to pass the management of housing to the local level. But the transfer of housing administration to Inuit would not transpire until the year 2000. In fact, very little detail about how housing should be managed or supported was accounted for in the original text of the JBNQA.[102]

First, let us return to November 11th, 1975, the date of the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. It was the culmination of endless negotiations and debate over several years that struck the spirit of the Inuit, and has been defined by Tamusi Qumaq, hunter, fisherman, trapper, politician, and one of the great minds of the Inuit of Nunavik, as the day that divided Nunavimmiut into those who were for and those who were

[102] The details of the JBNQA and housing will be analyze in Chapter 5.

against the modern treaty. It separated families and friends as a result of outside forces in their territory and due to issues over which they had no power (Qumaq 2010, 118). Leader, writer, broadcaster, young public servant at the time, and one of the Inuit negotiators for the JBNQA, Zebedee Nungak, wrote a memoire and history in 2017 called *Quebec Inuit Fight for Their Homeland*. He likewise described the effects of the Agreement as conflict-ridden, saying:

> The Inuit body politic in Nunavik was severely damaged by the divisions resulting from the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. People were very close to being enemies. Life was fragmented and incomplete. [...] Nine years after the JBNQA was signed, the divisions were still too deep, the scars too fresh, for Nunavimmiut to move toward reunification (Nungak 2017, 126).

This reality on the ground, the "deep scars" on the social relations of the Inuit, would have a significant effect across all aspects of social and political life (Nungak 2017, 126). It separated Inuit at several levels. There was a growing gap between what has been called an "Inuit elite" and the rest of which "60 percent of [the] population collects welfare or unemployment insurance" (Jobie Weetaluk in Taqralik Magazine February 1986 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:147). It divided families and communities, "turning relationships among Inuit in Nunavik into a psychological and emotional war zone" (Nungak 2017, 116). There were Inuit groups that did not agree to the negotiation process, nor to the principles ensconced in the Agreement. The Inuit of Povungituk (Puvirnituq) and Ivujivik denounced the JBNQA negotiations as a sell-out (Jobie Weetaluk in Taqralik Magazine January 1986 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:152). They formed the Inuit Tungavingat Nunamini (ITN) to separate themselves from the Northern Quebec Inuit Association (NQIA) which was the body representing Nunavimmiut negotiating the Agreement. In the end Puvirnituq,

Ivujivik, and Salluit refused to sign-on to the Agreement because of the extinguishment and surrender clause in the Agreement. Some of these divisions between Inuit communities and families have remained in place for many decades, and had an effect on how housing was distributed in Nunavik.

In these first years after the signing of the Agreement, villages were still being established. All NVs would receive their official "municipality" status during the late 1970s. Some Inuit families demanded the installation of two new villages that would bring them closer to their rich territory to exploit its resources (game and soapstone) to help fulfill their community needs and to benefit from the infrastructure of village life. This required the proper emplacement of the villages Akulivik on the Hudson Coast and Aupaluk in Ungava which were both only founded at the end of the 1970s (Duhaime 1985, 61).

While new settlements were being formed, there was also added pressure on Inuit from the provincial government (i.e. René Levesque's government) to unite in order to negotiate further (Nungak 2017, 126). There was a lot to accomplish as a society finding itself suddenly within the holds of a Western-imposed political and administrative structure in which they had to negotiate their needs and rights. In the late 1970s, the country was talking about constitutional reform in relation to French and English standing and the federal and provincial jurisdictions. Inuit wanted to be included in those discussions as First Peoples to ensure that their perspectives on the meaning of the *British North America Act* of 1867 was included, and to ensure that their rights would be constitutionally protected. To accomplish this, they knew that presenting a united front and regularly checking in with their own people would be the best position to be in (Charlie Watt in Taqralik Magazine 1978 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:48). They held an Inuit referendum that gave the Makivik Corporation the mandate to represent Inuit during

constitutional talks. The Nunavimmiut had only been given "Observer" status in the discussions at the First Ministers Conferences. The President of Makivik, Charlie Watt, whom the organization entrusted with representing the rights of Nunavimmiut, was able to voice some concerns, though he was adamant that as only an observer, he was not going to stay to "watch other people make decisions all week" (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:49, 65). He believed that there was potential in building a relationship with the provincial government (instead of the more familiar federal government) if Inuit could have a partnership with Quebec that was like a nation-to-nation relationship (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:50).

To add to the confusion, the relationships between the federal and the provincial bodies were also in flux. Makivik, which had been tasked through the JBNQA with safeguarding Inuit rights and interests, had put together a substantial brief in 1979 in which they advanced the need to improve on the Inuit relationship with Canada with proper protections through the Constitution (as explained in Atuaqnik Magazine in 1979 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:53). Makivik argued that the legal and constitutional conditions under which they were forced to negotiate the JBNQA five years earlier had not protected their Aboriginal rights. They wanted to have a voice in constitutional reform. In their view, Inuit could not be Canadian citizens without constitutional protection and they even wanted to find "a legal formula that will restore the concept of aboriginal rights that were extinguished by the federal law that brought the agreement [the JBNQA] into force" (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:55). While Makivik or KRG never gained a seat at the table for the constitutional talks that repatriated the *Constitution Act, 1982*, in 1983, Québec Premier René Lévesque intimated that a unified Inuit was more likely to gain autonomy than a divided Inuit body (in Taqralik Magazine 1984 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015b, 10: Politics Part

II:34), prompting the ITN and NQIA to start new discussions in 1984 about unity and having a regional government with more power and to be run by Inuit.

These were complex political relations that Inuit were constantly negotiating in order to have their needs and rights protected. At one point in 1983, when the Nunavimmiut, through Makivik, were participating in the Task Force of the Aboriginal Peoples of Quebec to establish their position regarding the principles and rights they wanted to have protected in the Constitution, they also had to make an extra effort to ensure that the Province of Quebec would even *participate* in the planned First Minister's conference, because if it did not, it was quite certain that Quebec would not sign on to any wins that the Task Force was hoping for. One of the sixteen points that they were presenting was that "aboriginal claim settlements be recognized as 'treaties' [...] this would give the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* constitutional protection, meaning that the governments would no longer have the power to make any changes to such agreement without following the proper terms and conditions" (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:96). This would rectify the issue of the JBNQA having been negotiated with Canada and Quebec before the existing rights of Indigenous people were protected through the Canadian Constitution. Quebec would need to sign on to the constitution reform in order for the Inuit to benefit from constitutional protection. There was also ongoing refusal by several other premiers to even continue discussions about Aboriginal rights in the constitutional debates, and Indigenous leaders noted the number of lawyers the provinces had retained to support their positions (noted in the opening statements at a conference by Zebedee Nungak (Nunavik) and John Amagoaliak (Nunavut) in March 1984 quoted in 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:106). Zebedee Nungak, co-chairperson of the Inuit Committee on National Issues during the Aboriginal Constitution conferences, had also said in 1982:

"Some Provincial Governments are the equivalent of 'Aulaniq,' unpredictably shifting ice pans requiring great skill to travel through and negotiate. Among the hazards are patches of good weather and solace in supportive governments. But fixed minds and attitudes are potential obstacles." (Nungak quoted in Taqralik Magazine in 1982 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:94).

These types of political games and injustices were repeated in the demands for housing. Inuit always had to negotiate their housing needs between two governments. They benefitted by creating a political identity and adopting "Western" behaviour that would allow them to be heard. They had to accommodate to the Euro-Canadian system of bureaucracy, governance, and justice. The skill Inuit leaders have had to develop to negotiate their way through these "shifting ice pans" has been an asset and a necessity to them ever since, indispensable for the advancement of their values and demands in political debates and for housing justice.

From the perspective of treaty-making in general, the JBNQA has been hailed as the first "modern treaty" in Canada and is often seen as an example of a successful, quick treaty-making process—especially compared to the twenty plus years some other treaties have been in the making. However, when the JBNQA was reassessed on its ten-year anniversary in 1985, there was palpable disappointment all around by the Inuit signatories who had each expected more timely, pertinent outcomes based on what they had agreed to upon signing the document (See Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:125–38 for the perspectives of the signatories in 1986). George Koneak had expected the governments to "slacken their total control over the Inuit and have them more involved in the decision making process" (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:125). Many expressed this same frustration about not having gained more control over their own affairs (such as Samwillie

Weetaluktuk, Charlie Arngak, Robbie Tookalook, and Tommy Cain). Some benefits were acknowledged to have come from the new levels of municipal and regional structures, but overall, the problem remained that Inuit were not granted more powers over the wellbeing of their own communities, including opportunities for better community planning and better housing (as expressed by signatory Putulik Papigatuk, and indirectly by Johny Williams, Robbie Tookalook, Charlie Arngak). Peter Inukpuk stated the issue as follows: "We have been assimilated into the Qallunaaq working system and because this system has been brought to the North it has become a problem for us to proceed with our own way of working" (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:136).

Largely, the frustration by the Inuit signatories was a result of the evident reluctance of the governments to hold up their end of the Agreement, especially with regards to funding. This issue had been identified in the "Tait Report" in 1982 which was an official review of the implementation of the JBNQA that demonstrated how governments had failed on many fronts. In fact, "Québec's implementation of the JBNQA has been characterized by the narrowest possible interpretation of its obligations and a failure to fulfill its commitments" (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:118). Moreover, after ten years, the JBNQA was already seen as somewhat outdated since it no longer represented the political reality of the Nunavimmiut who had by then better established their political identity. The relationship between them and the governments had also changed. For this and many other reasons, it is important to see the JBNQA as a living document that is part of a dynamic process in an evolving relationship, in order to continue to respond to the current and contemporary needs of Inuit (Andre Girard in Taqralik Magazine November 1985 in 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:145–46).

With the establishment of Kativik Regional Government (KRG) through the JBNQA, there was now a regional body that functioned like a "supra-municipality." What this also meant was that for the purposes of the *Quebec Housing Corporation Act*, the KRG "shall be a municipality" (Canada et al. 1975, 187).[103] The KRG managed the new system of individual Northern Village (NV) municipalities that were modeled after the political and administrative organization in the rest of Quebec. Scholars have described this as a dual order where the structure was a state-imposed municipal institution, but it was regionally and locally run in the North. Therefore, the local–regional level allowed for some avenues in which "Inuit rationality" could influence the system (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 89–90).[104]

NVs are centrally administered by the KRG located in Kuujjuaq, and individual sectors have their own regional administrative organizations. This included from the outset both education (KSB) and health (NRBHSS). The JBNQA determined that the Inuit in Quebec would still qualify for federal programs that were being offered to other Inuit or Indigenous people across Canada (Canada et al. 1975 Section 29.0.2). Therefore housing programs could remain in place for now, until a transfer of housing between Canada and Quebec could take place, which only occurred in 1981. Finally in the year 2000, housing became centrally administered through the establishment of a Nunavik organization for housing: the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau (KMHB) (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 160).

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[103] This can be found in the JBNQA Section 13 Regional Government North of the 55th Parallel in *The Act Respecting Certain Municipalities and the Regional Government of Northern Quebec* aka Kativik Act Part II, Chapter 2 Competence of the Regional Government, Division 2, article 132.

[104] The term "rationalité inuite" was used by the authors Breton and Cloutier (2017) in contrast to the idea that there is also "rationalité étatique" and that both are represented in the dual-order of governance that they describe exists in Nunavik after the JBNQA.

During these turbulent times, stable and adequate housing was needed in order to further the social and political wellbeing of the growing communities.

In the spring of 1980, Makivik's *Taqralik Magazine* communicated with their beneficiaries about the difficult political relations between the federal government and Quebec regarding the ongoing referendum question. It imparted how Nunavimmiut had been voicing their discontent with the government's implementation of the JBNQA and it suggested that this may have been one of the reasons that Société d'Habitation du Québec (SHQ) was unable to deliver on its promise to build sixty houses for Nunavimmiut. At this point, Quebec had just taken the reins to provide housing in Northern Quebec (though only officially in 1981). It was to replace federal government programs that had previously managed to build about 30 to 36 houses per year. The tenor at the time was that Quebec was not proving to be a good replacement for the feds.

The president of KRG at the time, Willie Makiuk, believed that KRG should have been given a larger role in this undertaking from the beginning rather than leaving it all to the provincial bodies to manage. He believed that had it been so from the beginning, KRG would have been better positioned to deliver a sufficient number of houses for their people (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:196). KRG knew best the needs of the Nunavimmiut. They knew that single family dwellings were preferable to the duplex options that the government planned—which the government had justified with lower cost of construction and lower cost for heating (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:198). KRG had presented a 5-year housing plan (1981-1986) that would have suited the needs of Nunavimmiut. The plan required that 440 single units be built and that restoration on existing houses be conducted. It demanded that local entrepreneurs be considered first for construction jobs, and it put forward a traditional

house design with certain improvements including hot and cold running water, a complete electrical system, separate living room and kitchen, and exterior storage area (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:202–3).

These conditions were needed across all communities "in order to meet the immediate needs of the population," (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:194). KRG was ready to distribute "badly needed houses" based on the fact that SHQ and Municipal Affairs had promised to build sixty houses. They did not deliver on the promise. A 1992 SHQ publication, however, looking back at its first 25 years, trumpeted the construction of houses in three Nordic villages in 1980 where the government was already providing public services (Québec 1992, 27). But the government bodies first reduced the promise from sixty to fifty houses, and finally only committed to building eight houses (in Akulivik and Aupaluk) and renovating another four houses (in Tasiujaq). It was apparent to Inuit that the provincial officials were knee-deep in "trying to do a job in the North that they don't know how to do" and they had even been heard admitting to the fact that they had basically failed (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:196).

Just the summer before, in 1979, similar ineptitude was observed when the Quebec Ministry of Public Works (MPTA) was tasked with installing electrical power lines in a community—a job it did not manage to complete—resulting in electrical damage to household appliances. Locals had then set it upon themselves to jerry-rig electrical connections out of desperation which had caused a house fire. At a meeting of KRG and community councilors, they described the MPTA as an example of "an organization that is always willing to do everything but never living up to their promises, or being a year late with carrying out its promises" (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic

Development Part II:200–201). The exasperation of the councilors of the NVs in the early 1980s reveals the low level of trust they had in the government fulfilling its promises. These were the conditions Inuit were living with only a few years after signing the JBNQA, and the housing situation was already being referred to as a soon-to-be "crisis."

Quebec takes over housing north of the 55th parallel 1981

1981 was the year that Quebec officially accepted *full* responsibility for all housing and social housing north of the 55th parallel, through an agreement signed only between Canada and Quebec (not Inuit) on February 13th. It was called *L'Entente de transfert entre le gouvernement du Canada et le gouvernement du Québec concernant le transfert de la propriété et des responsabilité pour le logement au Quebec* (which translates to "The Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec on the Transfer of Ownership and Control of Housing in Quebec"). Quebec took over responsibility for the 800 existing lodgings across 13 Inuit communities that the federal government had built and had managed until now (Canada and Québec 1981; Duhaime 1985; Québec 1992). Two decades later, during a dispute resolution process between Makivik and Canada, it was confirmed that neither of the Inuit representative organizations—not Makivik nor the Kativik Regional Government—had agreed to the original 1981 transfer of housing responsibility from Canada to Quebec (Makivik 2000, 111). This shows that even five years after signing the JBNQA, Inuit were still not being respected, consulted, or included in governance decisions that directly affected their day-to-day lives and their political power, in this case, keeping control of housing out of the hands of Inuit. Bilateral agreements between federal and provincial bodies are one mechanism used by governments to maintain state decision-making and control.

The Société de l'habitation du Québec (SHQ) would become responsible for the construction, management, maintenance, and renovations, of all existing and future housing in Nunavik, including social housing, low-cost housing (HLM), and later supporting home ownership through housing programs and policies (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 30). The 1981 transfer agreement comprised an annual $8M budget transfer from Canada to the SHQ for services, and there were other grants available from Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to build social housing.

The Agreement also distributed the management of housing across different bodies. SHQ would have full responsibility for all new builds, but the existing lodgings would be administered through the local municipal governments with oversight by the KRG, who would have a small budget for this task (Duhaime 1985, 65). It was frequently mentioned that Inuit institutions were underfunded and therefore had a difficult time fulfilling their roles (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:125). Likewise the insufficient budget that KRG was given was detrimental to the successful implementation of their much larger role. In other words, even administrative roles that Inuit bodies were granted through the Agreement (roles that did not even include decision-making powers) were not sufficiently supported, preventing Inuit from developing and displaying their competence and effectiveness in these new roles assigned.

In 1982, the federal government decided to provide Quebec with $29 million "to accelerate the construction of housing and schools, and to help cover some of the implementation costs of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement" (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:90). The regional Nunavik bodies (Makivik, KRG, and KSB) were to determine how the money would be distributed (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:90–91). The federal government was seen as doing more than its part

regarding the reported lag in the implementation of the JBNQA that was identified in the "Tait Report" (also called the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement Implementation Review) conducted that same year. The funds would expand the construction plans across Nunavik for the next five years and help fix some of the housing shortages. The year 1986 saw the peak of the bell curve of annual housing constructions between the years 1980 and 2000 (Québec 2001, 49). In general, the 1980s saw a steady growth in residential construction in Nunavik before it tapered off significantly in the 1990s (Québec 2001, 49).

Quebec's "Native Policy" 1982

In 1982, Canada had its Constitution repatriated and it included the protection of Aboriginal Rights, despite having been challenged on that point for several years by various government bodies, senior civil servants, as well as by the Province of Quebec. With the new Canadian *Constitution Act, 1982* which included the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Quebec decided to clarify its own policy towards Indigenous people which they referred to at the time as their new "native policy." It included that the provincial government would no longer require the extinguishment of Aboriginal rights when negotiating with Indigenous peoples (2015a, 9: Politics Part I:86). Their cultures and identities were recognized in the new political reality of Quebec. There would be a process of consultation set up for activities that affected their rights with regards to economic and social development, as well as other matters such as education, labour, and environment. A new fund for socio-economic development would be designed and Indigenous people would administer their own programs. Finally, the policy included the precept to "supply native peoples the means to provide themselves with housing which is suitable to them" (in

Taqralik Magazine March 1982 in 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:86–88). In 1983, the Quebec Ministre de l'habitation et la protection du consommateur even went up to Kuujjuaq to listen to the president of KRG and to "take stock" of the SHQ's relations with the Inuit (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 30). SHQ was managing 1075 lodgings in Nunavik (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 30). By the 20th of March 1985, Quebec's Assemblée Nationale passed a resolution "sur la reconnaissance des droits des Autochtones" (Assemblée Nationale 1985). The resolution referred to recognizing the rights of Quebec's Indigenous nations as well as those enshrined in the JBNQA. It also committed to negotiating treaties to recognize their right to exercise the following:

> (a) du droit à l'autonomie au sein du Québec;
> (b) du droit à leur culture, leur langue, leurs traditions;
> (c) du droit de posséder et de contrôler des terres;
> (d) du droit de chasser, pêcher, piéger, récolter et participer à la gestion des ressources fauniques;
> (e) du droit de participer au développement économique du Québec et d'en bénéficier,
> de façon à leur permettre de se développer en tant que nations distinctes ayant leur identité proper et exerçant leurs droits au sein du Québec;
> (Assemblée Nationale 1985).

Life and politics in the new villages 1990s

By the 1990s, there was a fairly broad range in the sizes of Nunavik villages. There was a perception that the political power and input between the villages differed, though there was strong evidence of solidarity across the communities such as in terms of hunting licenses and quotas, which helped give them a collective voice to be heard by governments (Dorais 1997, 99). Anthropologist, Louis-Jacques Dorais (1997) reported, however, that residents from smaller communities, such as Quaqtaq where he had conducted his research over many decades, expressed concern regarding their smaller size. Some Inuit believed that because they were less numerous they had less autonomy. Others found they

were "not allowed to decide freely what [was] good for their community" (Dorais 1997, 99) and were more likely to be manipulated and forced to agree with what regional bodies decided for them. At the same time, some also judged that the regional bodies themselves were merely a means of passing on information from the government to the communities, and not holding any real autonomy either to decide what was best for Inuit (Dorais 1997, 99). Were the regional Inuit bodies formed out of the JBNQA, such as KRG and Makivik, for example, actually representing Inuit values and voices? Did they providing them with adequate power over their own wellbeing?

Inuit leaders at the time expressed the same frustration in their positions, feeling a lack of control and power in their Inuit organizations. They experienced stalemates in the general decision-making process and in reaching multi-lateral agreements between Inuit, regional bodies, and governments. Mary Simon, who became President of Makivik a few years after the signing of the JBNQA, stated in 1985 that although there had been some agreements signed between Makivik and the provincial and federal governments regarding housing, schools, and airstrips, she was exasperated with the process which "required up to eight years of effort from Makivik and other organizations. Much of the delay resulted from a lack of co-operation between Canada and Québec, and from the unwillingness of governments to meet their financial obligations" (Mary Simon, Taqralik Magazine November 1985 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:140). Then, just when the governments had been playing the obstructionists with regards to funding for Nunavik, Inuit learned of a new hefty economic development agreement of $1.8 billion to be signed by Canada and Quebec. This had transpired in 1984 without any input from Indigenous peoples in Quebec, and without any mention of the *entire* region of Northern Quebec. Inuit were provided with apologies from the governments, though their so-called

"good intentions" still failed to fulfill the governments' commitments to Chapter 29 of the JBNQA regarding supporting economic development north of the 55th parallel. There had also been no advance in creating laws that would legally require implementation of chapter 29[105] (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:108 and 122). Inuit felt they were being senselessly penalized over and over again, marginalized from the hidden inner workings of two political giants they were stuck working with.

The JBNQA had been signed by the Nunavimmiut in order to safeguard Inuit rights. Once it was clear that their rights were not being protected, it was an ongoing necessity to fight for them in constitutional reform to make sure that treaty rights were protected by the Canadian Constitution. But, ultimately, the view by Inuit at the time was that the success of the JBNQA would be measured by whether it would "provide for the ongoing development of our culture and distinct identity [, ...] improve the quality of life in Inuit communities [and, ...] guarantee that we, as Inuit, have adequate control over matters affecting us and our region" (Mary Simon, Taqralik Magazine November 1985 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:140).

In most instances, these targets were not met. As already mentioned, the Inuit identified the main source of the problems as the lack of commitment from the Quebec and Canadian governments in their fulfillment of their treaty obligations. Without the dedication of a permanent source of funding for the newly established Inuit institutions, there would be a continual struggle to have sufficient operating funds and money to initiate new projects and programs that could reflected Inuit culture and identity and improve their wellbeing. From this perspective the structures in place put Inuit at a disadvantage.

[105] Chapter 29 of the JBNQA is where housing for Inuit is mentioned (see more later in this thesis with regards to the content of the JBNQA, in Chapter 5).

Entente-cadre Canada-Québec sur l'habitation sociale 1986

The new Framework Agreement (*Entente-cadre Canada-Québec sur l'habitation sociale*) covered all regions in Quebec, but also resulted in several new housing programs being introduced on Inuit territory such as the Plan triennial 1993-1995 which brought about 77 new social housing units in 1993. The 77 units included 64 units that replaced old units, therefore it only added 13 new units to the overall housing stock in Nunavik (Québec 1994c, 28). There were also programs introduced to encourage homeownership.

Since the Quebec took over responsibility for building housing in Northern Quebec in 1980, and subsequently for all existing housing in 1981, there had been only one single social housing program available to Nunavimmiut, despite Nunavik leadership asking to have access to federal CMHC private home ownership programs (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:215). What this meant, was that when the SHQ planned to increase the rent scale, there were no other options available to Nunavimmiut than social housing. SHQ had had a cost-sharing agreement with CMHC, and had been receiving transfer payments from Canada. Yet Quebec owed money to CMHC which it in turn decided to recuperate with an increase in rent levels starting January 1st, 1995 (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:216). The SHQ determined criteria for limiting the maximum and minimum rent based on household income levels. At the lower end it would help old age pensioners, retired people, welfare recipients, and seasonal workers. But maximum levels were also needed because there were as of yet no other housing options for higher wage earners in Nunavik. The portion of the Inuit population that would be most negatively affected by this type of rent scale was the middle income earner group (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:218–19). They would have a relatively high rent to pay without the option to consider future homeownership. The

issue of homeownership would remain a problem going forward. At the time, KRG was also directly affected by decisions SHQ was imposing. KRG had the burden of training their Housing Managers in the communities to implement and manage these new conditions, formulas, and to apply more pressure to tenants in arrears. These were outside decisions creating new tensions and pressures within the communities that were counter to Inuit ways of doing things.

Homeownership options and the Remote Housing Program 1994

1996 was the year when the fifteen-year joint initiative to provide *social* housing in Nunavik through transfer payments between Canada to SHQ would end. Now, in the mid-1990s, SHQ wanted to diversify the housing stock in Nunavik since to date almost all houses were subsidized housing. In 1994, SHQ announced a new program that would apply to the Nunavik region: *Programme de logement en régions éloignées* (PLRE) (Québec 1995, 28). The *Remote Housing Program* was a new collaboration between SHQ and the federal government to support *homeowners* in remote areas of Quebec by subsidizing certain related costs for the next fifteen years, such as municipal taxes and utilities (Québec 1996; J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 66). The new PLRE program started with a homeownership pilot project in Kuujjuaq in 1995 for nine Inuit households. KRG was mandated to support these new homeowners through the process (Québec 1996, 37). The goal was to demonstrate that there was a desire and capacity for ownership in Nunavik. Filled with optimism, President of KRG, Jean Dupuis, hoped that the program could be launched on a bigger scale to reduce overcrowding by removing people from the social housing waitlists (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:218–19). In the end, there were only 24 houses reportedly built by the PLRE program in

total, in the years 1995, 1997 and 1998. In the SHQ annual reports, the fifteen years of funding support for the twenty-four new homeowners were always listed (Québec 2002b, 35; 2007b, 70; 2012b, 67), but the program did not expand or offer a viable option to most Inuit households. Overall, the question of the viability of the homeownership option is unclear, and the response by Inuit has also always been varied. During the 2013 Parnasimautik community consultations, Inuit residents were heard expressing both sides. In Inukjuak, community members said "a home ownership program is offered but the people can still not afford to build their own homes. Even residents with good jobs who should be able to afford their own houses end up in debt" (Makivik 2013a). Whereas in Kangiqsujuaq, resident said that "home ownership is expensive for many reasons, such as municipal taxes and insurance. Still homeownership is a good way to reduce the housing shortage" (Makivik 2013b).

The ongoing attempts to find solutions and diversify housing tenure options for Inuit were matched with attempts to find the right type of housing and construction approaches in Nunavik. Makivik Construction Department was active on this file. In the mid 1990s, they looked into how to have more local labour involved in building houses in Nunavik by using basic construction design. Premier, Lucien Bouchard, hosted a conference that included workshopping "simple building techniques" to meet this need (Makivik 1998, 73). However, outcomes always fell short, and the overall housing stock remained a major concern for Makivik. They did not believe homeownership was going to resolve the shortage, and ongoing cutbacks by SHQ were an ongoing frustration for Inuit organizations (Makivik 1998, 73–74). There was an ongoing contradiction whereby both Canada and SHQ were aware of the growing problems in Nunavik, warned of its potential detrimental effects, and yet reduced support to Nunavik in multiple ways.

Changing demographics

KRG and Makivik found that the inaction on Nunavik housing by Canada in the 1990s was the major causes of the ongoing housing shortages in the 2000s. Canada did not fund CMHC between 1994-1999 resulting in a dramatic reduction in social housing units being built in those years (KRG and Makivik 2010, 367). In 1993-95, the SHQ published a *Three-year Plan for Inuit Housing*, recognizing that "any reduction in the construction of new units would lead to a deterioration in living conditions for the Inuit." This was based on a study that "foresaw a real 'northern baby-boom' in the decade to follow" (KRG and Makivik 2010, 367). They had projected an annual increase of 5% in housing need in the decade between 1992 and 2002 due to population growth. With the federal government's withdrawal of funding and programming for social housing in 1994, there would be a stark decline in adequate housing for Inuit (KRG and Makivik 2010, 367). By 1998, the demographics in Nunavik were being called a "time bomb" (Makivik 1998, 72). SHQ estimated that "Nunavik needed 302 additional housing units at the end of 1992 and 895 new dwellings before the end of 2002" (KRG and Makivik 2010, 367). As we know, this did not occur. By 2000, the need was so dire, that any commitment to building a few hundred houses in Nunavik would scarcely create a dent in the shortage.

Kativik Home Ownership Program (SHQ) 1999

In 1999, the *Kativik Home Ownership Program* (*le Programme d'accession à la propriété pour les résidents de la région Kativik*) was introduced and gave financial support for the construction of private homes for householders currently living in social housing but who could afford to buy. This program also gave the opportunity for cooperatives or non-profits to have access to the program to build multi-family homes or for other purposes.

Within two years, there would be 27 private home built across Nunavik through this program (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 66).

Makivik and KRG met with federal and provincial ministers in the early months of 1999 "to formally discuss the issue of social housing" and it was there that the Dispute Resolution Mechanism of the *James Bay and Northern Québec Implementation Agreement* was launched in order to clarify government housing responsibilities (as reported in Makivik Magazine in spring 1999 in Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:227). A longer term outcome of this process was that Makivik and Canada decided to use this "dispute resolution mechanism process to ensure a long term housing program for Nunavik." In the short term, the immediate outcome was a one-year emergency funding package of $10 million (with Quebec and Canada each contributing half) to build 40 units in Nunavik. However, it was the SHQ, rather than the KRG, that selected the communities in which these 40 houses would be built—a decision that was based on aligning it with the SHQ's renovation program already in progress in those same communities. At this point, in the spring of 1999, Makivik reported that Nunavik actually needed 425 units (not 40) to meet the needs of the Nunavimmiut population (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:227–28). The crisis was ongoing and governments did not appear to be ready to account for the growing Inuit population.

2000 to present: Housing in Nunavik today

With the entry into the 21st century, Nunavik continued to see a sharp year-by-year increase in population numbers. The population doubled from 1986 to 2011, going from 5,860 to 11,860 over this twenty-five-year period (Québec 2012a). Between 2006 and 2011 alone, Nunavik's population grew by 23 percent, more than double the growth rate of

Nunavut Territory and other parts of Inuit Nunangat that faced between 6 to 10 percent increases (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 24). Then from 2011 to 2016 the Nunavik population jumped another 9.1 percent to reach a total of 13,188,[106] three times the rate of increase of the rest of Quebec (Canada 2017b).

The 2021 census reported the current Nunavik population at 14,050 and counted 4,957 total private dwellings, although only 4,185 were private dwellings occupied by usual residents (implying that others are for occasional workers or are not inhabitable[107] (Canada 2021a). Today the KMHB manages 3,970 units, housing 98 percent of the Nunavik population of around 14,000. The number show that the need for housing has increased dramatically over the decades. And with it, overcrowding increased too.

Already in 2000 it was not uncommon to have two to three families living together under one roof (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2015a, 9: Politics Part I:234). These conditions could only worsen with the growing population. After a decade (the 1990s) of seeing so few new units built, it meant that by 2001, there was a desperate need for between 400 to 500 new houses in order to meet Nunavik's population needs (2014, 8: Economic

[106] Note that the total populations numbers reported by Statistics Canada and by Quebec do not always match up. For example, Statistics Canada 2011 census reported the Nunavik population at 12,090 (Canada 2017b), whereas the Institut nationale de la santé publique du Québec (INSPQ) said the 2011 population in Nunavik was 11,860 (Québec 2012a). The INSPQ numbers, however, match the populations numbers reported by Nunivaat, the Nunavik Statistics Program (Duhaime, Caron, and Everett 2021)

[107] The census definition of a *private dwelling* refers to "a separate set of living quarters with a private entrance either from outside the building or from a common hall, lobby, vestibule or stairway inside the building. The entrance to the dwelling must be one that can be used without passing through the living quarters of some other person or group of persons." Whereas the definition of a *private dwelling occupied by usual residents* refers to "a private dwelling in which a person or a group of persons is permanently residing. Also included are private dwellings whose usual residents are temporarily absent on May 11, 2021" (Canada 2021a). The second definition is going to represent the dwellings inhabited by Inuit, rather than the total number of dwellings that include those reserved for temporary workers coming North and managed by different organizations such as the school board, etc.

Development Part II:234). This demand would never diminish. However, the signing of new tripartite housing agreements brought some hope for the Nunavimmiut.

In 2001, President Pita Aatami of Makivik optimistically thought he could be ushering in a new era; he called this "a new era of housing construction" (Makivik 2001, 11). There was a lot of value placed on these longer term commitments that were to be renewed every five years. More housing units were built every year of the ensuing twenty years. But since the housing needs for Nunavik would increase throughout the early 21st century due to population growth and the dilapidation of the existing stock, the need grew exponentially, and stands at a shortage of about 1000 units.

The present day system of housing management in Nunavik, whether social housing or private housing, was essentially established in 2000 when the administrative duties of the provincial agency Société d'Habitation du Québec (SHQ) were transferred to a newly formed regional administrative body called Kativik Municipal Housing Board (KMHB). This was a result of years of negotiations to create an implementation strategy for housing in line with the JBNQA. That same year, the first *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement on Housing in Nunavik*[108] was signed. It was a commitment of five years of funding for social housing with a chance for renewal (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 74).

The funding dedicated to housing allowed for the launch of several SHQ programs, such as *Le Programme de logement sans but lucratif – volet Public – Inuits* (translates to: "Non-Profit Housing Program - Public - Inuit component"). This program resulted in the construction of approximately 1,200 low-cost housing (HLM) residences between 2003 and 2016 (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 74). Through the Quebec program called *Logement*

[108] In French: *Entente de la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois en matière de logements au Nunavik*

abordable Québec (translates to: "Quebec Affordable Housing Program") a Kativik region component resulted in 112 new affordable housing units between 2004 and 2007 (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 74). The final tally of low-cost housing available in Nunavik at the end of 2016 was recorded at 3,200 units, up from 1,996 in 2003.

The SHQ has claimed that its goal in Nunavik has been to improve Inuit wellbeing through housing, stating that "la SHQ va investir davantage pour le développement de logements destinés aux populations autochtones résidant dans le Nord-du-Québec afin d'améliorer leur bien-être"[109] (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 74). Also, it recognized that any future housing commitments in Nunavik would have to be in line with the tripartite JBNQA housing agreements.

On June 27th, 2005, Canada, Quebec and Nunavik announced with much optimism that they would renew the tripartite housing agreement for $140 million for another five years (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:250). This money had the potential to build up to 275 new social housing units, depending on the size and locations that KMHB would select. Maggie Emudluk, president of KMHB at the time stated: "We have about 150 houses in Nunavik with three families living in them and 200 houses with two families in them. This is how high our overcrowding is. So this agreement will help a lot" (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:251). The Makivik president at the time, Pita Aatami, expressed more concern, saying that this goal would still fall short of the housing need in Nunavik. He said during the announcement: "In some cases we have 20 people living in a three bedroom house, so this is really unacceptable and we have to figure out a way to try to get more housing up here" (2014, 8: Economic Development Part

[109] English translation by DeepL.com: "the SHQ will invest more in the development of housing for aboriginal populations living in Nord-du-Québec to improve their well-being."

II:251). Makivik Corporation had committed many hours and much effort to convince the government "to come on board" for this agreement, and Makivik employees were applauded for their dedication to it (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:251). It is not hard to imagine how difficult it would have been for Makivik to squeeze more funds and commitments from the respective governments. Between 2007 and 2010, fifty additional houses would be built by Quebec through a housing agreement committed to as a result of the Katimajiit Conference held in 2007 (Québec 2008b, 28; Makivik 2009).

The five year *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement on Housing in Nunavik* was renewed several times, including in 2005-2010 and 2010-2015. In 2015, renewal negotiations were stalled. Makivik had demanded that federal negotiators be given a mandate to *increase* the funding amount to account for the ongoing shortage in housing stock. During this impasse, only single-year commitments were signed, until a new agreement could be reached in 2017 for another 5-year period (Makivik 2016, 78).

Other developments regarding research, surveying Inuit needs, and general economic development for the region also happened through the 2000s. The *Aboriginal Peoples Survey and Survey of Living Conditions in the Circumpolar Arctic* in 2001 had a high rate of participation by Inuit (Makivik 2002, 72). With better data there would be better representation of regional needs, which could lead to better decision-making.

In April 2002, the Nunavimmiut represented by KRG and Makivik signed the *Entente de partenariat sur le développement économique et communautaire au Nunavik*, better known as the *Sanarrutik* Agreement. This 25-year bilateral agreement with Quebec called was formed in the interest of "forging a common vision of economic and community development" between the state and Inuit (http://www.nlhca.ca/about/). For example, funds

allowed for the construction of other community infrastructure such as breakwaters and loading wharves in Kangirsuk and Salluit in 2003 (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:241). It also discussed support for a nation-to-nation relationship in the context of the expansion of economic and community development such as hydroelectricity, mining, and tourism (Makivik, KRG, and Québec 2002, 2).

In the early 2000s, the Nunavimmiut made a second attempt at creating a Nunavik government.[110] An *Agreement-in-Principle* (AIP) for a government for Nunavik was officially signed on December 5th, 2007, by the Makivik President, Pita Aatami, the Federal INAC minister, the provincial minster responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, and Quebec Premier Jean Charest (Makivik 2007, 61). This was a political effort, with the three main Inuit organizations, Makivik, KRG, and KSB continuing the work of developing a detailed implementation plan. Two committees were involved in this process, a policy committee to work on the political level, and a technical advisory committee to work on implementing the management level (Makivik 2007, 61).

In 2007-2008 KMHB conducted a housing needs survey which confirmed again that Nunavik had a shortage of 1000 housing units (KRG 2009, 8). Around the same time, the public databank, Nunivaat Statistics, showed that poverty in the Kativik region had increased between 2000 to 2005 (Nunivaat 2009), with now up to thirty percent of households living in poverty, which was three times higher than in the rest of Quebec. In response, KRG planned to design a regional anti-poverty strategy (KRG 2009, 9 and 49). Inuit living conditions continued to be framed within the poverty reduction concept.

[110] The first attempt was a process set in motion in the mid-1990s that was derailed due to the Quebec referendum for separation from Canada (Makivik 2007, 61).

The Plan Nord was Quebec's new northern development plan launched by Premier Charest in 2011.[111] The first iteration of the Plan Nord (2011-2016) included a commitment to funding for social housing in Nunavik (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ 2017, 74). A housing agreement was signed in 2011 between SHQ, KMHB, and Makivik to build 300 units in Nunavik (Makivik 2011, 101). At this time, however, despite the 300 units to be built through the Plan Nord funds, the tripartite agreemend 2010-2015 to build 340 social housing units, and a plan to build 200 private units under a homeownership program (which did not end up being successful), the housing shortage in Nunavik could only be resolved if 1000 *additional* units would be built between 2011 and 2018 through a catch-up program (Makivik 2011, 100–101).

The homeownership program mentioned above was launched in 2012 by SHQ and KMHB, called *Le Programme favorisant l'accession à la propriété et la rénovation résidentielle dans la région Kativik* which included a homeownership component and residential renovation program for the Kativik region. The program had several components that all encourage Nunavimmiut to "Become a proud homeowner!" These components include to: "Build, buy or renovate a home that meets your needs and tastes!" (SHQ and KMHB 2012). It included support in the form of guidance and training for homeowners, and assistance with several financial aspects that have been challenging in the North such as purchase and construction, renovations and occupancy, including assistance with paying municipal taxes and subsidies. An SHQ report stated that 79 households had benefitted from this program in 2016, though the wording does not specify whether benefits were through home construction or through renovation (J.-F. Vachon and SHQ

[111] This Quebec northern development plan, along with the subsequent iterations of the Plan Nord, are analyzed in Chapter 7.

2017, 74). The 2012 goal with this program had been to build 200 new houses in Nunavik through this program in four years in order to increase the overall housing stock (SHQ and KMHB 2012). It is clear from later records that the number of new constructions that came out of this homeownership program was significantly less, with 8 built in 2014, 3 in 2015, and 5 in 2016, totalling 16 homes (Québec 2017c, 34). Despite repeated demands to governments by Makivik and KRG representatives to have a housing catch-up program, only the five-year tripartite funding agreement was renewed. In 2017, KMHB announced the construction of 212 new housing units across 9 of Nunavik's villages, to be built by Makivik Corporation with funds from both the federal and the provincial governments (NHB 2017).

The *Pivallianiq Program* is the other program launched jointly by SHQ and the KMHB. It is seen as another important piece of the housing effort that Nunavimmiut have participated in since its inauguration in 2011. Residents are very familiar with its annual events and contests to win prizes for their household. The purpose of the *Pivallianiq* Program, as spokeperson Mary Nassak stated, is for families "to join a vast offensive to transform our homes, neighbourhoods and communities into clean, beautiful and orderly places where we can live, thrive and grow up healthy" (KMHB 2021).

In 2017, a Senate committee put out a report called "We Can Do Better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat." It prompted discussions and media recognizing once again the abysmal state of affairs in the four Inuit territories. There was a list of recommendations, including that CMHC fund Inuit organizations directly, that Inuit return to building their own homes and hire Inuit labour, and that CMHC support more "homeownership programs, plus housing co-ops, co-housing ownership, and buy-back programs" (Bell 2017a).

In November 2019, Sylvie Bérubé became the Member of Parliament representing riding Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou. As a member of the Bloc Québecois, she committed to visiting Nunavik in her early days in office, to "push for housing money," and to support the Bill C-262 which the former liberal NDP Romeo Saganash had tabled in 2016, and which would put "Canadian law in line with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (Anselmi 2019b). There have been members from all parties supporting this Bill which was adopted in May of 2018. However, MP Bérubé also committed to pushing for it to become law. To date (June 2021) the Bill has not become law (Saganash 2016). The significance of making a country that is signatory to UNDRIP implement its meaning into their country's legal obligations means that the rights of Indigenous peoples including housing for Indigenous people would be enshrined in the legal obligations of the nation, rather than UNDRIP being a legal tool that is left up to the court's interpretation each time there is a claim of neglect or injustice regarding the treatment of Indigenous people.

Housing available in Nunavik in 21st century

The increases in the overall housing stock in Nunavik has been almost completely met through the supply of social housing, even today. Despite some of incentives for private homeownership mentioned above, those solutions and programming have, as of yet, not made a significant dent in the numbers. According to the 2001 Statistics Canada numbers, 93% of the housing in Nunavik was social housing (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90). A decade later, there were still only a minimal number of private residences. For example, in Salluit in 2010, only 3 out of 235 units (1.2%) were private residences (Ruffin

and Alaku 2011, 161), and in the biggest community of Kuujjuaq, only 5.6% of the houses were privately owned (2011 Statistics Canada numbers quoted in Breton and Cloutier 2017, 95). In 2005, only 2.6% of the houses in all of Nunavik were privately owned (Grey, Mittenthal, and Stenbæk 2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:250).[112] In a 2017 news article, it stated that "only 3.2 percent of Nunavik Inuit live in their own homes, compared with 21.9 percent in Nunavut and 72.4 per cent in Nunatsiavut" (Bell 2017a).

In 2021, the KMHB website indicated that 98% of the Nunavik population is housed thanks to their housing programs. It was managing 3626 housing units in early 2021. The mission of KMHB is to provide "comfortable, safe and affordable houses adapted to the needs and culture of the Inuit. Through its programs and services, it contributes to the development of dynamic, sustainable and safe communities"(NHB 2024). However, stating that ninety-eight percent of the population is "housed" thanks to the MKHB's programs does not account for the conditions in which Inuit are housed (i.e. many people living in overcrowded units or the quality of housing).

Pilot projects in Nunavik

New projects and ideas are also being introduced to Nunavik. In 2019, a few pre-built "tiny homes" were sealifted to Kuujjuaq (Anselmi 2019a). Designed and developed by a builder from the South who had worked for years as a plumber and furnace repair person in Nunavik, Claude Dubois created a new type of house for Nunavimmiut that would address several of the issues he had learned about through his work, such as: problematic plumbing and heating options, longevity of the buildings due to quality issues,

[112] These numbers seemed skewed to me or unaccounted for: if 93% of housing is social housing in 2000, and 5 years later only 2.6 are private, does that mean there is a small percentage that are not social but rental housing? Or is the discrepancy of about 4% the difference in the way government employees' housing is factored in?

offering a design that can accommodate add-ons to enlarge the house with extra bedrooms, and affordability (Anselmi 2019a). The private company called Nunavik Building is based in Kuujjuaq and Sherbrooke, Quebec. It claims it is responding to the need of Inuit and committed to finding solutions for the housing shortage. Based on the comments in the media by readers of the Nunatsiaq News where the story was reported, there are Inuit who were disappointed that the houses were built in the South and had not provided jobs to Inuit in the North. They remained skeptical of the claim that a one-bedroom tiny home for $228,000 was considered "affordable," and they saw ongoing problems with the design that did not include a covered entryway. Then there were those who expressed approval with having more options in Nunavik to choose from, and even encouraged others to consider the option. Readers mentioned the potential accessibility to this new housing option when considering the up-to-75% subsidy that they may qualify for through the Kativik homeownership program, or the option that purchasing a group of houses as housing cooperative would qualify them for even more subsidies, which would indeed make this option affordable to more Inuit (based on readers' comments in the news article by Anselmi 2019a).

The most interesting thing about this housing option is that it begins to provide choices and widen the range of possibilities for housing for Inuit. What is more difficult to reconcile is the manner in which such a housing option becomes mixed up in the ongoing North-South question of who has control, who makes decisions, who benefits, and who gets to have a say and contribute to the process of having options. The privatization of housing is not a simple answer in the Nunavik context, nor in the context of Inuit-state political relations and unfulfilled promises. It remains to be unpacked alongside the questions of

land management, land categories, the JBNQA, Inuit self-government, self-determination, and autonomy.

While there has been repeated reports and talk in government about supporting and alleviating the housing difficulties in Canada's north, the reality is that back in 1998, the CMHC announced it would gradually reduce its support for housing in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. This would mean that by 2037 there would be no more federal contributions to housing in those territories by CMHC (Bell 2017a). This projection of the federal housing corporation's intentions in the North is not promising for Nunavik. As housing stocks grow in these regions, the need and costs to maintain and repair the existing units also increase, while the funds for new builds seem to become more and more scarce. The Senate Report showed that the model whereby the housing industry in the North will start to pay for itself through returns has not worked due to the high cost of repairs and construction (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 26).

Organizations, Committees, and Working groups related to housing in Nunavik

> During a recent policy consultation process hosted by a government of Quebec department, representatives of northern communities articulated their exasperation, saying:
>
> > ***It is difficult to see how the various departmental plans fit together and the overarching vision that guides them, despite the existence of departmental coordination mechanisms and unifying planning tools[113] (Québec 2021a, 15 my translation).***

[113] Original: "En outre, les représentants des communautés autochtones estiment qu'il est difficile de voir comment les différentes planifications ministérielles s'arriment entre elles et avec la vision globale qui les guide, en dépit de l'existence de mécanismes ministériels de coordination et d'outils de planification fédérateurs." (Québec 2021a, 15).

To understand where we are today in terms of housing, it is important to know that there are numerous organizations and governmental bodies that have a hand in housing in Nunavik. Each organization has a specific role in the larger part of the housing process. The roles and responsibilities of each vary greatly and the dealings between the organizations are complex, with representatives coming together at multiple different committees, forums, and working groups to deliberate housing issues, housing goals, and housing solutions. Some organizations are regional Nunavik organizations, and Inuit have roles in many of these bodies and groupings. Through these venues, they have a greater voice than ever before in the formal housing process. However, the many layers of consultation, knowledge sharing, negotiating, and decision-making has created a level of structural complexity that Inuit must navigated to get results.

In Appendix B, I provide an overview of this structure in two parts. The first part of the table is a list of organizations and bodies that have a hand in Inuit housing in Nunavik at some level. In Part two of the table, I provide a list of meetings and forums where these representatives of these bodies come together where Nunavik housing issues are deliberated, lobbied, negotiated, and in some cases, decided. There are so many different parts to the housing process, so many actors involved, so many different authorities and decision-makers, that it is difficult to get a clear overarching view of the political landscape of housing. One must then also consider whether the complexity of these multi-layered structures contribute to the persistence of the housing problems in Nunavik.

Seeing the descriptions and mandates of the groupings, and the members involved in each venue, illustrates processes that expose government forms of control and authority, as well as a growing Inuit handle on aspects of administration and management over their own housing. One could argue that it indicates a gradual shift towards more autonomy for Inuit,

and an increase in the chance of taking back control of their own wellbeing in housing. To present this housing structure establishes the current state of affairs, and allows one to reflect on the limitations of this kind of multi-pronged governing arrangement, to consider the access Inuit have through these organizations and venues to power, influence, and decision-making, and to even contemplate the potential that it might offer.

Overall, it is fair to say that the number of forums in which Inuit participate in discussions about housing in Nunavik have grown over the decades. While opening up more venues for Inuit to participate in housing negotiations and discussions, it is a complex structure of consultation, dialogue, recommendations, and decision-making. Inuit participate mostly through the institutional level, with representatives of either KRG, Makivik, KMHB, or ITK attending meetings or providing submissions and reports. The roles of these organizations at these tables are at best in an advisory capacity, such as by providing recommendations to decision-making bodies. However, the role of Inuit in direct policy decision-making about their own housing situation has not changed. Nevertheless, their input can have an influential role, and their presence at these bodies and committees has given them a voice.

But it is enough? Is it a political voice? Do the values of mutual respect and integrity guide the format of these meetings? Is there space made in these venues for Inuit to voice their concerns and suggest new paths in ways that respect their own ontological and epistemological knowledge? Or do Western assumptions about what is "good" for Inuit continue to dominate? I cannot bear witness to past dialogues, but the outcomes in the form of housing policies analyzed below will reveal the legal, moral, and ethical form of the Inuit state relationship through housing. If, in the Appendix, the long list of many organizations and committees appear to be never-ending, overlapping, and sometimes

indistinguishable—it is because they are.

Part I Summary

Overall, it is largely agreed that Inuit have had a bigger role in housing and municipal planning since the year 2000 than they had prior to that. The creation of the regional KMHB played a major part in this change. Even more directly, Inuit have created these new scenarios by insisting on the creation of more local organizations and committees that now advise regional or provincial bodies. Breton and Cloutier (2017) maintain that in general, after 2000, "Inuit rationality" was better represented in planning and housing despite the ongoing "omnipresence" of state: "the local and regional authorities have affirmed their desire and capacity to take charge of the planning file, particularly through housing management and development"[114] (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90). Breton and Cloutier (2017) argued that the local interventions and inventions are superseding some of the more conventional municipal governance models (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90). Frustrations remain high, however, and the realities on the ground remain unresolved. Researchers have contended that colonialism and contact should not be seen as the *sole* contributing factor for the current social suffering in Inuit communities, saying that some communities have also been caught in a kind of self-perpetuation of problems which could be addressed through collective action by the communities themselves to create their own healthy social environments (Kirmayer, Fletcher, and Watt 2009, 310), a path that I argue would be greatly served by having appropriate essential living conditions first.

With regards to life in Nunavik, the number of political actions by Inuit and the personal anecdotes indicate that many, if not most, Inuit want to continue living in

[114] Original French: "les instances régionales et locales ont affirmé leur volonté et leur capacité à prendre en charge le dossier de l'aménagement, notamment par le biais de la gestion et du développement de l'habitation."

Nunavik, in their own communities. The Sallumiut want to continue living in Salluit (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 163). The Quaqtamiut are deeply connected to their permanent settlement of Quaqtaq where their identity is connected both to the traditional values and beliefs and the modern setting (Dorais 1997). The Parnasimautik consultations showed the commitment Inuit have to their homeland. There is an attachment, as sense of belonging, a desire to stay in Nunavik, to be connected to their territory, and to make things work out in their villages, despite Inuit demanding big changes. And Inuit agreed collectively at the Parnasimautik Nunavik Forum that "it is important for Nunavik Inuit to participate on all forums, tables, committees and working groups created by the governments concerning development of the north" (Makivik 2014c).

PART II: Who gains? Who loses? And by what mechanisms of power?

> ***Why, in spite of substantive progress over the past 40 years, including remarkable achievements such as land claims agreements, Constitutional inclusion and precedent-setting court rulings, does the (Canadian) Arctic continue to exhibit the worst national social indicators for basic wellness? Why, with all the hard-earned tools of empowerment, do many individuals and families not feel empowered and healthy?***

Mary Simon quoted in
Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (2019, page 17)

Introduction to Part II:

Knowing where we are going with regards to housing for Inuit does not necessarily unearth *why* we are headed in that direction or what kind of structures are in place that uphold the path we are on, for better or for worse. We need more clarity and honesty regarding who benefits and who loses from the current state of affairs (and perhaps there are no winners). But as Foucault would want us to understand, there is an unavoidable power relationship at play. And although it can never be fully eliminated, understanding the link between structures that maintain or obstruct positions of power can help understand where change can be made to bring the power imbalance to a minimum. And to bring about more social justice. Therefore, since the political relationship between Nunavimmiut and the state is a treaty relationship, I will start with an analysis of that 1975 pact, the JBNQA.

Following this, I analyze the evolution of the political relationship in terms of how it affects housing. The federal and provincial governments have made moves to renewing the Indigenous-state relationship and the Inuit-state relationship, stating shared values to move

forward together. I analyze these "soft promises" as an example of the government's ethical response to their treaty responsibilities and duties, promises that reveal the values that are meant to guide future decisions and processes.

Common sense would suggest that with the legal obligations of the treaty and the declarations of shared values in the soft promises, these principles would shine through in ensuing government policies and action plans—the place where actions take shape and results should show. The housing policy analysis that follows is therefore approached using a practical ethical knowledge to judge the governments' policy promises in the context of the values expressed in the soft promises. By examining the intentions and targets of a policy, one can uncover underlying assumptions regarding what is right, what is considered a "normal" or suitable approach to housing solutions, and expected outcomes of the policies. It will reveal how these assumptions are in fact ways of maintaining the dominant view of the policy-makers, of those who make the decisions, because it fits into their view of the world.

Chapter 5: The JBNQA – The foundation of all policies in Nunavik

> ***To date, the federal government has not recognized a universal entitlement to government-financed housing as either a treaty right or an Aboriginal right. It has taken the position that assistance for housing is provided as a matter of social policy, and its Aboriginal housing policy has been based on this premise. Thus, assistance has been based on "need". Federal, provincial, territorial and local governments have made a major commitment to assistance for housing for all Canadians.[115]***

The foundational agreement bringing Canada, Quebec, and Nunavik together in a joint purpose, was the signing of the *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* (JBNQA) in 1975. Today, when Nunavimmiut want to advance their case for more and better housing, the responsibilities of signatories prescribed in the JBNQA are what Inuit can rely on as a legal and constitutional argument to support their case. The JBNQA has played the major role in the formation of the Kativik region and the Northern Villages today. It was the means by which the three central Inuit-specific governing institutions (including KRG and Makivik)[116] were designated to function as a municipality. These institutions have become essential tools for Inuit to have a certain level of governance and control over their society, within the parameters of the provincial municipal system. However, demands for more control and governance for Inuit have to be negotiated with the province *and* with Canada, as set by the parameters of the JBNQA. Seen increasingly as

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[115] RCAP 1996, Volume 3, Chapter 4, p.349

[116] There are other key Inuit-led institutions, such as Kativik Ilisarniliriniq (the Kativik School Board) which has jurisdiction for education across Nunavik, and which was also enshrined through the JBNQA. I do not include documents pertaining to KI in my analysis and story of housing, even though they do get some funding and provide housing units for some teachers and employees. Also, one of the Supplementary Agreements of the JBNQA ensured that Kativik region would have its own regionally designated health services. The ensuing Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS) is part of a provincial health delivery system which falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Public Health but is adapted to regional realities, according to the NRBHSS website, so this could also be considered an "Inuit-specific" institution.

a *living document*, there is always more room for interpretation of the original text. The JBNQA plays an important role in today's political relationship between Inuit and the two main levels of government. It is part of the historical and political context of today's negotiations. Also, it was a pivotal experience for Inuit. Though almost fifty years ago, many from that generation still mark it as a significant event today.

If the JBNQA is the foundation of all future policies affecting Nunavimmiut today, what was the foundation of the JBNQA? The JBNQA was signed by Quebec in order to proceed with their goal, which was to construct the biggest hydroelectric project in history. This project was about building Quebec's economy and sovereignty, as detailed in Desbiens' (2013) in-depth exposé on Québec's culture of hydroelectricity in her book *Power from the North*. Premier Robert Bourassa was intent on ensuring a stable economic state as well as elevating national pride. The distinct economic needs of the growing nationalist movement meant that economic decisions overrode or directly influenced the way everything was going to be managed. As Bourassa said: "To make decisions on the economy, on public administration, is also at the same time to manage the social sphere, the human sphere, according to the needs and aspirations of human beings" (Bourassa quoted in Desbiens 2013, 23). This economic lens with which all human needs would be understood and answered is arguably still apparent in Quebec policies today.

The hydroelectric project was also a matter of occupying the territory, conquering it in fact, as a region designated at that time as a "non-organized territory" (Desbiens 2013, 26–27). It was only through the determination of Indigenous leaders fighting for their land and for recognition of their knowledge and modes of governance that eventually upset what was meant to be a clear path for the government (Desbiens 2013, 27).

Since the JBNQA set the stage for all forms of development, funding, and Inuit-state agreements that would follow, it is worth examining how the Quebec government viewed the people they were forced to negotiate with from 1972 to 1975, and the rationality they used to justify it.

The JBNQA as a demonstration of power

The *Philosophy of the Agreement* is an eight-page text that is included as a kind of foreword to the text of the JBNQA. It reveals the view government had of the Inuit at the time of the negotiations. The *Philosophy of the Agreement* was written to speak to Quebec society, though it is clearly not talking *to* Inuit since they are "the Other" in this address. It articulates the Government of Quebec's values and showed how they had positioned themselves within the Inuit-state relationship in 1975. The statement expressed a recognition that there had been past wrongs, while it also reminds the audience of Quebec's size and power next to the small ("tiny," as stated) Indigenous nations with which it had had to negotiate. Arguably, it can be said that subsequent government statements, policies, inquiries and commissions have been on a gradual path towards more recognition of past wrongs, employing new language, and acknowledging the detrimental colonial acts of the Euro-Canadian governments. This is not a path, however, that has acknowledged that there are harms and a persistence of colonial tendencies today.

The JBNQA was signed between Canada, Quebec, and the Inuit. The *Philosophy of the Agreement* was authored by a Quebecer. John Ciaccia was the negotiator, member of the National Assembly, and Special Representative of Premier Robert Bourassa. The

address[117] was a display of Quebec's sovereignty and power. It was peppered with possessive terms parading Quebec's sovereignty over the North and its people, such as: "our obligations to the native peoples who inhabit *our* north" (Canada et al. 1975, 5 emphasis mine) and "we were in a position to remove any lingering possibility of dispute as to Quebec's rights to this vast territory" (Canada et al. 1975, 6). It also contained rational arguments based on Enlightenment ideals, with the need to organize the territory in a way that made sense to the Western mind by transforming Northern Quebec with "the *rational* organization of a territory of 410,000 square-miles—with all that this objective implies" (Canada et al. 1975, 5 emphasis mine).

In fact, this speech was an pure expression of power and rationalized the need to maintain power. Ciaccia assumed that what his audience wanted to hear was that Quebec will maintain its authority over all of its delineated territory. He said: "It would be natural to assume that Quebec has always been fully exercising its powers and authority everywhere in its domain, that the structures of the state have made Quebec's presence felt everywhere within its boundaries. But that has not exactly been the case" and he proceeded to explain how Quebec would remedy its previous lack of power over the northern territory. They would do it by "grasp[ing] the opportunity to ensure that it is planned and orderly developed, with a human dimension" (Canada et al. 1975, 5). It was also "normal and natural" for Quebec to "assume its responsibilities for [the native peoples of its Northern territory], as it does for the rest of the population" (Canada et al. 1975, 6). This particular top-down order of power was presented as a perfectly natural condition in Ciaccia's speech. The impression is given that the government intends to treat Indigenous people with the

[117] I have made the assumption that this text must have been delivered orally at one point, based on the somewhat more informal style of the text.

same care and responsibility as it does for the rest of the population, offering "the services that are available to all other citizens of Quebec" (Canada et al. 1975, 9). This same claim will be frequently found in Indigenous policies and action plans in the years and decades to come. It props up the idea that "equality" is leading the cause and actions of the government, though we know today that this remains unfulfilled.

Power and dominance of Quebec is expressed repeatedly throughout the speech. For example, it was Quebec alone who was responsible for "clarifying their [the native people's] position" (i.e. for Quebec to clarify the position of Indigenous people vis-à-vis the government). With the JBNQA, the previously unfulfilled obligation from the Act of 1912 regarding the original transfer of land from Canada to Quebec would be fulfilled. And it was Canada who had set the parameters regarding which "mandated representatives of the Indian Bands of Quebec" (Canada et al. 1975, 6) were to be negotiated with—another relic of power and dominance maintained by federal and provincial entities who relied on decisions made over sixty years earlier without any Inuit involvement.

Power was expressed when addressing his audience—Ciaccia's presumably non-Indigenous audience—when he reassured them that they need not worry that Quebec had given Inuit and Cree too much land. Lest the government's duty towards native peoples infringe on Quebec's sovereign right to exploit all corners of the territory, Ciaccia assured his audience that the Category I lands (lands reserved for Inuit (or Cree) exclusive use, located in and around their communities) were too small to concern Quebec's exploitation plans.[118] He said: "Now to see the Category 1 lands in their proper perspective, it must be realized that they represent a tiny proportion of the whole territory. [...] you will agree that

[118] Note that mineral and sub-surface rights on Category I lands would remain in the jurisdiction of Quebec, not Inuit, as well as expropriation rights for public uses such as roads, transmission lines or pipelines.

they are of minimal importance in relation to the total economy of Quebec" (Canada et al. 1975, 8). One cannot help but wonder how he would have chosen his words when speaking to his Inuit and Cree negotiators regarding how "tiny" and of "minimal importance" the lands were that they would be getting.

Alongside this overt and presumably desirable position of dominance, Quebec also claimed it was remedying past harms through this treaty—harms that arguably arose out of the government's history of imposed control and enforcement of its Western "rationalization" of the way Inuit should behave and live on the land. But this internal contradiction was lost on the speaker. Ciaccia stated that through this treaty "Quebec has rejected paternalism as a policy for dealing with the native peoples" (Canada et al. 1975, 9). The manner in which they would reject paternalism was by acknowledging the citizenship of Indigenous people: "The Government proposes to deal with the native peoples as full-fledged citizens" (Canada et al. 1975, 9) and they would "become full participants in the life of Quebec" (Canada et al. 1975, 12). Quebec would also allow them to have administrative powers, as long as these powers were incorporated into southern governance structures, the same structures found in the rest of Quebec (Canada et al. 1975, 9). It was a thin definition of anti-paternalism. Ciaccia made it sound as if Quebec was rejecting the concept of Indigenous people being "wards of the state" when he said: "We are not creating shelters or confinements for wards of the State, for the simple reason that the concept expressed in the Agreement aims at wiping out the stigma attached to being a ward of the State" (Canada et al. 1975, 10). This wording revealed that Inuit and Cree were still going to be regarded as "wards of the state," minus the *stigma*.

Quebec claimed that its future treatment of Indigenous beneficiaries was motivated by the fact that they have a right to participate in their own administration, and that Quebec

is "required" to take into consideration the "well-being and interests of the people [in the North]" (Canada et al. 1975, 7). This statement of care and concern must be placed side-by-side with the actual reason for Quebec's new interest in the North (i.e. economics and resource opportunities). The negotiations with the Cree and Inuit did not arise *because of* Quebec's care and concern for their wellbeing. No. They arose because Quebec and Canada were *forced* to negotiate due to Inuit and Cree public protests and work stoppages.

The language used by Quebec is one of aid, implying that Quebec will take responsibility for the welfare of the Indigenous peoples who are part of the treaty. However, a treaty is not about aid. It is an agreement that describes an exchange whereby I argue *both* sides of the negotiation hinge on a belief that goes something like this: *We each want something here, and we are each making claims about our right to these things (lands, waters, our own governance, decision-making, control over our affairs). We need this agreement to explain how we will be compensated for the fact that you are taking or claiming something of ours that now infringes on our own capacity to fulfill our goals, future opportunities, needs, and wellbeing. Therefore, you owe us.* This is not an agreement based on goodwill or care or concern. It is agreement based on a basic concept of exchange and compensation. And this is how the duty to each other arises. The agreement is based on duty, and also on trust. Trust is required to believe that each signatory will in fact *care* enough to fulfill their end of the bargain. In this way it is a kind of partnership, and ongoing exchange of duties between the signatories. A partnership of equals, equals regardless of who gained more in terms of *undisputed control over more land and control over their own affairs*, and which side negotiated for *a larger exchange of monies, support for development, and control over their own affairs*.

However, the Statement of Philosophy does not demonstrate that Quebec saw anything akin to equality or partnership with Indigenous people. In fact, it is framed within the language of *minority rights*—an approach still found in some Indigenous policies today. This conception of Indigenous people as "minorities," as well as "cultural minorities," is not a recognition of Indigenous people as nations holding Indigenous rights (this came several years later when Aboriginal rights and treaty rights were recognized and affirmed in the 1982 Constitution Act). In 1975, Quebec confirmed that it viewed Inuit as minorities. In fact Ciaccia described them not just as "a different culture who are in minority position (sic)" but indeed that "they are very *tiny* minorities" (Canada et al. 1975, 10 emphasis mine).

Ciaccia even seemed to imply that Quebec's role in the JBNQA was a kind of grand gesture of generosity performed by a more powerful entity. He said: "their [Crees and Inuit] fate as collectivities would be sealed if the Government of Quebec were not determined to give their culture the chance of survival as long as it has vitality, and as long as they wish their culture to survive" (Canada et al. 1975, 10–11). Here, Quebec was hinting at its power to eradicate these people's culture if they could not demonstrate their "vitality." This is an overt statement of power and hegemony, with the power to *seal their fate*. It was reinforced with the view of Indigenous people not as peoples with societal structures and governance methods, but as undefined "collectivities." Describing the small Inuit and Cree populations as people "scattered throughout that territory," (Canada et al. 1975, 6) downplayed their history, autonomy, governance methods, justice system, and it also denied Inuit sovereignty over the land. How could they have sovereignty over this land when from the Western gaze, "it [the territory] has seen very little change in the three centuries that white men have had some contact with it" (Canada et al. 1975, 6)? Thus

implying that the land *and* the people needed to be uplifted by the powers of Quebec to be more "productive." And therefore through this Treaty: "they [the native peoples] are put on a new and more dignified footing, as a collectivity, than they have known in the past." Moreover, "we [Quebecers] are giving cultural minorities the chance of collective survival" (Canada et al. 1975, 9–10). Indeed, it was a gift Canada and Quebec was giving unto them! (is sarcasm permitted in a dissertation?)

Subjecting the tropes and stereotypes depicted in the speech to anthropological critique, we know how harmful it is to relegate only those Indigenous peoples who practice "traditional" activities as the "authentic Indian." But this is precisely what Ciaccia did. He went further to say that the Cree and Inuit displayed a "real and genuine" relationship to the land and they perform every day practices that are based on a long tradition (Canada et al. 1975, 11). This was what gained the respect of the South. To be acceptable to the Quebec public, it had to be reassured that *these* were the Indigenous people who would be benefitting from the JBNQA. He contrasted the Cree and Inuit with whom they had negotiated to other Indigenous people that would presumably *not* have been worthy of that respect and negotiating status; he said they were "not the people you see in our cities selling artwork and handicrafts. They are not people who offer themselves as a tourist attraction. They are not people who do odd jobs and live on pizzas and other delicacies of our supposedly advanced southern civilization" (Canada et al. 1975, 11). He is clearly implying here that "those kinds" of Indigenous people would not deserve respect or recognition. His shocking statement (shocking presumably only in hindsight with our current political correctness?) was just another example of Quebec's ignorance of the effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples across the country, and its complete failure to understand the very

complex identities, knowledge,,and choices they have had to make, due to the unfettered colonization of their communities by settler-colonial governments.

To be fair, the Special Representative of Premier Robert Bourassa did reveal, in the following sentence, a level of respect for a society in harmony, with a vital relationship to the land: "They are flesh-and-blood people who live and work in communion with the land they inhabit [...] They are living, if I may say so, a wholesome life in harmony with the land. They are at peace with nature" (Canada et al. 1975, 11). However, this is also an oft-repeated stereotype that fails to recognize Indigenous forms of governance, justice, complex social relations and economies that are more than a set of practices conducted by individuals and an undefined group of "collectivities." His statement diminishes and confines their identities to this one "indefinable" characteristic that is not relatable to our contemporary values. It is a way of reinforcing the government's rationality that imposes Western ways to organize the land, and impose a governance system in Inuit communities. It is another form of dominance.

It is important to understand these particular values and rationalities of the government entities the Inuit were negotiating with at the time of signing the Agreement. Perceptions of them continued to be colonial, despite statements to the contrary. Indigenous identities were assumed, stereotyped, and certain practices were required in order to be given respect, voice, or even to be considered Indigenous (Cree or Inuit, etc.), and to be considered worthy of negotiating with.

It must also be stated that governments today, just as the government at the time, believe in the capitalist system. In the 1970s, Quebec relied fully on the belief that capitalist corporations were the answer to creating wellbeing for citizens. Hydroelectric development was going to create growth and wealth for all Quebecers, and likewise, the development of

the North was going to benefit Northerners. Faith in the motivations of for-profit companies was so strong that three corporations were given status in the JBNQA, namely, Quebec Hydroelectric Commission, the James Bay Energy Corporation, and the James Bay Development Corporation. Quebec staunchly believed that "due to their [the companies'] experience and to the decisions that they have constantly take in the interests (sic) of all the people of Quebec" (Canada et al. 1975, 5–6), these corporations brought incomparable value not only to economic goals, but to the overall development of Quebec society. Together, one can only imagine the political and economic power that this partnership presented, in comparison to the concerns of the very "tiny" minorities that they were forced to accommodate. And after all, "there is no question of stopping development" (Canada et al. 1975, 11). So, how, indeed, was this social, economic, resource development going to benefit the Inuit and the Cree?

The JBNQA as it addresses housing and governance

The JBNQA is has a legally-binding text that must be interpreted to be implemented. It established the geographical, legal, constitutional, institutional, and political foundations for housing in Nunavik. It divided the territory and assigned responsibilities to each party. Today, Quebec social and economic policies relevant to Nunavik often include a preamble about respecting the tenets of the JBNQA and NEQA.[119] To understand the connection between the JBNQA obligations and housing policies in Nunavik, one must return to the actual text of the Agreement. In fact, the housing issue was handled in very vague terms back in 1975, with little precision. In fact, the wording in JBNQA was criticized early on in

[119] The NEQA (Northeastern Quebec Agreement) is a land claim agreement signed in 1978 by the Naskapi Nation, Canada, and Quebec, similar to what the Cree and Inuit had negotiated three years earlier in the JBNQA.

the 1982 Tait Report for being "vague, ambitious and open to widely varying interpretations" (KRG and Makivik 2010, 353). And so housing has become a central piece of contention, with repeated accusations that governments have failed to fulfill JBNQA promises.

Housing responsibilities were addressed on two separate tracks in the JBNQA, tracks that I argue do not sufficiently overlap, creating instead a divide between the housing programs and funding on the one hand, and the care and responsibility put on the shoulders of Inuit organizations to ensure the wellbeing of their people and communities. On the first path, it stated in the JBNQA that the existing provision of housing (at that time) simply *shall continue* (in whatever undefined form and by whichever government entity was responsible for this "existing provision"). It shall continue *until property and housing management is transferred* to the municipalities. One was to assume that the municipality will then have the duty to manage housing. No specifics were drawn out with regards to the condition of housing, construction, tenure, or what would be considered *satisfactory* housing before or after the transfer of management. The only other stipulation given was that the housing stock should *respond to population trends*. On the other path, Makivik Corporation was given a mandate to address several things through the JBNQA, including the *relief of poverty*, the *welfare*, and the *development and improvement of Inuit communities*. Housing, or lack of housing, is directly related to poverty, welfare, and community development. Though since housing was not specifically mentioned, one can only interpret the meaning to *assume* Makivik had a responsibility to ensure communities had sufficient and adequate housing as part of this umbrella mandate. This tenet, found in Section 27 of the JBNQA called "Inuit Legal Entities," states that "The Inuit Development Corporation" (later named Makivik Corporation), was established:

> a) to receive the Compensation and to administer and invest the Compensation and the revenues therefrom;
> b) the relief of poverty, the welfare and the advancement of education of the Inuit;
> c) the development and the improvement of Inuit communities (Canada et al. 1975, 307)

Makivik was created to represent Inuit beneficiaries, to manage the compensation from the JBNQA, and upon request, to support Inuit organizations, especially in ensuring the principles of the JBNQA are reflected in all subsequent government policies and programs (Makivik 1999, 54). And Makivik has taken on a substantial role with regards to housing, especially housing construction.

Another central part of the JBNQA was the provision to create local and regional governance systems that would be implemented in the years and decades following the signing, including the creation of the Kativik Regional Governemnt (KRG). In a section of the *Kativik Act* which was included in the JBNQA (in Section 13 Schedule 2), the "Competence of the Regional Government" was described as the power to "have competence" over health and social services, economic development, and local administration (Canada et al. 1975, 183–84). The role of KRG in housing is to determine in which communities housing construction will take place each year. The *Kativik Act* also established that the "Regional Government shall be a municipality for the purposes of the Quebec Housing Corporation Act" (Canada et al. 1975, 187). It is through the JBNQA that Makivik and KRG have the responsibility to deliver on housing needs in Nunavik.

The direct reference to Inuit housing in the JBNQA is found in Section 29, *Inuit Economic and Social Development*,[120] in these following three sub-sections:

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[120] Not only Section 29 refers to housing, but also Section 4 called *Preliminary Territorial Descriptions* makes reference to housing for Inuit. Since the community of Great Whale River (Kuujjuarapik in Inuktitut and Whapmagoostui in Cree) is located at the junction between Eeyou Istchee and Nunavik, it has both Inuit

> 29.0.40: The **existing provision of housing**, electricity, water, sanitation and related municipal services **to Inuit shall continue, taking into account population trends,** until a unified system, including the transfer of property and housing management to the municipalities, can be arranged between the Regional Government, the municipalities and Canada and Quebec.
> 29.0.41: Following the execution of the Agreement, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development shall decide the allocation of Inuit houses in consultation with the Inuit of Quebec. This arrangement will continue until the program is transferred.
> 29.0.42: The Agreement guarantees that the Inuit of Fort George shall receive new housing for all families under either the Indian or the Northern housing schemes. The Inuit housing shall be provided according to not less than the population ratio of the Cree and Inuit of Fort George[121] and concurrent with the provisions of Cree housing (Canada et al. 1975, 329).[122]

This is the extent of the reassurance in the JBNQA that housing will be provided for the Inuit population in Nunavik. As part of a huge overarching treaty that involves these said "vast" tracts of land (a term Ciaccia insisted on using to refer to the size of this territory (Canada et al. 1975, 6)) housing for Inuit must be seen as part of the exchange for the government's full reorganization and control of the territory Inuit that have always called *home*.

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and Cree residents. Therefore, special accommodation for housing was referenced in Section 4. The subsection 8 refers to Great Whale River. In this subsection 8.1.3, it is specified that separate allotments of Category I lands should be given to each the Cree and the Inuit residents:
"Such Category IA lands for the Crees and Category I lands for the Inuit shall be allocated in such a way as to take into account existing and future housing needs of both Cree and Inuit members of the community. In general, the Cree Category IA lands shall include areas of Cree housing and the portion of the above six square miles lying along the Great Whale River and inland; the Inuit Category I lands shall include areas of Inuit housing, taking into account Cree housing needs, and the coast" (Canada et al. 1975, 50).

[121] Fort George is current day Chisasibi. It is a village in Eeyou Istchee (or Cree territory). There have been a few hundred Inuit living in Chisasibi since long before the signing of the JBNQA. The Inuit in Chisasibi are therefore referred to as an exception since their location is outside of the Nunavik territory but within the larger *James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement* territory, and therefore will received the same considerations and services as other Inuit in Nunavik.

[122] There is also a section in the JBNQA addressing housing for Inuit in the South. In a part of Section 15 *Health and Social Services (Inuit),* there is a section that describes that the services to be provided for Inuit travelling to the South or "returning to their homes in the North" was to be reviewed by a working group with "the intention of expeditiously organizing, a broad range of support services, including but not limited to assistance with transportation and housing, translation, and counseling, might be made available to Inuit travelling to centers in the south or returning to their homes in the north" (Canada et al. 1975, 201).

Lastly, in terms of government responsibilities towards the Nunavimmiut, Section 29 on Inuit Economic and Social Development clarified that both governments would *continue to* have responsibilities:

> 29.0.2 Programs, funding and technical assistance presently provided by Canada and Québec, and the obligations of the said governments with respect to such **programs and funding shall continue to apply to the Inuit of Québec on the same basis as to other Indians and Inuit of Canada** in the case of federal programs, and to other Indians in Québec in the case of provincial programs, subject to the criteria established from time to time for the application of such programs, and to general parliamentary approval of such programs and funding (Canada et al. 1975, 322).

The next step was to implement the Agreement. In the following years, policies and programs would be put forward by federal and provincial governments regarding economic and social development, in an attempt at interpreting responsibilities, meaning, and the shape of implementation. Unfortunately, more formal implementation agreements have *not* included all three signatories of the JBNQA. This has created enduring difficulties for Inuit when negotiating with governments.

For example, the 1981 *Northern Quebec Transfer Agreement* was a bilateral agreement between Quebec and Canada with regards to how funds would be transferred from Canada to Quebec. It also enabled the transition of municipal services such as housing to Quebec (KRG and Makivik 2010, 350). A dearth in housing had already been growing at that time, and Nunavik leaders refused to endorse the Transfer Agreement without a promise to include extra support for infrastructure, services, and more housing (KRG and Makivik 2010, 350). The fact that Inuit did not support this Agreement did not change the course that Canada and Quebec were on.

In 1990, the bilateral *Agreement Respecting the Implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement Between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of*

Canada and Makivik Corporation was signed (Canada and Makivik 1990). It had included a dispute resolution mechanism for Nunavik and Canada that had not been included in the original JBNQA. It was a new tool at the disposal of Inuit. Despite this, Inuit leaders would still have to negotiate between both governments on all files for Inuit beneficiaries to "enjoy the cultural, political, social and economic rights and benefits provided for in the agreement by the governments of Quebec and Canada" (Makivik 1999, 52). As Makivik Corporation put it in 1999:

> The absence of a formal tripartite implementation mechanism puts Makivik in the awkward position of continually meeting one government, then the other, in an attempt to coordinate various implementation files. This system has proved to be cumbersome and inefficient when dealing on issues requiring input and contribution from both governments (Makivik 1999, 52).

The imbalance here in terms of how power panned out of the JBNQA is that the Province of Quebec received a fixed entity: Land. Land that was demarcated, categorized, and defined for specific uses. The Inuit, however, we given a fixed initial lump sum for compensation, and then loosely defined provisions for variable forms of support for social, cultural, and economic development—basically something that would always require ongoing negotiation, requests, demands, and ultimately, compromise. Because when governments do not see things the same way as their counterparts at negotiating tables, there is only one outcome, someone gains and someone loses. Those with more to lose, such as those dealing with emergency, crisis conditions, will *not* leave the table empty handed in the end—there is too much at stake. But they will also lack the power and pressure to get what they actually need.

A decade later, a significant follow-up economic agreement was again a bilateral one, between Quebec and Nunavik, called the 2002 Sanarrutik Agreement *Entente de*

partenariat sur le développement économique et communautaire au Nunavik. It spans a twenty-five year period (until 2027) and relates to development goals in the JBNQA, supporting the roles that Quebec and the Inuit entities (including KRG and Makivik) had agreed to in the JBNQA. One of the objectives of Sanarrutik was to support the increased autonomy of KRG and Makivik (Makivik, KRG, and Québec 2002, 2). However, despite being about community development, this partnership Agreement did not address housing in Nunavik. Community development and housing are not usually addressed together, nor through one single source of funding or action plan. Sanarrutik deals instead with crucial community infrastructure that is required in order to provide housing—infrastructure as diverse as the delivery of electricity to houses to the loading docks for receiving shipped construction materials.

Notably, there were some housing agreements signed since 2000 that have included all three parties. The title of these series of agreements specifically indicated that they were implementing the JBNQA: *Entente concernant la mise en oeuvre de La Convention de la Baie James et du Nord Québécois en matière de logement au Nunavik*. Through these, Canada and Quebec were responding *in part* to their commitments as signatories of the JBNQA. I say "in part" since the housing Agreements have not been "taking into account population trends" and growth as stipulated in Section 29.0.40 of the JBNQA (Canada et al. 1975, 329). Moreover, due to the significant slow down in new housing construction in Nunavik throughout most of the 1990s (Québec 2001, 41), the desperate conditions and housing needs in Nunavik increased exponentially before the first five-year agreement came about in 2000. The five-year Housing Agreements would be renewed in 2005, 2010, and again in 2015, though in 2015 it required several one-year renewals during a stalemate between signatories before finally assenting to a new five-year agreement.

It was maintained by governments that JBNQA obligations were being fulfilled with these tripartite housing agreements. The 2010-2014 *JBNQ Agreement on Housing in Nunavik* stated that the signing of this shall resolve any disputes about responsibilities laid out in Section 29.0.40 of the JBNQA, as well as any disputes that may have arisen and been resolved through the dispute resolution mechanism (DRM) to date, according to the 1990 JBNQA Implementation Agreement (Makivik et al. 2010, 2). As to whether *all* signatories had the same view that these short-term funding commitments actually fulfilled the responsibilities of both the Canadian and Quebec governments, it is well-known that the Nunavimmiut did *not* agree. And at times (such as in 2015 during the stalemate), they lobbied for greater funding commitments, but eventually would have to acquiesce. That is the reality of being in a crisis situation—there is little bargaining power. Besides, Nunavik leaders have not relented in their lobbying efforts demanding for more funds to meet their housing needs.

The agreements did not alleviate the existing extreme housing shortage, and neither did they provide support to Makivik to fulfill its purpose towards the "improvement of Inuit communities" as set out in Section 27.0.4 c) of the JBNQA (Canada et al. 1975, 307). Makivik's goals as laid out in the Act constituting the Makivik Corporation, stated that it was "b) to fight poverty and promote the wellbeing and education of the Inuit people" and "c) to develop the Inuit communities and perfect their methods" (Québec 2001, 39). Under-funding and short-sightedness in the governments' housing commitments compound ongoing power imbalances, with Inuit organizations and Inuit communities continuing to struggle.

Another mechanism that has prevented Inuit communities from thriving is the lack of long-term commitment between the Nunavimmiut, Quebec, and Canada for housing support. A long-term commitment is what Inuit have insisted on (Makivik 1999, 55) as an essential part of providing reliable consistent housing programs and making efficient construction plans in the logistically complex and geographically remote context of Nunavik.

Chapter 5 Summary

The Nunavimmiut have a keen understanding of the significance of the JBNQA in their dealings with Quebec and Canada. They know all too well how difficult it has been to keep the other two signatories accountable to implement the Agreement. In their vision for Nunavik laid out in their 2010 *Plan Nunavik*, Inuit established the historical and political context to support their argument that they have a treaty right to have their vision of their communities and quality of life fulfilled (KRG and Makivik 2010).

The JBNQA remains central and relevant to their current goals, just as it was during the JBNQA negotiations in the early 1970s. By looking back at the context of the JBNQA it helps place current negotiations into perspective. Through the JBNQA, Quebec claimed full control to develop unfathomably vast tracts of land by signing. Canada believed that signing it meant it would be finally absolved of costly responsibilities over the territory (KRG and Makivik 2010, 350).[123] The only benefit Inuit could foresee in surrendering

[123] While Canada may have released itself of its responsibility to manage the Inuit territory or to create programming for Inuit in Nunavik, it was not released of its responsibility to support Inuit of Nunavik in the same way that it provides for any Inuit in Canada. In Section 29.0.2 of the JBNQA, it was agreed that "Programs, funding and technical assistance presently provided by Canada and Québec, and the obligations of the said governments with respect to such programs and funding shall continue to apply to the Inuit of Québec on the same basis as to other Indians and Inuit of Canada in the case of federal programs" (Canada et al. 1975, 322).

their rights was to secure their traditional way of life (through assurances of sole access to hunting and harvesting rights on the Category II lands) and ultimately to improve their quality of life by having access to capital and operational funding for services and infrastructure to strengthen their communities (KRG and Makivik 2010, 347–48). They knew that the quality of services and life for Inuit in other parts of Canada were better than what they had been receiving in Quebec. This treaty was to provide for better living conditions in their communities, as well as "to have a say in decisions made on the day-to-day affairs that affected the development of their communities" (KRG and Makivik 2010, 348). This was the promise of the JBNQA.

Prior to the JBNQA, one could have made the argument that the government's responsibility towards the Inuit fit into the same box as welfare and poverty alleviation (if one ignores for a moment that Canada forced Inuit into their sedentary villages, which with the loss of their subsistence form of living, essentially caused suffering and dramatic rapid cultural change that resulted) because they did not yet have a legal agreement about how to manage the competing geographies and jurisdictional claims. However, I argue that through the signing of the JBNQA, when governments made clear their intent to exploit the land *in exchange* for providing certain living conditions to Inuit in return, the exchange of which is the essence of the Agreement, Canada and Quebec's responsibilities towards Inuit were no longer a choice but a *duty*. It is literally payment for the land Quebec continues to exploit every day.

The JBNQA may have been formed out of an unbalanced power relationship, yet it had and continues to have value to the Inuit. In 2001, Pita Aatami, the Makivik President, reflected on the last 25 years during a conference at McGill that was looking back at the treaty. Despite evident flaws in the JBNQA, and despite public rumblings about the validity

of comprehensive land claims agreements, he believed this had been an important step for "Aboriginal and Western society to move ahead, and to engage in 'progress' and 'growth' together" (Makivik 2001, 13).[124]

At the most local and regional levels, Inuit and their representative organizations rely on the treaty to hold governments accountable. Arguing in the name of the JBNQA is the most reliable claim Nunavimmiut can make regarding government responsibility, because it is precisely *not* about appealing to the government's goodwill. It is about a legal responsibility enshrined in the Constitution. Policies and accords might be predicated or prejudiced by particular values and ideologies of the government, but the JBNQA should not be beholden to the impulses of a temporarily elected political party. Contrary to accords, policies, and agreements, only the treaty is protected by the Canadian Constitution, giving it a legally binding status. However, as with all laws or legal documents, it is still a matter of interpretation to establish implementation approaches. Nevertheless, it is a living document that should reflect and evolve alongside the changing contemporary conditions, realities, and needs of Inuit.

Perhaps because government signatories of the JBNQA were primarily motivated by economic factors (i.e. hydroelectricity and resource development), that they also held an underlying belief that housing along with many other parts of Inuit life would be resolved through economic stimulation and market forces. In a capitalist system, the economy is the

[124] Without going into a detailed grammatical analysis of Pita Aatami's use of quotation marks, it is nevertheless interesting to see them employed around words "progress" and "growth" more commonly associated with Western concepts and ideology. One could almost venture that he was aware that these are not words Inuit would normally use to give meaning to the last 25 years or to their future goals. Moreover, he distinctly disassociated the developments of the last 25 years from any form of "assimilation" into mainstream society when he said: "we are maintaining our Inuit traditions of adapting, while taking part in the world around us. I would advise certain writers who advocate the assimilation of Aboriginal culture into mainstream society to open their eyes, and travel North to discover a different way, and see things from an Inuit perspective" (Makivik 2001, 14).

answer to creating paths of opportunities from which citizens can benefit such as jobs, housing, and a good quality of life. When this does not occur for all citizens, and some are suffering, as with homeless or unemployed citizens, a capitalist state needs welfare programs to step in to alleviate poverty and suffering so that these individuals can return to participating in the economy. And this is unfortunately the basic approach government has taken regarding providing housing for Inuit in Nunavik. Social housing as a welfare approach, as social policy, has been seen as a step towards creating a fully capitalist economy in the North so that Inuit can depend on the market to fulfill all their needs, and eventually dependency on the government would be ideally eliminated. However, the treaty agreement goes above and beyond this foundational arrangement that Canadian citizens have with their government. It is a unique relationship spelled out in the JBNQA. The JBNQA was not created in order to alleviate poverty. It was to ensure housing (among many other obligations) was provided to Inuit and Cree. Let's call this a "preemptive" responsibility. It is to create the conditions, as agreed upon, that will *prevent* poverty and suffering—not merely respond to it. It is to *promote* the wellbeing of the Nunavimmiut, and in fact, to ensure the *improvement* of communities. It was not based on the premise that the North should become like the South, in conduct, ideology, and values, but that Inuit should have access to the same quality of living as other Canadians. But this is not how governments have approached the housing issue in their treaty responsibilities.[125]

Another reality that creates an imbalance of power between parties is that negotiations about housing have always taken place during emergency conditions. The

[125] It's almost as if one could say that capitalism and treaties do not mix! They are based on two different sets of values and beliefs about how society should work and the role of government, and the relationship government has with its citizens. Maybe combining treaties into a capitalist system is why there is always a dispute and disagreement, and an imbalance of power.

desperate nature of the shortage in Inuit communities means that Inuit leaders are negotiating under duress to resolve negotiations quickly in order to get immediate results. The imbalance between the parties at the negotiating tables is an ongoing result of the JBNQA, but must also be understood in terms of the historical neglect and colonial relationship between Inuit and the states. This is an imbalance that can also be defined as an ethical imbalance, which I will explore further throughout the phronetic analysis.

The governments also used another mechanism of power, namely that of normalizing Canada's and Quebec's dominant position over the northern land and its people, with the capacity to make decisions about them without them. It was "natural and normal" for Quebecers to assume the government is "exercising its powers and authority" over the territory (Canada et al. 1975, 5). It was an approach that also reconfirmed a "normal" order of power between them and the Indigenous people.[126] And this power dynamic has become a structure based on cumulative prior decisions and actions that have turned into accepted "background conditions" (Luke 2015, 154) or in other words, assumptions.

It is also imperative to consider how this treaty represents the values exhibited by each party involved. The JBNQA showed that the federal and the provincial governments were willing to acknowledge that Indigenous nations (Inuit and Cree) in Quebec were worthy of being recognized—that they had a territorial claim based on historical grounds. At a minimum there was the value of *recognition*. The governments accepted that Cree and Inuit were peoples with whom they would negotiate, whether by choice or not. It set a precedent and new legal construct for future obligations to consult and negotiate.

[126] It also would have likely contributed to the liberal goal of uniting the Québécois, reducing class and geographical differences between non-Indigenous Quebecers while they were collectively in a position to dominate the North.

The JBNQA experience also exhibited the deeply held *trust* Inuit have in their own *agency* and willingness to act upon it when necessary. They managed, in their alliance with the Cree people, to get both Canada and Quebec to the negotiating table, against all odds. They also exhibited the value of *compromise*, possibly for the purpose of *harmony*. They recognized the limitations of their position yet showed willingness to forge ahead within that relationship to ensure that some essentials of life, culture, and land were protected for future generations.

But the agency shown by Inuit during and since the JBNQA must also be considered in relation to the venues in which this agency can be expressed. The new institutional bodies established through the JBNQA to manage the new North was being done at the tailend of the new larger state bureaucracy that had been introduced by the provincial liberal government in the late 1960s "creating new and complex departments, agencies, and institutions" (Desbiens 2013, 30). The word "complex" describes well the housing system in Nunavik. The role that Inuit have to play within this tangled system of committees, roundtables, councils, agencies, secretariats, ministries, federal, provincial, regional, municipal, and village authorities, is also complicated. Likewise, the task of establishing whether their roles and participation in these venues have changed the power dynamics is a complex issue to unscramble.

Chapter 6: Canada's "Soft Promises": Accords, Commissions, and other Expressions of Values:

> ***In my meetings with Arctic leaders, […] I encountered in my discussions a profound sense of disillusionment, and sometimes distrust, related to agreements with the Government of Canada, whether it was the slow pace of devolution agreements, conflicts in land claims implementation, or bilateral agreements that by-passed territorial governments. The term co-development of policies with***

Canada was looked upon with suspicion. My overall impression was that there was a longstanding disconnect between the aspirational intentions and commitments of Ministers, and the paternalistic, at times obstructionist, approach by the bureaucracy to the implementation of these ideas.

Mary Simon, Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership
in *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model* (2017) page 21

Is there power in the "soft promises" made by government bodies? A "soft promise" is a term I use to describe the accords, partnerships, commissions, principles and other non-binding commitments made between one or more interests (in this case, between the provincial and federal governments and Indigenous peoples including Inuit). These types of commitments cannot be held to account in the courts, but they have weight in what we might call the wider public sphere. These principles and partnerships are essentially commitments made by the state to conduct their own governance matters aligned with a certain set of values. Do these promises have the capacity to reduce power imbalances? Change actions? Influence decisions? How do Inuit benefit from them? Can they help bring about more fairness, equity, or responsiveness to the housing plight in Nunavik? With a phronetic approach, I analyze these soft promises to understand the status of values upon which the Inuit-state relationship is based and which the government has committed to uphold. Values provide normative standards against which actions are judged; they are more than empirically descriptive elements (Held 2006, 38).

International covenants signed by the majority of nation-states form the basis of what we collectively think humanity is about. What kind of values was Canada expressing in signing the 2007 UNDRIP[127]? It is not legally binding; it is a broad overarching yet

[127] Well, in fact, we did not sign UNDRIP in September 2007 alongside the other 143 nations that agreed to adopt the Declaration. At that time, Canada actually voted *against* adopting the Declaration. But finally in

unenforceable declaration. It points in the direction that signatory nations have agreed to follow. The Declaration first and foremost prohibits discrimination against Indigenous People. It does this by addressing the Indigenous right to self-determination, which means Indigenous Peoples have the right to "freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development" and "to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their rights to participate fully, if they choose to, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state" (United Nations 2007). But there is no clear or easy path to respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples. The liberal government demonstrated good intentions through signing such an international commitment, but the Declaration has not actually made any inroads at the Supreme Court level on important Indigenous cases. The areas in which the federal government may have had a chance to advance some policy and law issues in the direction of UNDRIP were in sectors that fall under provincial jurisdiction, and the provinces continue to resist UNDRIP, especially Québec.[128] Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAC), Carolyn Bennett (who would become the new Minister of Indigenous Relations in 2017), said that UNDRIP would require the cooperation of all Indigenous peoples, provinces, and territories to work together towards implementation into Canada's laws and the Canadian Constitution (Fontaine 2016). What has this

2016, with a liberal government in power, Canada signed, and with that, we can presume that our nation was finally accepting the intent and purpose of the values included in the international declaration.

[128] This perspective echoes opinions I noted during a roundtable discussion about UNDRIP at Réseau DIALOG'S International Forum in Québec City on October 14-16, 2022, that included legal scholar Jean Leclair from Université de Montreal. During the discussions, professors, Daniel Salée from Concordia University and Irene Belier from CNRS/EHESS Paris, equally surveyed the limitations and the incremental progress that the Declaration has given Canada such as the need for governments to consider the meaning of new terminology introduced by the UNDRIP, such as what the right to self-determination means in Article 3 or what the physical and mental integrity, liberty, right to life means for Indigenous people in Article 7.

cooperation looked like in terms of Inuit housing? Is there evidence of this said "resistance" to UNDRIP in Quebec's housing policies, programs, and action plans?

There are two ways in which international covenants touch directly on Inuit housing. UNDRIP is about Indigenous rights and Indigenous self-determination (and thus, *Inuit* rights and self-determination). Other covenants that Canada signed decades earlier contain mention of the basic right to adequate housing as part of a *human right*, such as in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979 (United Nations 2009, 11), to name a few. In Canada's 2018-2028 *National Housing Strategy* (NHS), housing was being addressed as part of a *human right* grounded in the principles of "inclusion, accountability, participation and non-discrimination" as part of its commitment to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (Canada 2018a, 8). But Canada's NHS does not refer to its commitment to UNDRIP, even though United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights confirmed the relevance of UNDRIP with regards to the Right to Adequate Housing in 2009 in its Fact Sheet no.21 (United Nations 2009, 29). We also know that Carolyn Bennett had been given the mandate to *implement* the UNDRIP (Trudeau 2015; 2017). The 2018 *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples* was about how Canada would put into operation the principles of UNDRIP through a review of laws and policies. The government's stated 2018 *Principles* are supposed to "reflect a commitment to good faith, the rule of law, democracy, equality, non-discrimination, and respect for human rights" (Canada 2018d, 3). When reviewed and applied to law and policy, they should fulfill the government's commitment to the Inuit-Crown relationship (Canada 2018d, 3). There exists

an ongoing theoretical debate about how synonymous "human rights" are with "Indigenous rights," and the lines in government policy and law are fuzzy. In Canada's 2019 *Arctic and Northern Policy Framework*, one of the objectives (as part of Goal 8) included to "honour, uphold, and implement the rights" as laid out in treaties *and* in the UNDRIP (Canada 2019a, 52).

Canada's *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* in 1996 based the "Aboriginal right to housing" argument on Canada's participation in the codes of international law as a signatory to the UN's Covenants in which "implementation of the covenant is based on the principles of 'progressive realization.' States undertake to take steps, within available resources, progressively to achieve full realization of the rights" (RCAP 1996a, 350). When the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights published the Fact Sheet on the Right to Adequate Housing, it reconfirmed that adequate housing is ensconced in the many international covenants. Adequate housing is "the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity" (United Nations 2009, 3). It includes freedoms listed as 1) the protection against forced evictions; 2) the right to be free from arbitrary interference; and 3) "the right to choose one's residence, to determine where to live and to freedom of movement" (United Nations 2009, 3). Adequate housing also consists of entitlements, including: security of tenure; housing and land restitution; equal and non-discriminatory access to adequate housing; and "participation in housing-related *decision-making* at the national and community levels" (United Nations 2009, 3 emphasis mine). Finally, Fact Sheet 21 explained that adequate housing is more than four walls and a roof. It includes: security of tenure; availability of services including safe drinking water, sanitation, heating, etc; affordability; habitability including physical safety, adequate space, protection against cold, damp, wind, etc; accessibility; location; and cultural adequacy which means taking into

account the expression of cultural identity (United Nations 2009, 3–4). Finally, the right to adequate housing also includes the principle of non-discrimination which is often "at the root of structural inequalities within societies" (United Nations 2009, 10). More precisely, discrimination in housing might include discriminatory policies, zoning regulations, exclusionary policy development, lack of access to credit, and "limited participation in decision-making," among other factors (United Nations 2009, 10). Has the commitment to these values and humanity become part of the government's operational decision-making processes? Has it increased their moral and ethical consciousness? Influenced outcomes? This is what I will attempt to assess.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (1996) saw the signing of international covenants as a moral and ethical responsibility saying: "they have moral force. They serve as an expression of shared values and aspirations" (RCAP 1996a, 350). As such, the Right to Adequate Housing is part of a shared value in which Canadians believe. This is reflected in Section 36(1) of the *Constitution Act, 1982*: "the government of Canada and the provincial governments, are committed to (a) promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians;" and the Royal Commission closed the loop stating that: "Since housing is an important aspect of well-being and an instrument for improving opportunity for the disadvantaged, it is reasonable to read section 36(1) as affirming a right of Canadians to decent and adequate housing" (RCAP 1996a, 350). Though stated over twenty-five years ago, it is central to my thesis about Inuit housing.

It is my argument here that the commitments, covenants, accords, and principles that Canada has agreed to and even advanced, have created the moral and ethical duty to ensure that the values expressed in those commitments are reflected in government actions such as in policies and programming. Unless, of course, they were empty promises.

So, how do government policies accomplish their constitutional obligation to "promoting equal opportunities for the well-being of Canadians" and to affirming the right of Canadians to decent and adequate housing, including for Inuit? Housing and *de facto* housing policies on a wide range of issues have direct and indirect impacts on housing in Nunavik. But how we go about policy-making is also influenced by "soft promises" which provide a good indication of the values that governments have expressed regarding their views, ideologies, and intentions toward the Inuit. As with the statement made by signing UNDRIP, the Canadian government has made various declarations about their grander intent towards the Inuit-state relationship. As I premise my argument on the belief that the persistence of the housing crisis is actually *determined* by how the Inuit-state relationship has unfolded, these stated intents of the government towards Inuit is an essential factor in conducting a phronetic analysis of power through interpreting values, ethics, and interests. I will survey the 1996 *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, the 2004 Kelowna Accord process, the 2005 Inuit-Crown Partnership and Accord in 2005 and 2017, the Inuit-Crown Co-development Principles 2022, and recommendations from Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This will provide a foundation and context with which to understand, and judge, Canada's code of conduct towards their Inuit-state relationship. It will provide the normative standards against which actions can be judged, for example when looking at how these values have been integrated into actions such as in housing policies and action plans. It is also a way of analyzing the supposed objectives of policies and programs to promote the "wellbeing" of Inuit—an objective that can be regarded as ethically motivated. And yet, we have the persistence of the housing crisis.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The Final Report of Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) published in 1996 is still a relevant body of research today for two simple reasons: One, no study or public consultation has been as in-depth or comprehensive since then; and two, the majority of RCAP's recommendations and directions have not yet seen the light of day despite the fact that the issues raised almost thirty years ago are still ongoing problems today. RCAP had provided the knowledge, research, and recommendations to set a new and more responsive federal policy direction with regards to its relationship with Indigenous people in Canada. The evidence and testimony gathered in RCAP, which included the Commission visiting fifty northern communities including many Inuit communities, brought to light their voices and their views on the source of the problems in the North.

The Commission's research and findings showed how interconnected political power and social and cultural wellbeing is. It stated that: "Northern Aboriginal people stress that economic and social development are not separable from political progress; each requires and complements the other," and the problem being that "the territorial North and the northern parts of most provinces still do not exercise control over most aspects of life. Control is exercised elsewhere by non-residents" (RCAP 1996b, 277). The Commission summarized that "many people who testified concerning the sources of current problems identified a lack of adequate control over their own political, cultural and economic lives—the inability to exercise self-determination" (RCAP 1996b, 286). The President of ITC (the previous name for ITK), Rosemarie Kuptana, voiced her concerns and ambitions saying that "her organization's goal remains to exercise self-determination within Canada and to adjust the essence of the relationship between Inuit and Canada [which] is an unequal

power relationship in which Inuit rights have often been ignored and Inuit powers have been usurped by governments not of our making." (RCAP 1996b, 302). These types of sentiments and views are still repeated by ITK and other Inuit bodies in Nunavik today. Unfortunately, the Commission did not write a specific recommendation indicating how the Canadian governments might change the nature of their relationship with Inuit. Though it stated: "We support cooperative political development and innovation along the lines now being pursued by northerners, and we urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to act decisively to resolve outstanding disputes" (RCAP 1996b, 315).

One direct policy outcome of RCAP was the 1997 *Gathering Strength Aboriginal Action Plan* that was ostensibly based on findings from RCAP. The new course of Canada's Aboriginal policy in the late 1990s reflected in this Action Plan described a willingness on behalf of the government to "work *with*" First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Non-Status Indians (Canada 1997, 2). So, while the policy in *Gathering Strength* actually represented the value of a kind of collaborative approach, to work "with" them, the actions planned were for Canada to work better *with the provinces* (rather than with Indigenous nations). It was believed that through forums allowing federal and provincial bodies to work more together, they could strengthen those relationships and "identify areas for immediate co-operation" and share objectives for addressing Aboriginal issues (Canada 1997, 6). This policy demonstrates that in 1997, the federal government saw its relationship with the provinces and territories as *the* central relationship that could help resolve its Indigenous-state relations. The idea of working "with" Indigenous people was not yet making its way into policy development.

Much of the RCAP research is still relevant for Inuit housing today, especially the chapter on *The North* in Volume 4 and the chapter on *Housing* in Volume 3 of the Final

Report (RCAP 1996b; 1996a). The Commission recognized that one of the main problems was that economic and political power in the North was not in the hands of the northern peoples, despite the various Indigenous institutions created to represent their culturally distinct needs (RCAP 1996b, 264). This issue was not addressed in the subsequent *Gathering Strength* federal policy either. In fact, it has been argued by scholars that no federal policies or forms of devolution have effectively put the power back in the hands of Inuit.[129] RCAP described the North as a region that has seen great advances in its political development, citing the JBNQA as a striking example of political development for the Cree and Inuit in northern Quebec. However, the Commission recognized that this had not, in fact, translated into social and economic stability in the regions. It stated: "as far as the economic social future of northern communities is concerned, [...] complacency would be ill-advised" (RCAP 1996b, 264–65). The Commission also recognized and reported what "Northerners"[130] had been telling them repeatedly about, namely, the important interconnectedness between economic development, self-government, and social wellbeing in Aboriginal communities, and that one without the other cannot be attained. This conviction held by Inuit and other Indigenous Peoples has not been adopted or transformed into government policy, as I will demonstrate.

In Volume 3, Chapter 4 of RCAP, it established a few essential foundations to advance in housing policy development. The Commission referred to housing in terms of a "basic human need" (RCAP 1996a, 348), as a "right," and as an "Aboriginal right" (RCAP 1996a, 349). It also reminded us that the federal government had in the past only

[129] See literature review Chapter 1.
[130] In the 1996 RCAP chart about northern populations, it included the population of Northern Quebec as part of the "Far North" (RCAP 1996b, 267) which is an interesting grouping since even today in policy, Nunavik is often excluded from plans dealing with "The North" which still sometimes only includes the Territories.

recognized adequate housing as a basic human "need" (i.e. not "right"). It summed up the compounding problems as follows: "The combination of a sense of crisis and the inadequacy or failure of past policies has contributed to demands to transfer *both authority and resources* for housing and community services to Aboriginal governments" (RCAP 1996a, 348). The Commission showed that the federal government had not made significant advances towards this demand and continued to fail in its stated goals. As such the "Aboriginal right to housing" remained a central issue for Aboriginal people with "practical consequences today" (RCAP 1996a, 349).[131] The critique remains relevant in that there is a lack of progress on new housing policy which equally "can be traced in part to these *different perspectives* on the part of [Indigenous] leadership and the federal government regarding what constitutes treaty and Aboriginal rights" (RCAP 1996a, 349). The difference in the belief that either something is a *need* or a *right* essentially reveals a different set of values upon which demands and responses are based. Needs are assessed based on demand, and fulfilled through social policy based on how far funds can reach the "most in need." Rights have political implications. The government was exhibiting its values through its actions: "To date, the federal government has not recognized a universal entitlement to government-financed housing as either a treaty right or an Aboriginal right. It has taken the position that assistance for housing is provided as a matter of social policy, and its Aboriginal housing policy has been based on this premise. Thus, assistance has been based on 'need'" (RCAP 1996a, 349). This, despite the fact that Indigenous representatives and institutions understand the government to have a triple layered obligation: moral, ethical and legal. This is due to the international human rights covenants

[131] Although in this passage in Volume 3, the authors are specifically referring to on-reserve housing for First Nations, the following statement could apply equally to Nunavimmiut since they are likewise in a treaty relationship with the federal government.

they have signed that have a "moral force," due to the fiduciary responsibility through the Crown's historical obligations "to restore a land and economic base for Aboriginal people" (RCAP 1996a, 350), and through the treaties they have negotiated that have a "legal force."

The Commission made several suggestions for a way forward, including mutual responsibilities, that "Aboriginal people have a responsibility to contribute to the cost of building and maintaining their own dwellings, whether as individuals or collectively, according to their ability to do so" and "the federal government has a responsibility to clarify with treaty nations a modern understanding of existing treaty terms as they apply to housing" (RCAP 1996a, 352). In 1996, the Commission considered ten years should be sufficient time to achieve a desirable level of adequate housing for Indigenous People in Canada. I maintain that what the Commission was essentially saying was that a balancing out of the gap in values would need to be achieved first in order to come to a place of shared values towards a shared direction. This is what the UNDRIP could have provided.

Kelowna Accord 2004-2005

The Kelowna Accord was another major initiative to update Canada's Indigenous policy in the 21st century. While Kelowna was never implemented, it has been said that the eighteen-month process leading up to the Accord was exceptional in Canadian history. Government and Indigenous leaders worked together to develop policy and set the stage for future policy-making. Aboriginal people no longer wanted to be merely "consulted with"; they wanted to be "initiators of policy change" (Patterson 2006, 13) based on the principles of "mutual recognition, mutual respect, mutual benefit, and mutual responsibility" (Patterson 2006, 6). From this experience, the Government of Canada "pledged to continue to work inclusively in the development of policy concerning

Aboriginal peoples" (Patterson 2006, 13) demonstrating "Canada's commitment to renewing relationships and strengthening policy partnerships" (Patterson 2006, 6).

ITK was one of the five Indigenous organizations present at various parts of the Kelowna process, from the policy tables and roundtables on the priority areas, which included a roundtable on housing, and later at the 2005 bilateral policy retreat with the Cabinet Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and leaders of the Indigenous organizations (Patterson 2006, 5). There was the continual presence and input by Indigenous leaders throughout. When priority areas were discussed in sessions, the participants were made up of experts, representatives from Indigenous organizations, government and private sector representatives, and each session was "*led* by the Minister of the relevant federal government department" (Patterson 2006, 4), which, in the case for housing, was CMHC. Even in this "inclusive" process, there were inevitable power imbalances. Although it was an important "first" for Canada, it did not upset Canada's immovable role as *the* decision-making leaders. One could say that the process was inclusive in so much that it fit within a Westminster democratic process and maintained the existing structures of the Canadian government. It is worth noting, however, that *Quebec* First Nations boycotted the First Ministers Meeting in Kelowna in 2005 allegedly for fear that any increased provincial responsibility would risk absolving the federal government of its own responsibility towards them (Patterson 2006, 15).[132]

Nevertheless, from the perspective of changes in Canada's approach to working with Indigenous people, the Kelowna process included a First Ministers meeting *with* Indigenous leaders, bringing the issue of wellbeing of Indigenous people to the attention of all Canadians (Patterson 2006, 16). The Kelowna First Ministers Meeting had "a view to

[132] I do not know if Inuit leaders from Nunavik also boycotted it, or if they felt sufficiently represented by ITK.

raising the standard of living for Aboriginal peoples up to that of other Canadians by 2016" (Patterson 2006, 7) and it demonstrated that there was public interest in improving the wellbeing of Indigenous people for the future of the whole country. It brought forth a willingness to return to a "deep-seated principle of mutual respect found in the early treaties" with a pledge to continue to work more closely with Indigenous people (Patterson 2006, 13) and it made more evident how deeply interconnected the multiple issues that affect Indigenous people are. This process raised the expectation: governments should proceed in policy-making based on the values of mutual respect, inclusiveness, and dialogue. With regards to housing, the government of Canada agreed to further an "Inuit-specific housing approach" by making partnership agreements with Inuit regions, creating an Inuit Housing Institute, and committing to "multi-year housing investments to create economic development initiatives" (Patterson 2006, 11).

Inuit–Crown Partnerships 2005 and 2017

Shortly thereafter, an novel agreement was reached between ITK and Canada on May 31st, 2005 called the Inuit Partnership Accord (*Partnership Accord between the Inuit of Canada and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada*). The Partnership referred to the Kelowna process that had increased expectations to renew and strengthen state relations with Indigenous peoples and to conduct joint policy discussions on a wide range of issues including housing (ITK and DIAND 2005, 3). The Inuit Partnership Accord established clear principles upon which the relationship should be based and identified short-term and long-term objectives (ITK and DIAND 2005).

Canada was represented by the then Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, The Honourable Andy Scott,[133] and Inuit were represented by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, with the President of ITK signing the document, Jose Kusugak. Representatives from each of the four Inuit regions also signed the Accord, including Makivik's President, Pita Aatami, as well as the Pauktutiit Inuit Women Association, the National Inuit Youth Council, and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference Canada. This Partnership Accord was seen by the Parties as a living document (ITK and DIAND 2005, 7). There would be an Action Plan developed to respond to the long- and short-term objectives, negotiated by the Parties. It was launched in December 2006, called *Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan* (ITK and Canada 2006). The Action Plan would become part of the Partnership Accord, and was to be replaced every three to five years. This was a new partnership based on the principles of "mutual respect, recognition, responsibility and sharing" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 5).

In the Accord's preamble, the implication was that the accord will have an impact on Canada's sense of honour and moral duty. At a minimum, it implied that government actions or inaction will be noticed, and judged, stating in the preamble: "WHEREAS the parties recognize that *the honour of the Crown is at stake* in all the Crown's dealings with Inuit;" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 2). Again, an Accord is not a legally-binding document, but it is an important reference point showing the government's willingness to forge a new path in its relationship with Inuit, based on the principles and values included.

In the list of principles that formed the basis of the new Partnership Accord, it was asserted that "demographic, socio-economic and geographic realities of Inuit regions and

[133] It is noteworthy that Canada did not send its head of state (the Prime Minister) to sign the Accord as they would chose to do in the subsequent Inuit-Crown Partnership declaration in 2017.

communities will be given appropriate attention and thoughtful consideration in the *design of governmental institutions* responsible for the delivery of programs and services that may affect Inuit" and that "[a]ppropriate financial, human resources and accountability capacity for the sustained *involvement of Inuit in policy development* with the Government of Canada and, where appropriate, relevant provincial and territorial governments, will be jointly developed" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 3). It also intended to advance the "development and delivery of *Inuit-specific* policies, programs and services, within the Government of Canada" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 6). One of the short-term objectives of the Accord was that federal advances in Inuit-specific policy and program development were meant to be coordinated with provincial policy-making and program development (ITK and DIAND 2005, 5). Another short-term objective of the Accord was to "undertake *joint initiatives*, including, where appropriate, with provincial and territorial governments and developing governance structures, to improve the socio-economic, cultural and environmental circumstances of Inuit" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 5). Unfortunately, the nature of Inuit involvement was not specified, and the power of Inuit decision-making remained undefined. On the positive, it was also left open to interpretation which offers potential.

As revealed in the many forums and committees on housing in Appendix A, Nunavimmiut still only have "advisory" roles in most joint initiatives. Sometimes they are given the role to provide recommendations to decision-making bodies, such as the Tripartite Housing Working Group and the JBNQA Implementation Forum.[134] On the other hand, the latterly formed Inuit Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC), promisingly, has the function of making high-level decisions. Whether these types of assemblages

[134] See Appendix B for more details.

encouraged by the Inuit Partnership Accord will improve the socio-economic, cultural, and environmental circumstances of Inuit, or their "wellbeing," remains to be shown. In fact, the text maintained that this renewed relationship had already had the effect of informing prior "joint policy discussions" on various matters including housing (ITK and DIAND 2005, 3). This partnership would rely on the new Inuit Relations Secretariat to assist in building the Inuit-Canada bilateral partnership. Essentially, the Accord was a demonstration that Canada was committed and therefore Indigenous people would have "greater economic self-reliance [and] a better quality of life" (ITK and DIAND 2005, 2).

In 2017, another statement of values was declared on February 9th, when Prime Minister Trudeau, President of ITK, Natan Obed, and the Chair and Presidents of the four Inuit regions (including President Jobie Tukkiapik from Makivik), all signed the *Inuit Nunangat Declaration on Inuit-Crown Partnership*. This one-page declaration states the willingness of Canada to recognize the rights of Inuit as confirmed in the Constitution. As it is a joint partnership, it must demonstrate how it benefits both Inuit and Canada, confirming, therefore, that it will create prosperity for Inuit which will in turn benefit all Canadians (Canada 2017c). It states the goal of achieving reconciliation (coming on the heels of the TRC (the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) and the plan is to build a relationship based on "the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership" (Canada 2017c). It also recognizes as a foundational part of the puzzle, the "full and fair" implementation of the obligations from Inuit land claims. The focus is on the creating socio-economic and cultural equity between Inuit and other Canadians, another way of saying "closing the gaps."

An outcome of this most recent Inuit-Crown partnership is that Inuit leaders will twice a year have a chance to sit with federal cabinet ministers who's work, arguably, "most

affects the wellbeing of northern Canadians," as a former long-time editor of the *Nunatsiaq News*, Jim Bell, noted (Bell 2017b). The Inuit-Crown declaration is aimed at increased prosperity and reduced inequity, but as Bell pointed out, the Inuit leaders do not represent governments.[135] Therefore, he argues, the governments of those regions, Quebec in the case of Nunavik, need to also be brought to the table to really start having an impact on Inuit wellbeing (Bell 2017b). This one-page declaration did not have the kind of detail about *how* they are going to move forward together compared to the 2005 *Inuit Partnership Accord* which included principles, objectives, and an action plan. This 2017 declaration is a reconfirmation of a commitment to work together, though it can also be seen more skeptically as a somewhat empty way for Canada to respond to the TRC recommendations by just performing a kind of "elite accommodation [by] striking deals with leaders of the national Indigenous organizations" (Bell 2017b).

Does this kind of vague declaration of an Inuit-Crown Partnership give more power to the Canadian government? Perhaps in the public eye it creates the image of a benevolent attentive government committed to its relationship with Indigenous peoples. From the side of Inuit, it is another soft promise that they can call upon to make their arguments for more meaningful involvement, decision-making roles, and funding commitment to improve their communities. Due to its vagueness and lack of a plan, however, it is likely to require just as much lobbying effort as before for Inuit to get to the decision-making tables.

Inuit-Crown Co-development Principles 2022

In 2022, the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC) put together a set of principles as a guide for all collaborative work conducted between Inuit and Canada. It is to

[135] With the exception of Nunatsiavut which signed an ethnic-based self-government agreement along with its land claim agreement for the Inuit of Nunatsiavut.

be applied to work related to "the development of content for federal legislation, regulations, policies, programs, services, and initiatives, and monitoring and evaluation criteria" (Canada 2022a). These principles were also specifically meant to support actions coming from the Inuit Nunangat Policy, which is the chapter added to the *Arctic and Northern Policy Framework* on Inuit Nunangat (ITK 2019). The principles were understood to be the implementation of UNDRIP.

Co-development describes "the process of designing and developing a range of legislative, program and policy initiatives undertaken by the Government of Canada in partnership with Inuit" which indicates that it is not only about co-developing resources or economic development, but could therefore apply to policies and programs related to housing (Canada 2022a, 2). It applies a "distinctions-based" approach which means it is based on the legal, political, social, and economic conditions of Inuit. And it is premised on the belief that Inuit themselves are most in tune with the needs of their communities and know best how to respond and prioritize their issues (Canada 2022a, 2).

There are ten stated principles in total. These include the descriptions of what it means to work in "good faith," maximize collaboration, prioritize human rights, and uphold Inuit rights (Canada 2022a, 3). It is also focused on working together towards active leadership, joint design and delivery through all stages of development, to work in good faith meaning partners upholding values of honour, integrity, transparency, active engagement, collaboration, sharing information, and consensus building towards solutions that partners can support (Canada 2022a, 4).

Finally, there is the principle of respect for governance and decision-making. This makes clear that these acts of co-development of solutions are not the same as co-decision-making. The partnerships are based on laudable values including collaborative work,

dialogue, exchanging of ideas, sharing of information and knowledge, but the reality is that this is still about just providing input, advice, recommendations, maybe even coming up with innovative solutions, but ultimately to provide the leaders who make the decision with information—information that is also to be submitted within a timely manner, respecting the "operational and governance processes" that are part of Canada's existing legal and constitutional framework and Inuit governance (presumably in reference to Nunatsiavut) operational structures (Canada 2022a, 5).

The value-added of this step in co-development, is that submissions to the final decision-makers will already have the stamp of approval of both federal and Inuit representatives that have worked towards agreement and joint solutions. Lastly, included in the list of principles is a commitment to minimizing power imbalances, the kind that are a result of unequal access to the financial capacity to engage in such processes equally, by supplying the resources necessary for equal participation in co-development.

These particular principles, because they are premised on the UN's Rights of Indigenous Peoples, include the right to self-determination. In fact one of the principles specifies that it respects and supports "self-determination and participation in decision-making in matters affecting their *rights*" (Canada 2022a, 2). The limiting factor in this case is "rights" because it depends what is considered a "right." The fourth principle in the Inuit-Crown Co-development Principles refers to Inuit rights, as affirmed in Section 35 of Canada's Constitution Act, 1982. It also implies that it was supporting the rights affirmed in UNDRIP because this co-development initiative is meant to help implement UNDRIP (Canada 2022a, 3). The principles also refer to "prioritizing human rights" and thereby co-development processes serve to help implement human rights as affirmed in international covenants (Canada 2022a, 3). However, if housing is not seen as a "right" (as defined in

various UN Covenants Canada has signed onto) but is rather defined by the government as a "need" due to conditions of poverty or misfortune, then there is no principle supporting the Inuit right to participate in decision-making about issues of social policy responding to social "needs" and not about fulfilling rights. This small detail has the potential to maintain government as the absolute decision-maker on all government policy, especially social policy. And it will remain so, *even if* the process leading to the decision becomes much more inclusive, collaborative, and is done in good faith. It is a mechanism of power.

Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples 2018

For a government to announce a set of principles with which it intends to proceed in a political relationship can be seen as a testament to its intentions and interests, which Canada did in the *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous People*. This 2018 affirmation by Canada to implement UNDRIP recognized that the rights affirmed in UNDRIP "are necessary for the survival, dignity and *well-being* of Indigenous people" (Canada 2018d, 3 emphasis mine). The principles are guided by UNDRIP, Indigenous rights affirmed through treaty rights, and section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, the knowledge created through RCAP, and the TRC's Calls to Action. It is an indication of the kind of caring relation Canada would like to create, one that will require a transformative change in how government will deal with this key political relationship from now on. Based on the values of fairness and just reconciliation, the statement acknowledges that Canada will have to review its laws, policies and other initiatives, and it must do this based on "a commitment to good faith, the rule of law, democracy, equality, non-discrimination, and respect for human rights" (Canada 2018d, 3).

The Principles are also meant to pave the way towards a future "where non-discrimination, equality and justice are achieved" (Canada 2018d, 4). This type of commitment by the government is not so much a mechanism of power, but rather an attempt at leveling the imbalance of power in some way, as long as actions follow. This aspect will be analyzed in relation to housing policies examined in the following chapter.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission report 2016

Canada's pledge to conduct a Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the treatment of Indigenous people through the Indian Residential School system indicated a commitment to facing the truth about our nation's history. Canada was not the first to conduct such an investigation into its past as a colonizing settler state.[136] What such an act suggests is a willingness to behave differently in the future. At a minimum it is about the state's accountability for its behaviour, and creating a new, impartial historical narrative about the relationship between the state and Indigenous people. It is also a way to provide recommendations for policy and further reparations and reconciliation regarding the contemporary relationship. As quoted in the *Arctic and Northern Policy Framework*, in reference to the TRC, reconciliation is about "establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the

[136] Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission follows on the heels of similar actions in other countries coming to terms with past pain, death and suffering instigated as a settler state, but it has not been the last to conduct such an inquiry. New Zealand has had the Waitangi Tribunal since 1975 as a permanent truth commission that conducts investigations into grievances by the Maori about outstanding issues in their Indigenous-state agreements, and makes recommendations towards reconciliation. South Africa launched a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1995 about violations to human rights during the period of apartheid, with one of the final reports in 2003. In 1994 Guatemala launched the Commission for Historical Clarification to reveal the killing, disappearance and human rights violations during the Civil War and to uncover whether the Mayans were targeted in particular. Recently in 2021, Finland appointed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Concerning the Sámi People on October 28, 2021 to address past and current discrimination, assimilation policy, and human right violations towards the Sàmi.

harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes and action to change behaviour" (Canada 2019a, 52). Therefore the results of the TRC should provide a window into Canada's values and intentions towards its relationship with Indigenous peoples, and in subsequent Indigenous policy.

The very mandate of Canada's TRC expresses the intent to establish a new relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on mutual recognition and respect, to pave the way for reconciliation, and to forge a brighter future (Schedule N in Canada and et al. 2006). And as the title of the Commission indicates, the central value expressed throughout is *truth*. Of the ninety-four Calls to Action, none specifically target the issue of Indigenous housing conditions. However, they do rely heavily on the tenets in UNDRIP as a guiding path and the TRC calls upon the "federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation" and "the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*" (TRC 2015, 4). With regards to child welfare, the TRC calls to "keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside" (TRC 2015, 1) which must include adequate housing for Inuit families to create a safe home environment to reduce the number of Inuit children moved into child welfare care services. And with regards to Indigenous "closing the gaps in health outcomes," the TRC recognizes that "the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies" and that we need "to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties" (TRC 2015, 2). With the issue

of Inuit health so closely affiliated to Inuit housing, as the academic literature showed in my literature review, one cannot ignore the detrimental effects of inadequate housing and ineffective housing policies on Inuit health. The TRC is another commitment founded on a worthy set of values. Again, have the actions on Inuit housing reflected these stated values?

What do these soft promises tell us about government values?

At this point, having analyzed power and values related to the JBNQA, and values expressed in the government's soft promises presented above, there is a need to disentangle some of the differences. This will be important in the lead up to the final chapter in Part 2 where I examine housing policies. I have presented some key documents that have shown what the government has *promised* to implement, what it is *legally*-bound to implement, and *how* it has committed to act. These can be seen as three different measures. And I argue that they are guided by different "versions" of values. I believe there are three ways to think what values really are.

One, values are a kind of moral duty or ethical code of conduct. They are about *how* to behave. This could mean aligning one's actions with a certain set of principles. Principles are meant to guide behaviour and decision-making, whether for an individual, for an institution, or a government. Basically they are social codes of engagement. They can even be considered a kind of character trait. Examples of such traits might be: being honest, caring, compassionate; demonstrating integrity, honour, respect; and so forth. These types of values can be found in the "soft promises" made by Canada regarding the manner in which it has pledged to proceed in its obligations and renewal of the relationship with Indigenous peoples. The values specifically itemized throughout the soft promises are:

honour, integrity, respect, good faith (Canada 2022a), and mutual respect (ITK and DIAND 2005; Canada 2017c; 2018d; Patterson 2006; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015).

Second, there are other types of values that I describe as value-laden factors. These values also guide behaviour because they point to desired outcomes. Justice is an example of this. It is a desired outcome, but does not necessarily indicate *how* to behave in any given situation. They imply potential *paths* of action. They are less about a character trait, and more about *ideals* that describe an outcome, and therefore, also somewhat encompass the *means* to get there. They are values that can be assessed along the way as well as at the conclusion. They are the reference standards to which we can answer: Where have we arrived? (as a secondary question to Flyvbjerg's phronesis question: Where are we going?). These types of values are also subject to a commitment. As a summary of those covered in the soft promises examined in this chapter, they include: justice, fairness, recognition, trust, collaboration, partnership, equity, friendship, sharing, transparency, active engagement, consensus building, inclusiveness, dialogue, mutual benefit, mutual responsibility, and mutual recognition. As such, when housing actions have been implemented, for example, through an action plan or strategic plan, we can then ask: Is there justice? Is there trust? Is there dialogue? Is there partnership? And so on. In other words, a variety of paths and types of character traits and behaviours might be selected to work towards and arrive at "collaboration" or "mutual recognition" or "fairness", but the options are not limitless, and one is presumably, at the same time, adopting behaviours in line with the values of "honour, integrity, respect, good faith, and mutual respect".

Third, another type of "value" revealed in this analysis, is that there are things upon which we *place* value. I believe these are elements of our society that also guide actions in a

selected direction. In and of themselves, they do not actually indicate *how* to behave, but one's behaviour (words, promises, commitments, etc.) can be assessed based on whether it is moving towards these valued elements. They can be existing parts of our societal norms—things that we maybe even take for granted or upon which we make assumptions—or they can be anticipated, newly identified outcomes that indicate where we want to see our society headed and that help frame decisions. Existing ones would be, for example, to say we are—and therefore we value—a democracy and a capitalist economic system. In that case, we must design actions that support democratic concepts and structures. We must devise actions that support our capitalist system, or at a minimum, we rely on the capitalist system. These are often generally taken as accepted assumptions—ones that are valued in our society. Some of these valued items have been included in both the soft promises as well as in government policies and strategies. First, values that arguably form the basis of our society in Canada: democracy, rule of law, economic strength, sovereignty, and fundamental rights and freedoms as stated in our Constitution. Values that have been expressly stated in the soft promises are equity, equality, non-discrimination, distinctions-based solutions, respect for human rights, Indigenous rights, Inuit rights, self-determination, Indigenous self-government, mutual respect of treaties, full and fair implementation of land claims, wellbeing, and more.

Wellbeing is in this category of "things upon which we place value" not just because it is implied in most soft promises, but most importantly because it is in our Canadian *Constitution Act 1982* to promote the wellbeing of Canadians. And secondly, it is in the *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous People* and UNDRIP that the respecting the rights of Indigenous people is necessary for their wellbeing. There is an assumption that our social and economic policies exist because they

should improve the quality of life for Canadians (whether or not one believes that wellbeing will be better met through economic policies or through social policies). Our "ethical code of conduct" values and the "value-laden beliefs" guiding our paths of action are assumed to be headed towards this desired outcome, because we place value on having a dignified quality of life and wellbeing. However, to just say we value the wellbeing of Inuit does not tell us *how* it can be accomplished. Moreover, statements as such do not include an understanding of what wellbeing looks like, especially for Inuit.

Overall, one could argue that the soft promises committed to by our government have implications about *how* to behave in order to attain certain kinds of "value-laden beliefs" and desired outcome (such as justice). In other words, by following the path of justice, or the path of partnership, or the path of inclusiveness, etc., we are upholding the things upon which we place value such as maintaining our democratic system or promoting wellbeing (whether we realize it explicitly or we do it through assumptions).

However, what if there are competing values? What if some of our underlying assumed values (such as democracy or capitalism) undermine the new things upon which we claim to place value (such as citizen wellbeing, or Inuit self-determination)? Can for example, democracy and Inuit self-determination be upheld at the same time, can they be at the end of the same path? Or can we be on two different "paths" and get to the same point? Or do we inevitably only end up fulfilling one goal or the other?

What if there is a fear that the thing we value (democracy) would be trampled if the other things we value (Indigenous self-determination, or Indigenous self-government, or Indigenous sovereignty) were to be given the space to exist? Conversely, what if Inuit self-determination is infringed upon because our version of democracy (such as first-past-the-

post electoral system, or voting on issues where the side with 50+1% support "wins") denies that goal?

Either way, when we are talking about Inuit housing, we are talking about the key issue of Inuit wellbeing. And we need signposts to see if aspects of Inuit wellbeing are being met along the way, especially through certain policies, in this case through housing policies and action plans. There have been attempts to assess the status of wellbeing along the way, as seen in the literature review. Various research programs, government health surveys, and Inuit-led consultations and surveys have tried to assess the status of Inuit society health and wellbeing. Until now, we mostly have a plethora of reports, evaluations, surveys, and Inuit testimonies indicating that we are *not* accomplishing the goal of wellbeing. What are we accomplishing instead? Does this path perhaps maintain our democratic principles instead? Or are we perhaps supporting the demands of dominant economic forces? These values, and sometimes conflicting values, must be distentangled.

How does power play out through these soft promises?

One question that remains is whether the expression of these values in the soft promises are strategies for the government to maintain power? Does signing these covenants, principles, and partnerships reduce the power of the state or increase it? These kinds of soft promises are often a reflection of the values in which our society believes. They might reflect the foundation of our nation. They might become part of our Canadian identity, as citizens who believe in human rights, trust, freedom, and equality. The signing of partnership accords and international declarations could be seen as bringing a compassionate side of the government to the forefront. It can be about building public trust. Public trust is an important aspect of political power. However, it could be argued

that signing these kind of promises may limit some government power, for the simple fact that it should remove the power to make unilateral dominating decisions without accountability.

Moreover, regarding behavioural values, how do we know if stakeholders who lobby and pressure governments to act in certain ways are behaving with respect, integrity, honour, and good faith? And how do we know if the government upholds these values? When the Canadian government has committed to these values in terms of their relationship with Indigenous and Inuit peoples in Canada, then what form should the government's actions to take? And how are we to know whether actions taken, or policies put in place, are a true reflection of these expressed and promised values or principles?

Mary Simon's comment, seen at the top of this chapter, illustrates the suspicion Inuit have had regarding Canada's promises. The next step is to see whether the expression of these values could make a difference in the lives and communities of Nunavimmiut. The next chapter will analyze housing policies through this lens, by looking at how values are expressed and enacted in policy. And what kind of new (or predictable) power relations are exposed.

Chapter 7: The Policy Disconnect

> ***IN THE NORTH WE FOUND A PARADOX. On one hand, the North is the part of Canada in which Aboriginal peoples have achieved the most in terms of political influence and institutions appropriate to their cultures and needs. On the other, the North itself is a region with little influence over its own destiny. Most of the levers of political and economic power continue to be held outside the North and, in some cases, outside Canada.[137]***

[137] RCAP 1996, Volume 4, Chapter 6, p.264

Too often policies developed to meet the needs of other Aboriginal peoples have been applied to Inuit, sometimes with devastating consequences … For some, the North is merely a matter of geography. We have found that it is also a distinct social, political and cultural terrain.[138]

Introduction

The quotations above from RCAP might be over 25 years old, but unfortunately the critiques remain relevant. In Nunavik, there are still problems with finding Inuit-specific housing solutions that would attend to the "distinct Inuit social, political, and cultural terrain." Housing is also ultimately decided based on "need" rather than as a right, which was enshrined in the JBNQA. It is, instead, lumped in with the gamut of Canadian social policies which, by definition, exclude political and governance considerations. Moreover, despite the numerous soft promises that governments have made to express the values and goals for the Inuit-state relationship, housing appears untouched by these efforts. Finally, despite the multitude of institutions, organizations, councils, and forums in which Inuit take part or manage themselves, the bulk of decisions about housing are still not made by Inuit.

Let me set up this policy analysis with a summary of the background I have presented so far. What we have is a multitude of layers that form the foundation, knowledge, and impetus for housing policies that should serve Inuit rights and needs. The foundation is made up of a legally-binding relationship that has established obligations and responsibilities for the signatories, Canada, Quebec, and the Nunavimmiut, through the JBNQA. We have Nunavik regional institutions that play a big role in the administration and construction of housing through the KRG, Makivik, and KMHB. The province has a

[138] RCAP 1996 ,Volume 4, Chapter 1, p.5

central role in housing through the SHQ. We have venues in which Inuit have been given a larger voice than in the past, with bilateral and tripartite partnerships, forums and technical tables identifying needs, expressing viewpoints, and giving recommendations. There are often extensive consultation processes and surveys conducted to gather quantitative and qualitative data to establish key facts about housing and the impacts of housing shortages in Inuit Nunangat. Inuit themselves identify further venues to lobby governments to pay attention to the urgent housing shortage such as at the Assemblé Nationale, Parliament, and issue-specific conferences with representatives from ITK, Makivik, KRG, Elders, youth and others participating. In other words, they use multiple means to get their messages across: presentations, meetings, negotiating tables, written submissions, and even their own Inuit-designed policy proposals. Finally, we have plenty of statements and declarations by governments at all levels who have pledged to work with a set of ethical values and principles of engagement, with partnership accords that should, in theory, guide future decisions and paths together with Inuit, as well as working towards larger goals of reconciliation and Inuit self-determination.

So why, then, does the housing crisis persist? Where is the disconnect? When looking at these legal, institutional, administrative, and moral and ethical settings in which negotiations and decisions about Inuit housing should be made, in principle we should reasonably expect some definition of success. In my opinion, the answer lies in a close reading of how the policies, strategies and action plans for housing are distorted by ethical shortcomings. A phronetic analysis enables the identification of the difference between the specified, promised values of engagement by government, and the ideological values that are more shrouded, underlying, *assumed* as obvious paths forward, yet ready to be uncovered through an analysis of the actual policies and actions. Using phronesis for the

interpretative approach, guided by the background context of where we came from and where we are going, the analysis of policies will decipher who gains, who loses and by which mechanisms of power. This will be followed by exploring which parts of this are desirable (Part III) , and what could possibly be done (Part IV).

I will do this by closely tracing the assumptions that governments seem to be making: how the "best" path to Inuit wellbeing is presented; what wellbeing means (to different actors); how housing might improve Inuit quality of life under these conditions. To do this, I will present what I call a policy "dialogue" by presenting policies and responses between governments and Inuit institutions and leaders on issues that are all *de facto* about housing.

In this chapter, I examine the policy puzzle in terms of excavating the governments' objectives for the housing sector in Nunavik. This will help unearth other factors contributing to the persistence of the housing crisis in Nunavik. I look at three possibilities.

1. First, government actions are primarily about upholding the status quo by maintaining control over the decisions, while also relinquishing just enough authority over some parts of the housing process to sustain the dialogue.
2. Second, the policies are truly being guided by politico-ethical commitments governments have made towards Inuit in their treaties, international covenants, partnership accords, and acts of reconciliation.
3. Or third, these new ethical commitments, even if sincerely held, are nonetheless steered by presumed market forces, economic demands, jurisdictional interests, and other national or international pressures that the Canadian state presumes to be an agonistic reality against which political dialogue is inherently placed.

I will examine housing policies, of course, but also a wide-range of other federal and provincial policies that form the social, economic, and political backdrop to housing. These *de facto* housing policies—Indigenous policies in general, as well as social, health, homelessness, and economic development policies—are often presented as separate issues, with their own timelines, goals, and momentum. They may also be, to some extent, decoupled from Indigenous rights language. But they are equally relevant to housing outcomes, and are part of the vast interconnected network of government goals and objectives that contribute to the housing outcomes in Nunavik. I include past and existing policies conceived by federal and provincial departments, as well as agreements signed between Inuit and state bodies. I will also analyze where we are purported to be going, that is, whether government direction seem to be "desirable." To judge whether policy directions are "desirable" it will be based on what Nunavimmiut have been saying in reports, demands, and critiques made by Inuit leaders and organizations of Nunavik. Through an analysis of this "dialogue" using a phronetic approach that interprets the particular status of values, I offer a re-interpretation of the power relationship between government and Nunavimmiut. This will substantiate my argument that we need a new way of framing "housing" with a housing-specific set of values for Nunavik that the non-Inuit stakeholders and decision-makers would be able to relate to and integrate into their way of thinking—appealing to our shared humanity—and ultimately see how their controlling and dominant roles in the housing complex has blocked Inuit from realizing many of their own goals for Inuit wellbeing.

Indigenous Policies

The JBNQA treaty established the political relationship with its attendant material offerings, legal definitions, and moral and ethical responsibilities. But that was only the beginning of the story. Governments continue to frame their political relationship with Nunavimmiut through social, economic, and health policies. These policies reveal the relationship states are willing to build with Inuit today. It is through these actions that we can identify how a government frames its sense of duty and responsibilities, its willingness to act, and the behaviour it expects to see from the target population. Policies also reveal how the state views its responsibilities in relation to treaty signatories, as well as in relation to its larger goals for the nation, the provinces, and for all citizens. In a liberal-capitalist nation-state, there is above all an inclination to see economic development, however defined, as the best means—and often the only means—to fulfill these duties and to attain citizen wellbeing. This is true for Indigenous and Inuit communities, regardless of their culturally specific understanding of the term wellbeing. I examine first federal conceptions of economic development for Indigenous Canadians as a way of understanding the gap between conceptions of social values.

Federal

Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development

In 2009, the federal government responded to the global recession with *Canada's Economic Action Plan*, a two-year stimulus package. With that, it launched the *Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development* to improve the participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people so they can "help build a vibrant Canadian economy" (Canada 2009, 1). The new federal framework would replace the existing 1989 *Canadian*

Aboriginal Economic Development Strategy which had not achieved its goal of simplifying the administrative complexity of many diverse economic support programs that often ended up in lost opportunities and inconsistent application (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, 19). One reason for dedicating more support towards Indigenous economic development prior to the recession was the evidence that out of the $9 billion that the federal government allocated for Indigenous people, only 8% was targeted to economic development programs, with apparently the bulk of funding going towards social development, which was defined as capital facilities, education, social assistance, housing, and health services. It was then recommended that there should be a shift towards better integration between social and economic support in order to alleviate Indigenous poverty writ large (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, 15–16). Economic assistance for Indigenous people was something that witnesses to the Senate Committee's meetings and public hearings[139] saw as going hand-in-hand with housing programs. Development included funding for the most basic infrastructure upon which adequate housing and new constructions rely, and without which, economic development cannot even proceed (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, vii and 65–66). The *Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development*, in 2009, however, showed no inclination to understand the problem that if someone is deprived of basic essential needs, such as housing and health care, they would not be poised to benefit from an economic opportunity as described in this new approach.

The *Federal Framework* was an outcome of a consultation with a broad cross-section of stakeholders, that included Indigenous organizations, provincial and territorial

[139] Witnesses included a small number of representatives from ITK and Nunavut Tunngavik, though there were no public hearings or "fact-finding initiatives" held in Inuit Nunangat (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, vii and Appendix C and D)

governments, and private sector groups. It held one meeting in the north, in Iqaluit (Canada 2009, 8). The framework was seen as a response to an emerging trend believed to be that Indigenous people were ready to take a "step toward *becoming full participants in the Canadian economy, as entrepreneurs, employers and employees*" (Canada 2009, 3 emphasis mine). It turned the identity of Indigenous people into a one-dimensional market player, indistinguishable from non-Indigenous Canadians, and without recognition of any particular set of values, beliefs, relations, geographies, or unique social structures. The Framework focused on how supporting Indigenous employment and Indigenous partnerships was a "smart business strategy" (Canada 2009, 3) for companies and entrepreneurs. The language clearly reflected the Harper era's belief that social progress is fuelled by business opportunities. There was, accordingly, no reference to wellbeing in this Framework. Neither were there any expected outcomes related to Indigenous autonomy or improved quality of life. Presumably positive outcomes would come of creating "opportunity-ready Aboriginal communities" because they would become safe investment targets for companies (Canada 2009, 20). By becoming players in the (global) market economy, wealth in the North would be built in line with other Canadians.

The government's role was to coordinate federal initiatives across different government departments and agencies, and with other private partners; it focused only on working with the "federal departments and agencies that have an interest in Aboriginal economic development" (Canada 2009, 17). It was not about coordinating with other sectors working on related issues such as housing and community infrastructure. These, it was presumed, would simply be solved through economic growth. The need to support basic human living standards for all people alongside the support of economic development, as flagged by the Senate Committee two years earlier, was omitted. The

Senate Committee pointed out that for those Indigenous people who "continue to struggle to acquire even the most basic services, for their communities, such as adequate housing and health care, the promise held by economic development may still be far away" (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, vii).

There were no guiding principles indicating how to engage specifically with Indigenous peoples and businesses, nor any reference to Indigenous knowledge, perspectives, or approaches. The Framework had the purpose of becoming a "decision-making tool" (Canada 2009, 11), one designed to ensure that government decisions were always made in line with its own strategic priorities: developing human capital, strengthening a business-friendly climate, ensuring better business management, and promoting partnerships with provinces and territories (Canada 2009, 12 and 18). Unlike the priorities identified in so many other reports that acknowledged how adequate housing was the cornerstone of all Indigenous wellbeing, indeed the one upon which all other improvements can be built, this economic policy reflected Harper's view that: "The first priority is economic development. This is obviously the most essential step to improving the lives of Aboriginal people and their families" (Canada 2009, 2).

That said, both the update to the Framework in 2012 and the progress report in 2014 introduced new wording with some recognition of the need for Indigenous agency in economic development. The main principles and goals remain unchanged, but there was grudging awareness that "Aboriginal economic development is best done by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people, [and] the Framework positions the federal government as an enabler that can help develop the right conditions for economic development, bring partners together, and make targeted investments in Aboriginal economic development" (Canada 2012, 27). It also now saw the value of "enhancing the capacity of Aboriginal

communities and economic development leaders to provide advice to the federal government and inform Framework implementation" (Canada 2012, 27). This was a palpable shift in the government's approach. I identify this change as a willingness to place some value on *recognition* and *listening* to Indigenous leaders. I hesitate to go as far as say that *inclusion*, *partnership*, *dialogue*, or *active engagement* were part of this new policy since it is a far stretch to say that "receiving advice" from Indigenous leaders is the same as including Inuit voices at the decision-making table.

The 2014 progress report, which displayed a host of new ventures and partnerships, also anticipated the continued success of the Framework over the next ten years, believing that it would provide for "community well-being, and self-sufficiency" (Canada 2014, 14). In general though, references to the wellbeing of communities and residents on-reserve and in the North did not elaborate what that might consist of, except to say that wellbeing was associated with the maintenance of income generation through resource development (Canada 2014, 6). This policy in other words did not significantly address *how* progress on these fronts might close the gaps in their standard of living, quality of life, or wellbeing except as an unspecified aftereffect of Canadian resource development strategies. Implying that end goals like wellbeing and self-sufficiency could be met by economic growth alone, without hinting at the political and social changes that would have to take place, is evidence of a kind of underlying assumption or faith in the supremacy of economic growth.

Quebec

"Do More, Do Better" 2017-2022 and the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs

While provinces generally carefully guard their prerogatives, Quebec has publicly expressed commendable values regarding how it views its relationship with Indigenous

peoples in the province. In 1998, Parti Québecois Premier Lucien Bouchard issues a series of new directions for the government in its approach to economic and social development for Indigenous peoples. On the occasion of the twenty year anniversary of Quebec's Secretariat aux affaires autochtones, he stated support for Indigenous autonomy and greater control over their future: "Je crois profondément qu'ensemble, nous réussirons à faire du développement économique et social la clé de voûte menant à une plus grande autonomie et à la prise en charge, par les Autochtones, de leur destinée propre."[140] With Indigenous automony on the table, he also said he wanted to advance the relationship based on the values of *trust* and *mutual respect*: "accentuer le développement d'une relation de confiance basée sur le respect mutuel"[141] (Québec 1998, 4).

The new direction called *Partnariat, développement, actions*[142] was to guide the government's future actions. It addressed the province's support of economic *and* social development for Indigenous peoples, and it also referred to the special relationship Quebec had with treaty Indigenous nations and its willingness to take actions to support more Indigenous autonomy. More specifically, the new policy direction addressed the issue of governance and the need for "un lieu politique de débat, d'échanges et de concertation"[143] (Québec 1998, 27). It was to be a pragmatic approach bringing tangible outcomes. Speaking in terms of future partnerships, Quebec agreed that all negotiations inherently touch on the issue of Indigenous and Inuit governmental autonomy,[144] which

[140] Translation into English by DeepL.com: "I firmly believe that, together, we will succeed in making economic and social development the key to greater autonomy and Aboriginal control of their own destiny."
[141] Translation into English by DeepL.com: "emphasize the development of a relationship of trust based on mutual respect."
[142] Curiously the English version of this policy, the word "actions" was replaced with "achievement" in the title of the document: *Partnership, Development, Achievement.*
[143] Translation into English by DeepL.com: "a political forum for debate, exchange and consultation."
[144] In French the term used is "autonomie governementale" which can translate to either governmental autonomy or self-government.

would go hand-in-hand with the capacity to *take over their own* development paths (Québec 1998, 12). The province even accepted at this time that Indigenous nations demanded to maintain their special ties to the federal government (Québec 1998, 12).

This new direction for Quebec was a showcase for what the Secretariat des affaires autochtones had accomplished over twenty years. It wanted to demonstrate that it was responding to what Indigenous people had been asking for, legitimizing the need for the Secretariat that would be seen to be building bridges and dialogue with Indigenous peoples and Inuit. It talked the talk. Trust and mutual respect are desirable codes of conduct in a partnership. Valuing Indigenous autonomy in the face of economic development reveals an awareness that one requries the other. Yet, another twenty years on, and another new provincial Indigenous policy, reveals how much has been left unfulfilled.

In June 2017, Quebec launched *Do More, Do Better: Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit 2017-2022*.[145] It was intended to complement an economic stimulus called the Aboriginal Initiatives Fund, which had been renewed multiple times since 1999. *Do More, Do Better* claimed that it needed to fill gaps in the province's decades of support for Indigenous economic development. The provincial government said it finally wanted to address culture and social needs specifically, and to bring more cohesiveness across all policies and actions.[146]

This new provincial policy was a result of consultations with First Nations and Inuit and it was also identified as "rounding out" past commitments such as the1975 JBNQA

[145] In this case, the Minister Geoffrey Kelley, responsible for Native Affairs, specified that although this is being called an "action plan," both the policy and the action plan are contained in one document together. The new government policy direction being stated in the first sections of the action plan (Québec 2017a, vi).
[146] This was contrary to what the federal government had been accused of neglecting, with research in a 2007 Senate report finding that the majority of *federal* funding had been going to social needs (based on certain policy directions) while purely economic development in Indigenous communities was not given enough support, economic support that Indigenous people were insisting was necessary (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2007, xiv).

and the 2002 *Paix des Braves Agreement* (Québec 2017a, 66). Compared to the one-dimensional federal economic policy (*Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development)*, it employed a broader, more inclusive, holistic, and conciliatory tone, recognizing how interconnected the many parts of society are and how economic development must be well-supported by the other parts to have success. It also addressed the need to repair past wrongs, work towards reconciliation, contribute to healing, attend to constitutional protections for Indigenous people, and base all this on *dialogue*[147] and return to its *nation-to-nation* foundation. It is debatable whether this is truly a policy shift, though. It was a judiciously worded plan, appealing mainly to the Quebec general public. On the one hand, it contained keywords that spoke to values that appeared to lend it legitimacy for Indigenous peoples, even recognizing the "holistic definition of wellbeing" of Indigenous culture (Québec 2017a, 11). But we do not see a repeat of claims to respect and work towards Indigenous *autonomy* as we had in 1998, nor engaging with the values of *trust* and *mutual respect* (others values are presented, as we will see below). We should not misread the main policy purpose in 2017: to create a better tool for economic development. Even if it can be used for the Aboriginal Initiatives Fund (Québec 2017a, iv), it is ultimately for the benefit of economic development of the *whole* province. It is about the provincial economy.[148]

The policy was part of Quebec's aspiration for "a fairer, more prosperous, inclusive, open Québec" (Québec 2017a, iii) which included Québec's new policy on its own cultural affirmation within Canada, entitled *Quebecers: Our Way of Being Canadian.* Québec

[147] It is worth noting that half of the "dialogue" that the policy refers to is directed at Indigenous people, and half is about improving dialogue with the federal government.

[148] It was also not new for Quebec to claim it will respond to both economic and social needs, as it said in its 1998 policy: "Québec favorise un partage de la richesse et plus spécifiquement un rattrapage socio-économique pour les Autochtones et leurs communautés" which was going to be addressed with concrete and pragmatic actions (Québec 1998, 27).

would always uphold its unique identity as a francophone society.[149] Quebec has often expressed a sense of vulnerability due to being surrounded by English North America. It feels the need to bolster its economic autonomy as a province, which becomes a driving force towards Quebec's explicit intention "to contribute significantly to the progress of the Aboriginal societies *in order to* better build the Québec of the future"[150] (Québec 2017a, 3 emphasis mine). A generous interpretation here might claim that this is implies partnership, equality, and inclusion of Indigenous into the larger society, of being treated like the rest of Canadians. However, I disagree.

In all of these statements we find partial acknowledgment of Quebec's difficult historical relationship between state and Indigenous populations. But these are overshadowed by the need to enhance *Quebec's* wealth and identity, never fully identifying what Inuit and First Nations needed, nor more importantly, what they were due. It spoke sympathetically of how the "historic contribution of Aboriginal peoples" to Quebec society (Québec 2017a, iii) came at the cost of "sustained attempts" at assimilation and forms of discrimination that Aboriginal peoples "have suffered from"[151] in the past (Québec 2017a, iii).[152] But there was no ownership of whose agency was responsible for these historic

[149] This question of identity is always at the heart of Quebec policy with the province "remaining closely attached to the continuity of its distinct, French-speaking character"(Québec 2017a, iii).

[150] Actually, it was in the 2015 Governor General's Speech from the Throne that the partnership and relationship between Canada and Indigenous people was about ensuring "a certain path to economic growth" (Québec 2017b, 140). It is a common refrain about how Indigenous people can and should contribute to the wealth of the whole nation.

[151] The use of the passive voice allows for statements that imply that this was an unfortunate state of affairs in the past, without identifying an offender. The wording of the provincial action plan, which is in part motivated by Canada's attempts at reconciliation, shows that there is still no willingness to actually point to or claim any responsibility for who was *driving* the assimilation or discrimination policies in the past or today. This, in my opinion, is how governments can skirt the issue: they publicly accept that things happened, but to not acknowledge any responsibility in the harm committed by past policy and past bureaucratic actions, past leaders, nor, by extension, by any present day policies.

[152] Premier Couillard made this statement after having met with people from Nunavik's Parnasimautik consultation process where they talked about housing in Nunavik (Makivik 2017, 73).

"sustained attempts," nor for ongoing discrimination. Indeed, it was implicit that these were things of the past.

The Premier continued: "It is, therefore, incumbent upon us to ensure that this cohabitation [with Aboriginal people] is now based on *respect*, *mutual aid*, *collaboration* and *friendship*" (Québec 2017a, iii). These are values echoing similar values stated in the past, but not going as far as to mention Indigenous *autonomy*. Quebec had indeed come to recognize that the "definition of well-being that Aboriginal culture advocates does not necessarily suit the manner in which modern governments usually organize their activities" (Québec 2017a, 11). It also accepted that the wellbeing of Indigenous people involves a more "holistic" approach to policy design. It even offered, for that very reason, to expand its view of Indigenous societies and the way it considered the requirement for economic development of Indigenous communities. Therefore, this plan was to include space for Inuit and First Nations' social and cultural development with a new comprehensive approach based on *collaboration* and *friendship*. It even focused on strengthening *communities*, not just the self-fulfillment and quality of life of *individuals* (Québec 2017a, 10). However, the *political* needs and questions of the political voice of Indigenous people were altogether absent from Quebec's action plan. Moreover, there were precise limitations included, which I argue were designed to maintain the status quo of the existing power relations between Quebec and its Indigenous communities.

An explicit caveat was included regarding the degree of Quebec's "openness" to change. It stated that: "While the Government of Québec is promoting the management by the Aboriginal peoples of the means to ensure their wellbeing," the plan stated, "it should be noted that it is not a question of establishing bodies parallel to the Québec networks. While it continues to encourage the establishment and development of Aboriginal service

organizations, the Government of Québec wishes, above all, to *harmonize* its initiatives and those of the Aboriginal organizations" (Québec 2017a, 26 emphasis mine). There may be much practicality to this approach—in reducing unnecessary administrative costs or new program development—but, it clearly limited what might have been a paradigm shift to being a mere boost for "Aboriginal service organizations"—and these must be enveloped into Quebec's existing governance and administrative structures. How would this status quo accommodate goals of Indigenous "holistic wellbeing" when the reality *that Quebec admitted to in the same document* is that Indigenous wellbeing does not suit the way in which "modern governments usually organize their activities" (Québec 2017a, 11). In other words, mechanisms for implementing this policy would have to fit Quebec's modus operandi. One would be hard pressed to find a clearer statement of the developmental prerogatives of the western state. How had Quebec proposed that these two positions could co-exist?

It did not. The new social and cultural action plan was not a door for Indigenous people to have more control over their society, let alone genuine self-governance or autonomy. The government was no longer headed towards the complicated questions of autonomy or control. There were still no substantial connections being made between the support for social and cultural uniqueness and Inuit autonomy and control, even in the realm of political freedom to express Indigenous (and Inuit) identity and decide their own future within Quebec or Canada. It also ignored that to remain wrapped in the provinces structures (and federal, for that matter) with those inevitable constraints does not provide the freedom to *feel* "in control" or to live with minimum amount of domination. Quebec once again made an assumption that for Inuit to merely "manage" their own services is

what would create wellbeing. Although the concept of building the "nation-to-nation" approach with Indigenous peoples was mentioned, the political was left out of this policy.

This was a plan about expanding the way *services* were delivered and managed. Transferring *administrative responsibilities* to Inuit organizations is of course valuable in and of itself. It has, at times, afforded the structural change necessary for Inuit some freedom to express direct responsibilities for and towards their communities. A case in point is the process of devolution that created the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau in 2000.

However, during the development of this provincial policy (circa 2016-2018) Inuit in Nunavik had already revived their own discussions about self-determination and autonomy. They had come to see self-determination as essential to supporting their economic, social, cultural and political goals. Quebec policy omitted the concept of "self-determination" and opted for its own word "self-fulfillment," such as attaining collective self-fulfillment (Québec 2017a, 10, 15, 34) or cultural self-fulfillment (Québec 2017a, 16), which denotes feelings more akin to "satisfaction" than to autonomy. The difference is important and not accidental: self-determination has political implications that self-fulfillment does not. This policy is intent on maintaining the political status quo for Quebec while appearing to be open to a new relationship with Inuit. Keeping the control in the south was not acceptable to Inuit, however. Charlie Watt,[153] who was re-elected President of Makivik in January 2018, put it this way: "Our problems will not be solved by the south. Solutions should be

[153] Charlie Watt was a negotiator for the JBNQA in the 1970s, and he became the founding President of Makivik in 1978. Having served as President from 1978-1982, and again from 1988 to 1994, his reelection in 2018 carried with it an echo of reviving the drama and political voice that had brought about the new relationship for Nunavimmiut in the past (Rogers 2018a).

conceived of and developed by our people. It's 2018. The era of making decisions about our region in Quebec City without our input is over" (Makivik 2018, 13).

If power indeed continues to remain distributed unequally (i.e. in the south), what does this mean for housing? First, housing negotiations and strategic and action plans follow existing policy lines, policy lines determined by the government. The Société d'habitation du Québec stated that its actions contribute to four of the Indigenous policy, *Do More, Do Better*, action items. The policy also mentioned existing initiatives that can be "reviewed, resources can be reallocated and funding bolstered" (Québec 2017a, 25). It said it will even "improve the financial conditions of tenants of low-cost housing in Nunavik" (Québec 2017a, 25). Yet there is no single mention of housing as such. Although *Do More, Do Better* states that there is a need for a holistic approach that interconnects the social, cultural, and economic factors that the policy was officially championing. Housing, one of the most foundational interrelated aspects of a community's and individual's social, cultural, and economic foundation, is not mentioned. This is a policy centered on financial support.

Northern Policies

Federal

In this section, I examine geographically-focused policies that express the intentions of the federal and provincial governments for northern and Arctic regions. These are neither Indigenous nor housing policies. But because they concern government action towards a vast northern region, they address many issues for entire Indigenous and Inuit populations living in these territories. The broad reach of these policies means they contain

de facto housing policies. What they do and do not say regarding the populations in the North are also indicators of the government's relationship with Inuit.

For example, in 2008, Ottawa unveiled *The Federal Northern Strategy*, which focused on infrastructure and mapping related to mineral exploration and northern fisheries. Its four main priorities were economic and social development, governance, environmental protection, and sovereignty (Canada 2008). In the strategy's budget, there was no targeted money for Indigenous communities besides supporting some local fisheries in Nunavut and a subsidy for a residency deduction program that applied to people in "the northern zone," which was restricted to Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. It was the 21st century, yet the strategy still omitted Nunavik from its conception of "northern," perhaps out of deference to Quebec's authority. It also revealed that the federal government still saw the North as a *resource* for Canada—a central thread found in all northern strategies to date. A new policy framework for the northern and Arctic regions was launched eleven years later and showed a noteworthy shift in its priorities and intentions.

Arctic and Northern Policy Framework (ANPF) 2019

I maintain that identifying a government's original impetus for designing a new policy helps to understand its intent. The federal government launched the *Arctic and Northern Policy Framework* (ANPF) in 2019. What prompted this was the intersection of customary efforts to assert Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic archipelago with new ice conditions brought about by climate change. The latter prompted a response from the government because the opening of Arctic waters attracted the interest of more international players, putting Canada on strategic alert. The ANPF opened by stating baldly that the region is

defined as "an important crossroad where issues of climate change, international trade and global security meet" (Canada 2019a, 4).[154] The new policy intertwined Canada's historic title and Inuit presence (just as it had in the infamous High Artic Relocations of the 1950s): "Canada's enduring sovereignty over its Arctic and northern lands and waters is continually expressed. Canada's sovereignty over the region is long-standing, well-established and based on historic title, and founded in part on the presence of Inuit and First Nations since time immemorial" (Canada 2019a, 20).[155]

There was novelty to this new 2019 policy, though. It was co-developed with Arctic and northern Indigenous people (Canada 2019a, 8). This was an important new step in the connection between policy development and the voice of northern Indigenous people. The policy's vision included creating "thriving, strong, and safe communities" (Canada 2019a, 5), and an acknowledgement that "Inuit Nunangat is the Inuit homeland in Canada" (Canada 2019a, 4). The use of the term Inuit Nunangat signalled for the first time that Nunavik was clearly included in this strategy. The ANPF continued: "Unlike previous Arctic and northern policies, the framework better aligns Canada's current national and international policy objectives with the priorities of Indigenous peoples and of northerners" (Canada 2019a, 5). Disclosing international pressure, and wanting to display Canada's Arctic leadership, we know that the impetus for the policy was, at least in part, due to the fact that: "As the region undergoes rapid environmental change [...] international interest

[154] It was a continuance from the 2008 northern strategy which had also been about reinforcing Canada's sovereignty claims in the Arctic by backing marine and fisheries infrastructure, mapping the seabed, and financing a new icebreaker.

[155] This statement by Canada in inherently problematic which I cannot fully dissect in its historical context here, but it is essentially saying that Canada's sovereignty is long-standing, and that this is partly *because* of the presence of Inuit and FN who have been here since time immemorial. It is just another way that colonial settler states make claims over the original inhabitants, claiming not only Indigenous people as their "own" but even making a claim to Indigenous experiences and historic title as proof of the state's sovereignty. It is a very deceiving statement.

surges" (Canada 2019a, 5). This was not just protective; it was competitive: "Other circumpolar nations are making significant investments to make their Arctic regions part of the global community" (Canada 2019a, 7). The conclusion is inevitable: "Supporting Canadian initiatives to keep pace with international efforts will bring increased opportunities, health and well-being to Indigenous peoples and northerners" (Canada 2019a, 7). The wording here reveals what we see in other federal and provincial policies too, which is to somehow place Indigenous needs (and even sometimes rights) within the framework of the government's wider political needs.

Then there were to be "spin-offs" or ways in which Indigenous people will benefit from other economic or political goals that the government sets. It placed Indigenous needs and rights (or Inuit in this case) as a secondary priority, or, at best, as part of a geopolitical *quid pro quo*. The strategy was not triggered *because* of the suffering of Inuit or other northern First Nations, nor *because* their treaty rights were being denied. The outcome may bring about some desired results: new job opportunities, new services targeting local people of the northern region, new government investments in infrastructure to support economic and community development, and new funds for local entrepreneurs and businesses. But in so far as the policy starts with international and climate change priorities, it sets the stage on a different footing. Being "open" to *inclusiveness*, *consultation*, and Inuit proposals is, within this context, always circumscribed by the parameters of the government's own goals within a wider national and international system.

For example, one of the first goals of the strategy is about defending the North. Given the potential future incursions of foreign vessels and resource interests in its ever growing accessible waters, the federal government wanted "to ensure that the Canadian Arctic and North and its people are safe, secure and well defended" (Canada 2019a, 5). Framed this

way, it reveals that the goal of supporting the sustainability of Indigenous communities and responding to their social, economic, and cultural needs is actually *the means* by which Canada intends to re-state its sovereignty over the region. The primary interests to be met by this policy are state interests. The strategy chosen to fulfill these state interests on the global scale might just happen to have the effect of also benefitting Indigenous communities in those regions, but it has drifted farther and farther away from the right of self-determination as the foundation of Indigenous-state relations.[156]

This position of supporting northern communities, although it *appears* to echo some of the demands submitted by ITK, in effect, it is not the same. The goal of supporting the sustainability of Indigenous communities and responding to their social, economic, and cultural needs is based on a different set of values. The priorities are simply not the same. ITK said that social and economic equity are "a necessary *pre-condition* to the development of a healthy, resilient and secure Canadian Arctic" (ITK 2019, 2). In 2009 the *Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic* made clear the connections between healthy communities and sovereignty:

> The inextricable linkages between issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic and Inuit self-determination and other rights require states to accept the presence and role of Inuit as partners in the conduct of international relations in the Arctic... The foundation, projection and enjoyment of Arctic sovereignty and sovereign rights all require healthy and sustainable communities in the Arctic (ITK 2019, 1).

Social and economic wellbeing in Inuit communities is not meant to be an afterthought or a mere by-product of government policies in the Arctic. Document after document describe

[156] To play devil's advocate with this argument I make here, one could say that if Canada's interest to re-instate its sovereignty over the northern region in face of the potential international incursions into the Arctic waters could only be met by *eradicating* the Inuit communities along the coast, then that would have been a "means to an end" that would obviously *not* have benefitted Inuit. This unrealistic and hypothetical scenario is simply meant to demonstrate that the "purpose" or "end goal" of the Arctic strategy was not to sustain the Inuit communities, but rather first and foremost to make a public claim to uphold Canadian sovereignty over the region and to defend it.

it as a *commitment* and *moral duty* to which various levels of Canadian government are bound; it warrants full attention, and flexibility to adapt to Inuit approaches and solutions. But the proof is in the words themselves, so below I parse how the federal government has described the nature of its new policy (as a change in direction), the outcomes it hopes to see due to the new approach (by closing the gaps), and one of the ways it intends to reach it (by changing federal practices).

The ANPF contains a simple platitude:—"the manner in which the Government of Canada interacts with Indigenous peoples continues to evolve" (Canada 2019a, 16)—but suggests that, this time, the government offers "a profound change of direction for the Government of Canada," as claimed by the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs at the time, Carolyn Bennett (Canada 2019a, 2). The government drew on high-level declarations and promises signed over the last ten or more years regarding rights, the relationship, and reconciliation. In accordance with these various pledges and obligations, Canada re-affirmed that the ANPF was based on the 2017 *Inuit Nunangat Declaration on Inuit-Crown Partnership,* the 2018 *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*, the 2015 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*, and the 2007 *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (in other words, the "soft promises" I analyzed in the last chapter). As such, the "Government of Canada is moving towards the recognition and implementation of rights as the basis for Canada's relationship with Inuit" (Canada 2019a, 53).

As per the avowal to increase the amount and the quality of consultations and engagements with Indigenous people for policy-making, this policy framework did not in fact disappoint. Considering how policy was made in the past, it was significantly more

engaged with Indigenous leaders across the North. The process had also included accepting and reviewing a wide range of position papers as well as surveying past reports produced by Indigenous organizations, including Nunavik's own *Parnasimautik Consultation Report* from 2013. The value of this was not only in how the policy framework was created, but how it displayed a deeper understanding of Inuit desires, along with new kinds of policy goals. As one example, the ANPF included a recognition of the need to move decision-making about the Arctic and North closer to the region, and the necessity to have stable funding behind it all (Canada 2019a, 22).

Likewise, the ANPF at last paid explicit attention to closing the gaps between the quality of life of Inuit (and northern Indigenous peoples in general) and other Canadians, calling them currently unacceptable. It laid out a future vision for the North whereby "its people will be full participants in Canadian society, with access to the same services, opportunities and standards of living as those enjoyed by other Canadians [and the] resources required for their physical and mental wellness will be accessible" (Canada 2019a, 36). In order to close these gaps, Canada recognized that it "requires greater effort, focus, trust and collaboration, and more self-determination for the peoples of the region" (Canada 2019a, 36).

These are invaluable goals as stated, but I maintain that because closing those gaps is not the main *intent* of the policy—it is only one of the many goals contained within it—it leaves the potential of failing again. One could argue, for example, that the ultimate purpose of the Arctic and Northern Framework—to defend the North and assert Canadian sovereignty in the context of climate change effects—might be accomplished *without* bolstering the wellbeing of Indigenous communities and closing those gaps. If it was decided that the route to defend the North did *not* require bolstering the wellbeing

Indigenous communities, where would it leave Inuit? In fact, this has been the case for policies of the past. In 2016, the Minister's Special Representative on Arctic Leadership, Mary Simon, commented in the *Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, saying: "the simple fact is that Arctic strategies throughout my lifetime have rarely matched or addressed the magnitude of the basic gaps between what exists in the Arctic and what other Canadians take for granted" (Canada 2019a, 2). And the current 2019 Minister Carolyn Bennett likewise admitted that: "While almost all past governments have put forward northern strategies, none closed these gaps for the people of the North" (Canada 2019a, 2). While the current goal and the path proposed is worthy, does this Policy Framework actually right past wrongs?

The values the government expressed—*trust*, *focus*, *collaboration* and placing value on *self-determination*—are of course laudable. As are the claims that the federal government will support the "development and implementation of federal policies and programs that are intended to benefit Inuit" (Canada 2019a, 4). The proposed means to do that are to "change federal operating practices and processes in support of increased self-determination and representation of Arctic and northern Indigenous peoples, and recognize the unique operating environment of various Indigenous and public governments in the Arctic and north" (Canada 2019a, 52). But to change *what* exactly about its practices? As a policy framework, this objective will need to be interpreted and applied in future action plans, negotiations, and agreements but there is no indication how practices and processes would overcome long-standing power dynamics. More chapters were still to be appended to the Federal Framework, including addressing issues for Quebec. However, how would Quebec contribute meaningfully to a federal policy framework that diverges

from its own values and goals as expressed in its provincial Indigenous policy and Plan Nord (which I will examine next)?

Perhaps the federal ANPF used an expression that could be critical to the possibility of changing practices: "fate control." I contend that this does indeed *theoretically* show a willingness to respect concepts of autonomy towards the goal of Inuit wellbeing. It is an expression that connects self-determination, wellbeing, and power. Referring to the Arctic Council's *Arctic Human Development Reports*, the ANPF says "fate control," (understood as "guiding one's own destiny") is an "important element in peoples' well-being" (Canada 2019a, 15). Through past processes, such as land claims and devolution, Canada asserted that fate control was on the rise, but also that it continues to be a challenge. It wants, therefore, to "ensure that fate control comes with the *capacity* to meaningfully exercise local aspirations" (Canada 2019a, 15 emphasis mine). But again what does "meaningfully exercise" mean?

If we look closely at the consultations and demands that Inuit had made during the formulation stage of this Policy Framework, we see that the ITK repeatedly emphasized the right of Inuit to self-determination (ITK 2019, 4) in their submission. The federal Framework, in turn, spoke to this, referring to supporting self-determination and representation of Arctic and northern Indigenous peoples (Canada 2019a, 52). Self-determination is a pliable term, however, and it was used in the government policy in the context of various scenarios such as: that "innovative" self-determination could be reached through public governments[157] (Canada 2019a, 53); that Inuit need the right to self-determination for "sustainable harvesting of flora and fauna" (Canada 2019a, 33); that "closing the socio-economic gaps" is a route to self-determination (Canada 2019a, 53) and;

[157] Public government has been the form that processes of devolution have often taken, such as in Nunavut.

that the "modern" route to Indigenous self-determination over the last 50 years had already been formalized through various land claims (Canada 2019a, 12), including the JBNQA. These are arguably measured interpretations of idea of self-determination compared to the much more powerful designation of self-determination described by ITK as social, cultural, economic self-determination which is "part of the broader goal to gain control over institutions and systems that had undermined our [Inuit] traditional ability to be self-reliant (ITK 2016a, 5). Devolution, which has generally meant transferring administrative duties to Indigenous peoples, has not resulted in a change in the power balance of the Indigenous-state relationship (Therrien and Duhaime 2017). Harvesting rights expressed *as* self-determination do not extend to the self-determination of other social or political aspects of Inuit lives. Land claims agreements require an honest commitment from governments to back Indigenous sovereignty; and governments have historically failed to uphold their treaty responsibilities precisely on that question, as proven in the JBNQA dispute resolution process regarding Canada's multi-year refusal to support Inuit housing in the late 1990s. Moreover, the federal government's enthusiasm for "the devolution of province-like powers to territorial governments" (Canada 2019a, 53) is a process that might give an Inuit territorial government such as Nunavut "province-like" powers, but Nunavik is clearly different: the Kativik Regional Government functions more like a municipality inside the jurisdiction of the province of Quebec.

Nevertheless, Canada evidently believes these approaches should provide more power to all Inuit in the North because, as stated, the "federal government agrees with the people of the Arctic and the North that they must play a greater part in governing the region — domestically and internationally" (Canada 2019a, 16). However, I would contend that all this recognition in the policy does not translate into a new opening for more

political power for Inuit, nor for more direct decision-making power so that they can actually have more control over their fate and future. Even after the admission that wellbeing depends on a level of "fate control," the ANPF still comes up short. At its launch in 2019, there was a separate chapter for Inuit Nunangat added. When the text referred to building stronger communities by addressing "mental health and closing gaps in social and economic well-being between Inuit and other Canadians" (Canada 2019a, 6), Canada responded by investing in addictions treatment facilities in Nunavut and Nunavik and in more suicide prevention services. These are certainly crucial social services every Canadian deserves to have access to, but mental health services do not self-evidently provide Inuit with additional control over their future or their communities.

Wellbeing is used throughout the ANPF in reference to other social issues, but they too fail to make the connection between wellbeing and power or autonomy. The references to Inuit wellbeing include:

- resilience and health regarding strengthening mental and physical wellbeing and creating an environment for children to thrive and focus on their wellbeing (Canada 2019a, 64);
- wellbeing as a result of preserving culture and language (Canada 2019a, 71);
- supporting arts and culture for spiritual wellbeing (Canada 2019a, 71);
- the way climate change affects the social and cultural wellbeing of Northerners (Canada 2019a, 18 and 72); and
- the manner in which security risks associated with foreign investments, research, and science in the Arctic could have negative effects on the wellbeing of Northerners (Canada 2019a, 74).

The habitual use of this term in government documents related to services for, and the relationship with, Indigenous people, especially "wellbeing" in relation to social issues (social services), cultural issues (languages, arts), and health (mental health and medical services) spreads thin its meaning. It is also used in relation to defence and security, not so

much in terms of economic wellbeing through self-development, but in a vague sense as a by-product of governance, the "improvement and devolution of governance to give all people in Canada's Arctic and north more control over their lives will underpin reconciliation" (Canada 2019a, 53). Wellbeing, however, is at its heart a deeply political concept. It means the Inuit would have agency, access to decision-making, and control over their future.[158] Limiting the term wellbeing to social, cultural and health outcomes can perhaps be explained by the fact that "wellbeing indexes" used to gauge population health and growth in a way that is common to all societies, do not include political indicators or measurements.[159]

Finally, what connection, if any, has been made in the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework between Inuit wellbeing and housing? Housing is prioritized as the Policy Framework's first goals, which includes ending poverty, eradicating hunger, and eliminating homelessness and overcrowding (Canada 2019a, 43). The housing problem is acknowledged in the "what we know" section of the policy, which states: "On a more local level, insufficient housing is a chronic problem in many northern communities. The lack of housing is linked to several other poor health and social outcomes" (Canada 2019a, 27). Poor housing conditions are seen as product of poverty and never referenced as a determinant of political outcomes for Inuit. Housing tends to remain within the realm of a financial barrier and a health concern, which are both a cause and consequence of ongoing social problems complicated by overcrowding (Canada, 2019, p. 25). There is recognition that "poor health outcomes in the region are directly linked to [...] serious social problems, including: a critical shortage of housing" (Canada 2019a, 42).

[158] The meaning of wellbeing for Inuit will be investigated in more detail in Chapter 8.
[159] I provide a review of the term wellbeing as it has been used in Inuit contexts in Part III.

Housing is routinely discussed in the context of "closing the gaps" between Inuit and other Canadians. Canada believes that: "Municipalities and other forms of local and regional government play key roles in developing and supporting Arctic and northern communities, and are integral to addressing challenges such as housing, health and education. Many communities are already taking actions that contribute to the goals and objectives of this framework." (Canada 2019a, 25). And the federal framework specifically acknowledges the problems in Nunavik, which has the worst housing statistics across the north: "In Nunavik, no communities have all-season roads or connection to a regional energy grid, [and only] 58% have suitable housing" (Canada 2019a, 27). In other words, the new policy framework recognizes the seriousness of the "housing crisis" but has siloed it under general social problems, imagining that solutions might be addressed within conventional means, without fully grasping how to reconcile it with greater autonomy within an ongoing political relationship.

Quebec

Plan Nord

As mentioned earlier, part of the problem with Canada's new "Arctic" policy is that Nunavimmiut fall specifically within existing federal-provincial jurisdictional struggles. When Quebec was designing its northern development plan in the early 2000s (which would eventually lead to Quebec's 2011 *Plan Nord*), they invited Inuit institutional stakeholders (Makivik, KRG, KSB, and NRBHSS) to participate in working groups. KRG, with its public service mandate,[160] emphasized the housing sector, access to territory, and

[160] Note that KRG has both a public service mandate that includes public services such as housing, and it created the Regional Master Plan that applies to the lands over which it has jurisdiction (i.e., Categories II and III), but these lands are NOT the lands designated for community development and housing. This alone seems to create a kind of complicated jurisdictional separation.

community building, among others issues. These meetings and the associated work "monopolized a large number of KRG staff" at the time (KRG 2010, 10). The long-term participation of Inuit organizations in the development of Quebec's Plan Nord exposed them to the way development issues were discussed and planned. A year before the Plan Nord was launched, Nunavik leaders tabled their own version of a northern strategy called *Plan Nunavik* (Makivik 2010, 94). The *Plan Nunavik* defined the needs of the Nunavimmiut, sector by sector, describing their concerns and priorities for the region. Housing stood as the number one priority. Seven preconditions were then presented to Quebec. Inuit demanded these conditions be met first, upon which Inuit would support the issues they heard discussed in the provincial policy consultations. Their first demand was for Quebec to commit to a "catch-up" housing program that would see the construction of 1,000 housing units (Makivik 2010, 96) by 2017 (KRG and Makivik 2010, 374). The third was for Quebec to recognize housing as an essential service in order for funding to be deemed a continuous priority, rather than on an ad hoc basis (Makivik 2010, 95–96).

The *Plan Nunavik* stated Nunavik's "immediate social and community needs" which they wanted to see incorporated into Quebec's long-term development goals (KRG 2010, 10). These priorities, however, did not pair with the priorities we would see in Quebec's Plan Nord a year later, despite Quebec stating the intent to improve wellbeing and quality of life for its citizens.[161] But Makivik had made its position clear even before the launch of the Plan Nord. It had appealed to the values of fairness, equity, and moral duty in the statement: "if Québec is to provide benefits from the future development of the north to all

[161] For example, chapter two of the Plan Nord is entitled "Assumer le mieux-être et le développement des communautés." Also "bien-être" is a term used a couple of times in relation to the quality of life of the local residents (Québec 2011b, 41, 73, 132).

Québecers, it must accept as a fundamental principle of the Plan Nord, before anything else, that it has to invest much more to improve the standard of living of Nunavik Inuit taxpayers, the inhabitants of the territory which Québec wishes to exploit for the benefit of future generations" (KRG and Makivik 2010, 465). These were the priorities and pre-conditions of the Nunavimmiut, with housing as number one.

Quebec knew that the province had to assign to the Inuit an important place within its development plan. Plan Nord provided more detail about how housing issues would be broached compared to the federal government's northern policy framework. Throughout the three iterations of the Plan Nord (2011, 2016, 2020), we see positive changes with regards to the province's duty to its Indigenous relations in the North, yet at the same time, and somewhat mysteriously, references to housing development fall off the radar by the last plan in 2020.

First, the government said it has a "special relationship" with Indigenous nations (Québec 2011a, 23) which it intended to respect through the implementation of the Plan Nord.[162] Quebec put forward these principles to observe in their special relationship:

- the maintenance of a Nation-to-Nation relationship;
- the obligation to properly consult the populations;
- participation by the Aboriginal peoples both in decision-making processes and the realization of development projects;
- respect for the principles of sustainable development;
- respect for the Aboriginal culture and identity;
- respect for the treaties and agreements already signed and impending (Québec 2011a, 23)

This list identified the things upon which the government placed value. It pointed towards Quebec's intentions and a recognition of its obligations, and what kind of paths it could

[162] Although it had not been special enough to give them special partner status in the way Quebec had given Hydro-Quebec.

take to get there. Quebec said it would gauge the achievements of the Plan Nord by "the quality of the relations maintained with the Aboriginal nations" which it would do by including an "active, pivotal presence of the populations in the Plan Nord elaboration process" (Québec 2011a, 25).[163] Effectively, in practice that might involve allowing them "to be *heard*" (by the government of Quebec) and to have their "interests *taken into account*" (by the government of Quebec) (Québec 2011a, 25), but the centre of decision-making remained clearly *outside* the North. As argued by legal scholar Jean Leclair (2013), while the *intentions* to include Indigenous people in the Plan Nord were expressly stated, there is a stark refusal to connect those actions to any *constitutional* obligation of consultation (Leclair 2013, 313). Moreover, the PN had a vagueness, wherein "everything seems possible" and therefore it is not clear on what issues consultations would be declared necessary: whether on specific projects with local impacts? Or on the cumulative impacts of multiple projects in a region? Or both? (Leclair 2013, 316).

The policy approach was first laid out in the 2011 *Plan Nord: Building Northern Quebec Together*. It was then renewed in the 2016 *The Plan Nord: Towards 2035*, which included a twenty-year framework and a five-year action plan. And was then updated again for three years in 2020 in the document: *Living in the North: Northern Action Plan*. Quebec recognized that most of the territory it was targeting is governed by the JBNQA and the NEQA (Québec 2011a, 8). It also recognized the need to stay in line with the tenets of the 2002 *Sanarrutik* Agreement signed with Inuit to ensure economic and community development in Nunavik. The Plan Nord deals with the development of the territory North of the 49th parallel, including Eeyou Istchee, Nunavik, Saguenay Lac-St Jean,

[163] In fact, it has been noted that almost every one of the first 50 pages of the Plan Nord 2011 document contains reference to the word "Autochtones" (Leclair 2013, 314)

and Côte Nord—an area inhabited by only two percent of Quebec's population, including Inuit, Cree, Innu and Naskapi. Quebec stated that it wanted to build its relationship with Indigenous people on these territories through *mutual respect* and *partnership* (Québec 2011a, 23). The Plan Nord's goal for the population of Nunavik was to improve the "qualité de vie, la santé et le mieux-être des communautés inuites" (Québec 2011d, 6). And the government said that it would "ensure that the implementation of the Plan Nord is sufficiently flexible to adapt to other ongoing negotiations with the First Nations and the Inuit" (Québec 2011a, 24). In other words, it saw the plan as adaptable to an evolving political environment.

However, a closer reading of these development plans show that improving the wellbeing of the people on these territories was not the central driving force of the Plan Nord. Its main impetus was altogether different: to develop Northern resources for the benefit of Quebec's economy; to profit and build the wealth of *all* Quebecers. This point comes through in all three iterations of the Plan Nord. Its focus was on how mining, forestry, and energy developments should unfold in the North in order to benefit the province's economy. The place in which Indigenous involvement and needs were included in 2011 was also defined in economic terms. Social wellbeing was always only going to be a hopeful by-product of wealth production.

The revised Plan Nord in 2016 maintained its principal purpose, which was "to spur Québec's economic recovery" (Québec 2015b, iii). Exploiting Quebec's "exceptionally rich" energy and natural resources and attracting national and foreign investment remained the means with which to accomplish it. What was apparently new was what it called the "current context" (Québec 2015b, iii). This included new awareness of Indigenous and Inuit needs in the plan—even though there was nothing new about the needs of Inuit in the

previous five years. Nonetheless, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources said that the "extensive resources of the North will be developed first and foremost for the benefit of local inhabitants" taking into account a list of Indigenous needs which fortunately included housing (Québec 2015b, v). But while promising to address "a broad range of social measures that will help improve their [Indigenous] wellbeing" (Québec 2015b, iii), the ultimate policy goal was to attract investors for resource extraction.

The most recent extension of Plan Nord, *Living in the North: Northern Action Plan*, is the current three-year action plan for Nunavik. An Assembly of Partners were welcomed to advise on its creation and the Société du Plan Nord (SPN) said it linked to Quebec's *Plan Nord: Towards 2035* long-term objectives (Québec 2020, 9). This action plan was framed by a concept borrowed from eminent Quebec scholar Louis-Edmond Hamelin, who had developed the concept of "nordicité" in 1965 (Chartier and Désy 2014, 5). Nordicité embraces the "feeling of belonging to their territory among the inhabitants of Northern Québec" (Québec 2020, 5). A quotation from Hamelin was included likely with the intention of emphasizing an affective connection between the North and the South of the province, especially in terms of the articulation of a stronger national identity of Quebec. Hamelin said that the "expression 'Québec overall' responds to a conception of Québec as a whole, encompassing space, mentalities, nations, and development, and goes beyond the separate North and South zones" (Québec 2020, 5). This excerpt of Hamelin's work reflects the ongoing tone of Quebec policies that emphasize the togetherness and possessiveness of the province of Quebec, an idea that is to be continually revitalized and believed by all Quebecers. However, it also revives the "idea of North," a sentiment that has motivated Arctic expeditions, explorers, travellers, and researchers alike. The idea of North incorporates colonial ideas and has had a tenacious hold on Canadian imaginations,

shaping national identities that claim to belong to a place that most Quebecers are never likely to visit.[164] The Plan Nord itself admitted that "the North sustains the imaginative universe of some individuals" (Québec 2020, 5).

The Plan Nord promotes a sense of ownership of land which had not been part of the province of Quebec prior to 1912, and which it had effectively ignored and neglected for decades after that. Suddenly the territory had acquired economic value in conjuction with Quebec's quest for indepence within Canada. The imagery they chose to associate with the term *nordicité* allows for the occupation of the North by outsiders, and for the movement of southern ideas and approaches for the development of the northern territory. I argue that using nordicité[165] in this context is a term meant largely for non-Inuit. It is meant to encompass "our" sense of the North, as well as expose southern senses to the unique context of the northern territory and people. Hamelin's term does, perhaps, offer some needed nuance. It may even lean towards an understanding that "home" for Inuit means something that is unique to them and to no one else. If the "feeling of belonging to their territory among the inhabitants of Northern Québec often takes root in the distinctive

[164] In Peter Davidson's thought-provoking book, *The Idea of North* (2005), he shows that the Arctic has a tenacious hold on our imaginations. It carries with it both inspiration and hope, fear and discord. "Everyone carries their own idea of north within them" he repeats over and over again (Davidson 2005). Today, the imagination of the North endures for urbanites as an extreme, exotic, and dramatic place. Cultural geographer Kay Anderson (2011) describes the Canadian North as a "spatialized trope of *extremity*" seen as "the defining landscape aesthetic of a largely metropolitan constituency" (K. Anderson 2011). Canada-as-North has always been part of our national identity and national unity. It continues into the 21st century (Grace 2001). The notion that a *qallunaaq* can "know" the North from afar is upheld in the texts and narratives that fuel our colonial relationship to a place of renewed economic, environmental and political significance today. For generations, stories about the North, about Arctic expeditions, written by explorers, travelers and researchers have enthralled readers to create their own imagination of the North (Cruikshank 2005), arguably contributing to a patriotic national identity in Canada (Cameron 2015; Baldwin, Cameron, and Kobayashi 2011). The stories also positioned readers in opposition to the "primitive" peoples they read about. For scholars in the field of Inuit studies today, it is crucial to ask not whether, but how, one is participating in the same tainted grand narrative of universal "truths" about culture, the Inuit, and the North.

[165] I do not take on the challenge of analyzing Hamelin's full concept of nordicité which is much more expansive than this reference, and which comes from a lifetime of research and experience in the North. I only look at the part that the Plan Nord included for its own purpose.

features of nordicité," then clearly one must understand their home as embodied in a spatial and environmental reality for Inuit (Québec 2020, 5).

Unfortunately, what the Plan Nord wanted to create in the North in 2011 was not a stronger sense of home for Inuit, but rather a "new economic space" that could be claimed by an abstracted sense of possession symbolized in a Quebec sense of nationalism. The new economic space would be formed in the North where Indigenous people could create jobs, partnerships and have greater access to development projects (Québec 2011a, 25). This kind of economic framing was repeated time and again in the document, whereby invigorated "economic activity will enhance the standard of living of the Aboriginal peoples through broader access to the job market, in particular through manpower training programs" (Québec 2011a, 25). The principle of the nation-to-nation relationship was one Quebec wanted to maintain through the PN (Québec 2015b, 23) and success of the PN was going to be measured "by the quality of the relations maintained with the Aboriginal nations" which were "essential to the creation in [sic] the new economic space" (Québec 2011a, 25). This was how the province expressed the value of its relationships with the northern Indigenous nations.

However, the responsibility the government accepted in signing the JBNQA was not one that could simply be fulfilled by bolstering Quebec's economy and recommending Indigenous involvement in Quebec's own economic plans. This reduces the government's treaty duty into one of a capitalist project whereby there is no rebalancing of power, autonomy, or equity within the nation-to-nation relationship. The policy and related budget commitments are a source for local investment to be plugged into the Inuit communities which would be dependent on whims of foreign and outside investment.

The Plan Nord was a tool so that "the Inuit can participate more extensively in the coming years in the development of the territory" (Québec 2011a, 25). It implied that the development would happen either way, and hopefully Inuit could also be involved in it. I am not arguing that the province's support for resource development in Nunavik has no value; indeed it has been frequently welcomed by Inuit, and by Makivik (ref!). However, it is possible to believe, within the framing of this relationship, that, for example, a proposed mine on the territory would likely proceed whether Inuit were partners or not.

Indeed, the outcomes expected for Indigenous people from this plan were intended to be less direct. I argue that there are two ways in which the portrayal and involvement of Indigenous people in the PN was problematic. First, was the promotion of Inuit benefitting from undefined "spin-offs" rather than through genuine partnerships in resource projects. And, second, Indigenous locals were being framed as "assets and resources" *for* developers and investors.

Premier Jean Charest's opening words in May 2011 explained that the people of the North were going benefit from this development plan through "spin-offs," which is by definition secondary to the targeted goal of resource development. Spin-offs were not central to the initial impetus of the plan, and evidently not part of defining success of the development goals.[166] The Premier said, "through the economic spinoff and social development that it engenders, the Plan Nord will improve the living conditions of northern populations" (Québec 2011a, vii). It was believed that this side-effect approach of northern resource exploitation was meant to "enhance" living conditions and be a socially

[166] To prove that the improved wellbeing of Inuit was NOT part of a success marker of the Plan Nord, I'd have to look at evaluation criteria, if there was any kind of evaluation conducted with regards to the Action Plan outcomes and what kind of elements were being measured – or through statements by government when announcing the new 2015 Plan Nord.

responsible way to create sustainable development. For this purpose, investment partners had to accept at least one implementation mechanism (Québec 2011a, 21). For example, one condition in 2011 was the "hiring of local workers, worker training, and the development of expertise in the regions" (Québec 2011a, 21). This action had indeed been implemented through Makivik's construction division, training programs, and its supported businesses, but Makivik is an Inuit organization, not like the foreign investors they were looking to attract.

Another spin-off was that local communities would be incidental beneficiaries of the government's expansion of transportation, energy, and telecommunications infrastructure planned to support new mining activities (Québec 2011a, 20). New access to trapping lands would create outfitting opportunities and a base for tourism infrastructure which *might*, in turn, benefit local communities. Quebec would "prioritize local and regional spinoffs" as a way of enhancing their living conditions. "This principle assumes," it claimed, "that the optimal use of local human, financial, informational, technological or other resources is promoted and developed" (Québec 2011a, 21). The "locals" were seen as both beneficiaries and *resources*—resources to be used towards the province's larger goal. Investors were certainly invited to see them as resources. The plan's documents routinely refer to locals as "assets" and "a noteworthy labour pool."[167]

In 2015, there was an unmistakeable change in the tone of the new *Plan Nord*. Likely in response to the 2007-2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as well as the accession to UNDRIP in 2016, the Québec government felt compelled to place

[167] This type of expression is a prime example of a Marxist critique of capital accumulation through labour, as well as the more obvious accumulation by dispossession of land—although I do not make an overt Marxist argument with this phronetic research approach.

Indigenous issues front and center throughout the policy.[168] Although both old and the new Plan Nord had included a chapter on the wellbeing and development of local communities, the wording was now significantly altered. It no longer referred to the northern residents as "assets" or as a "labour pool," but instead asserted in the first sentence that Quebec wanted to "channel the dynamism of local and aboriginal populations and ensure that they benefit as much as possible from the development of the North's economic potential" (Québec 2015c, 23). This was laid out in its objectives as helping "local and aboriginal communities plan and structure their development," providing "a more adequate response to the social needs of local populations," and ensuring "the cultural development of northern communities" (Québec 2015c, 23). The tone was now closer to the province's *Do More, Do Better* social and cultural development policy.

There was also a new effort to take into consideration the particular challenges that large development projects have on the local Indigenous communities. The acknowledgement of negative effects that resource development can have on Indigenous communities had not been part the first iteration of the PN. Now, though, the province conceded (though without going into detail) that, "large-scale projects in a northern environment can have both positive and negative impacts on various factors influencing the health of the population" (Québec 2015c, 26).

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[168] The Québec government created a website page that chronologically traces the evolution of its relationship with Indigenous people, acknowledging "that Québec has broken with the tutelary approach that has long characterized government action in Canada and that the province's relationship with First Nations and Inuit has changed since the middle of the 20th century, although much remains to be done to correct the errors of the past." See: https://www.quebec.ca/en/government/quebec-at-a-glance/first-nations-and-inuit/agreements-demands-negotiations/significant-events.

The 2015 Plan Nord Reference Framework furthermore stated that the "Québec government considers it a duty to honour its commitments toward the First Nations and the Inuit, to accommodate them where necessary, and to establish a partnership with them in a form that reflects their aspirations and the realities they face" (Québec 2015b, 11). The updated policy directions in 2015 listed three main priorities consisting of, obviously, economic development, but also the "wellbeing of local and aboriginal communities," and environmental protection (Québec 2015b, 18). This was a significant change from four years earlier when Indigenous community development was only talked about in terms of economic spinoffs.

The new twenty-year vision more generously referred to the needs of the communities as an integral part of the overall goal. "By 2035, the Plan Nord will have enabled the development of this rich resources area, *for the benefit of its populations* and of the whole of Québec, through an exemplary form of sustainable development based on a comprehensive, integrated, consistent and responsible approach" (Québec 2015b, 17 emphasis mine). It proposed a more locally-oriented development plan. Although the Société's mission still included benefitting local communities through spinoffs, and making sure that actions taken were "in accordance with Québec's intergovernmental and international trade commitments" (Québec 2015c, 39).

Then in 2020, Premier Legault had launched the newest plan, saying: "Our three-year action plan has been conceived with and for the inhabitants of the northern territory but will benefit all of Québec" (Québec 2020, 1). With the concept of "nordicité" that Quebec adopted, there was repeated mention of how this new action plan would "enable residents to *fully inhabit their northern territory*" (Québec 2020, 6 emphasis mine). The focus on attracting investors for resource development was accordingly diminished. More

front and center was the recognition that the living conditions in the communities have continued to face challenges and that the services in the communities needed to be improved. It also claimed that the new objective of this plan was to focus more on locally-based initiatives that "take root in the northern territory" (Québec 2020, 6), likely in response to the priorities being identified by those consulted in the territory itself. However, given that this PN was about "living in the north" and addressing the *habitability* of the region for its residents, there were surprisingly few remarks or commitments to housing, especially compared to older versions of the Plan Nord. There was only one trite remark of "well-being" in the plan, about enhancing services for the inhabitants of the territory (Québec 2020, 5).

The Plan Nord had thus shown the government's capacity to move towards including more voices, more recognition of Indigenous needs, and more inclusion of locally-based initiatives, but what actual mechanisms of power and implementation have been adopted to put these ideas to work? Has any of it had a positive effect on the housing sector? The evidence suggests not. There have been no institutional mechanisms built for Indigenous or Inuit organizations to have new roles in decision-making power. Implementation of the Plan Nord continues to be done by the Société du Plan Nord (SPN), a body legislated in 2014 that was given among other things, the role of coordinating implementation of the plan with its partners "in particular Hydro-Québec and government departments and bodies" (Québec 2011a, 18). The PN was to be implemented principally with non-Indigenous partners. Representatives from the Indigenous nations would have a seat on the Société du Plan Nord's Board of Directors, of course. However, the fact that "Hydro-Québec will assume a specific, strategic role" (Québec 2011a, 19) was evidence of a

persistent hierarchy among the stakeholders. Neither Inuit, nor other Indigenous nations, appeared to have any comparable "special" or "strategic" roles.

The head office of the Société du Plan Nord (SPN) sits in Quebec City (Québec 2015b, 12). Satellite offices in the regions are there in order to work more directly with partners, which includes "working with an organization in Nunavik" (Québec 2015b, 91) though it was not defined as a partner. Although in 2015, the SPN was supposed to open a satellite office in Nunavik (Québec 2015c, 39), by 2020, it still had no permanent presence in Nunavik, nor in Eeyou Istchee (Québec 2020, 10).

These structural absences were echoed elsewhere. The PN created a new government-led *Ministerial Committee for the Plan Nord* which consisted of fourteen provincial ministers, one being the Quebec Minister responsible for Native Affairs (Québec 2015b, 11 and 104). By definition, a "ministerial" committee is made up of ministers and deputy ministers. And although it was created in order to "focus on the needs and demands of local and aboriginal communities" (Québec 2015b, 92), representatives from regional governing bodies such as the Kativik Regional Government are not and cannot become members of this new body since they are not ministers. Its mandate is to ensure that the actions put forward by different government departments follow in line with the Plan Nord's policy directions. Inuit access to these governing bodies is through a single point of contact: the Secrétariat des affaires autochtones (SAA) (Québec 2015b, 93). And it is only through the SAA that they can raise concerns about the alignment between the northern action plan and the government's commitments in the JBNQA (Québec 2020, 10). In this way, they are supplicants to the process; they are decidedly not *at* the table during implementation.

To compensate, Plan Nord created an Assembly of Partners (which was made official after the signing of the *Act respecting the Société du Plan Nord* on December 4, 2014.) They had already been meeting since 2010, and were divided into two tables. The "Partners' Discussion Table" has three Inuit representatives (among roughly 25 representatives): one from KRG, and two from Makivik, including Andi Moorehouse on the issue of health and housing (Québec 2011a, 130). The second group was the "*Aboriginal* Partners' Discussion Table." Québec insisted that this would be a place of *dialogue* where Aboriginal partners could "express their values and needs" (Québec 2011a, 25). It was made up of appointed members from the local and aboriginal populations of the Plan Nord region and members representing the main sectors (Québec 2015c, 39). Inuit have two positions representing Nunavik. The Assembly's role was only to provide an opinion about ways forward to the Minister and to the Société du Plan Nord on issues that the SPN put forward to them (Québec 2015c, 39). It could also submit recommendations to the SPN by its own initiative (Québec 2015b, 92). There did not appear to be any substantial power assigned to the Assembly apart from this advisory capacity. All actions would need to be "in accordance with the policy directions defined by the Government in relation to the Plan Nord" (Québec 2015c, 38). The provincial government set the terms and has the final say according to its own policies. The power of the province would not be compromised by these new advisory bodies. Nevertheless, the claims were that these mechanisms would maintain closer ties between "Québec's political and Aboriginal decision-makers"[169] (Québec 2011a, 23). The SPN stated that it wanted to institute a

[169] The separation of "political decisions-makers" and "Aboriginal decision-makers" almost implies an a-politicization of the Indigenous contributors. Are they being seen here as mere knowledge holders? Treaty beneficiaries? Locals benefitting from spin-offs? It is not clear. It is also a façade to refer to them both as decision-makers when there are no mechanisms to bring Indigenous people into the part of the process where the decisions are made.

"consensus-building structure" that would adapt to the territory through new partnerships (Québec 2011a, 19), but there was little description of what this might entail. By 2020, there were no additional governance mechanisms presented in the PN, and no mention of further "consensus building" except to the extent that it would continue *listening* to the contributions of the different discussion tables and working groups.

To say the least, these outcomes are a disappointment for Inuit hopes for a new housing regime in Nunavik. This is even more so when we look at the specific housing aspects of the Plan Nord. It is not just the lack of concrete indicators of social progress; it is that the decision-making structures were designed to ensure that Inuit interests could only be contained within existing structures. There was no adaptation to any Inuit-specific forms of inclusion or decision-making. Nor was there any broad acknowledgement of how treaty rights, or Québec's belated accession to UNDRIP would fit into the PN. The entire structure simply repeated that it acknowledged "needs." Given that Quebec had stated from the outset that "acceptance of their modes of operation and governance and respect for established agreements must also be part of the approach" (Québec 2011a, 134) this would have understandably been a disillusioning outcome.

So, while Quebec said it was open to change, because it was "reviewing ways of doing things and willing to act otherwise" (Québec 2011a, 137), I argue that through these governance mechanisms set up by the PN, the government did not feel obligated to go beyond maintaining a space for consultation on its own terms and offering an advisory role for Indigenous peoples. The role that representatives of Nunavik have in the Assembly remains consultative, or at the most, as a decidedly minority voice on the governing board. The power to decide, to be an equal partner, as a nation-to-nation relationship might imply, would not be realized. This is the manifestation of the Inuit-state relationship through the

Plan Nord—through its systems of governance—and it has an effect on how Inuit housing progresses and is (or is not) supported through policy.

Turning to the housing question in the Plan Nord specifically, there was agreement on the fact that sustainable development was fully dependent on the communities having essential needs met, which included housing (identified as a "basic need") (Québec 2015b, 134). Quebec acknowledged that the Plan Nord had to take into account issues raised by different nations, including "issues pertaining to housing and the cost of living in Inuit communities" (Québec 2011a, 24). Yet, over the years, attention and commitment waned on the housing issue, an issue that ten years earlier Inuit had already made clear must be considered an essential need. We may recall that the Nunavimmiut had demanded in 2010 that a 1000-unit housing catch-up program be part of a northern plan to be delivered within seven years (KRG and Makivik 2010, 374), in order for the PN to gain Inuit support. But a catch-up program that would *sufficiently* deal with the detrimental housing shortage has never been delivered, even though a *Plan Nord Housing Agreement* had been signed in 2012.[170]

When the 2011 Plan Nord addressed housing specifically, it was a subchapter in a larger section called "Community Wellbeing and Development." Remarkably, the first "housing priority" was about ensuring that suitable accommodation would be available for the *incoming workers from the South*: "The development of the North and the arrival of workers from outside the territory will pose for the partners under the Plan Nord a challenge in respect of reception, lodging and housing infrastructure throughout the

[170] I find it curious, and almost inexplicable, that while housing for Inuit was not a priority in the 2011 PN, there was one Plan Nord housing agreement signed for Nunavik in 2012, whereas by the 2020 iteration of the PN, which was all about making sure the North was a livable place for the residents (i.e. the "Living in the North" plan), there was no more mention of how housing fit into the northern development plan funding commitments.

territory" (Québec 2011a, 41). So, while the PN had described locals as a "noteworthy labour pool," it also said that "the initiation of development projects within the framework of the Plan Nord will depend on[...] workers who arrive from *outside* the region, and their families" (Québec 2011a, 30 emphasis mine). New houses had to be built for *them* first. The plan was for the Société d'habitation du Québec to create new housing programs "aimed, in particular, at *new households wishing to settle permanently* in a municipality located in the territory that the Plan Nord covers" (Québec 2011a, 38 emphasis mine). It was not surprising that local skills training could not fulfill *all* the manpower needs of these new large projects. But clearly the growth attributed to incoming workers overshadowed the existing population growth of a region like Nunavik where locals have little mobility, few external job options, and, moreover, for whom this territory is home. The housing plan was essentially tone-deaf to the problems posed by natural population growth in Inuit communities. Indeed, it described local populations growth in almost negative terms, as a phenomenon that was "exerting *considerable pressure* on education and healthcare services" as well as creating housing demands (Québec 2011a, 30 emphasis mine). The chapter on community wellbeing in 2011 circled around the "problem" of existing conditions for locals but then ensured services would be provided for the new residents. This framing of the housing crisis in the north reveals the extent to which the PN was ultimately meant to attract outsiders to the North.

As grim as that was, however, there was an Inuit housing commitment that followed. The *Plan Nord Housing Agreement 2012-2016* was a Quebec commitment to build 500 houses across Nunavik between 2012 and 2016, as well as 482 renovations between 2011

and 2014. This was considered a "catch-up program" of sorts[171] because it was a Quebec commitment above and beyond the funding it already provided in the five-year trilateral JBNQA housing agreement that would see 340 new social housing units between 2010 and 2015. The PN's 500 houses were to be delivered in the form of 300 social housing units and 200 private units.[172] By September 2015, 300 social housing units had been built by Quebec under this agreement (Makivik 2015, 77). But the program for homeownership had not taken off as hoped. The program to support 200 new private units only benefitted sixteen new homeowners due to a variety of barriers residents of Nunavik continued to encounter, such as problems accessing credit and the general high cost of homeownership. In 2015, when Quebec relaunched the PN, it made a "new" commitment—which it also referred to as a catch-up construction program—to build an extra 60 social units plus 10 units for elders (Québec 2015c, 28). However, I put "new" in quotation marks because the newness of the commitment was deceptive. The money for the 70-unit catch-up program was actually a reallocation of the original 2012-2016 funds that had been left unused due to the unsuccessful homeownership program intended to provide 200 private units. Essentially, the following 2015-2020 PN priority action on housing was to play catch-up (still) for the housing shortage, by "building 90 additional dwellings in Nunavik: 70 new

[171] For years, Inuit leaders and representatives have been demanding a commitment from the federal and provincial governments to have a catch-up construction program (Makivik 2012, 11) of about 900 to 1000 units to deal with the ongoing housing shortage (Makivik 2013c, 10). The catch-up program is something apart from the regular housing construction agreements that should be ongoing to account for population growth and the deterioration of existing houses. I called it a "catch-up program of sorts" because it would not be enough to actually catch-up on the need.

[172] A total number 840 new units is often referenced in these years, and it is a calculation based on the commitment to building 340 units via the 2010-2015 Quebec and Canada Housing Agreement (officially called "Entente concernant la mise en oeuvre de La Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois en matière de logement au Nunavik 2010-2015) plus the 500 extra units (300 public and 200 private) that was meant to be built between 2012 and 2016 via Quebec's Plan Nord (with the 300 public housing units promised through an Agreement officially called "L'entente intervenue entre la Société d'habitation du Québec et l'office municipal d'habitation Kativik concernant la réalisation de logements à loyer modique au Nunavik"). The final numbers however differed significantly.

public housing units, including 10 multigenerational units" (Québec 2016, 70) as well as twenty new private units via the *Home Ownership and Renovation Program for the Kativik Region*. It was not an additional funding envelope for housing construction, and it would actually fall short of the *original* commitment to provide 500 catch-up units for Inuit households. As a result, Quebec's commitment to "catch-up" was only half of what Inuit had decidedly shown was necessary according to the population numbers, and the results fell well short of what Nunavimmiut identified as a basic need for the wellbeing of their communities. In 2016, a total of 120 units were built across a few Nunavik communities, through a combination of the trilateral (JBNQA) and bilateral (PN) housing agreements (Makivik 2016, 14).

The wording in the new 2015 PN showed a more honest recognition of the struggles locals had with housing. In fact, the specific issues facing Nunavik residents in terms of overcrowding and the poor viability of a private housing market was the first item mentioned in its subchapter on housing (compared with the 2011 focus on housing needs for outsiders settling in the region). The 2015 version introduced a new mechanism for Inuit called the "Fond de rachat" (a repurchasing fund). It proposed to bolster the private housing market by ensuring that the government would repurchase private properties when the private market failed. This would facilitate residents' access to credit (Québec 2015c, 27). The Fond was integrated into the revised *Programme favorisant l'accession à la propriété et la rénovation résidentielle dans la region Kativik*. There were also other measures added to support access to credit and stability of the value of the houses in Nunavik around that time (Québec 2016, 70).

Nonetheless, by the end of 2016, which had only seen a total of 120 new units built in total across the Nunavik territory, President Tukkiapik of Makivik anticipated future

progress: 2017 would see a total of 204 units built, including 144 social units through the Canada-Quebec housing agreement, and 60 through Quebec's PN funding.However, the enthusiasm expressed by President Tukkiapik in 2017 was due to the *federal* government's renewed commitment to housing, not Quebec's (Makivik 2016, 13–14). In fact, despite the statements and priority actions set out in the 2015 Plan Nord to support local communities, Makivik found its relations with Quebec at an "impasse" in early 2016. A variety of unmet housing needs, including the funding agreement and issues around reinstating the private homeownership program, led Makivik's Vice-President to describe relations with Quebec as "tense" (Makivik 2016, 25). The funding Nunavik was receiving for housing could not keep up with population growth. In response, Quebec appointed two official negotiators, which resulted in reinstating the existing homeownership program. But it is surely telling that during the first five years of the Plan Nord, the annual report of both KRG and Makivik had dedicated substantial space to the hopes, benefits, and outcomes of PN funding and activities; after 2016, the PN was scarcely mentioned in their reports at all.

It is fair to say that, overall, the housing problems in Nunavik have not found a solution through the Plan Nord, either due to lack of government willingness to commit resources, or to divergent values and ideologies about what belongs in an economic development plan. There is no question that the PN is first and foremost a resource development plan. To support Quebec's economy, it is acknowledged that all communities need to be strong and healthy. Therefore, the wellbeing of communities is constitutive of the entire project. Yet, while issues that hamper wellbeing are recognized, they are not directly addressed as part of the PN actions. Overcrowding in Nunavik is a problem to be dealt with; supporting access to the private housing market was a solution proposed in 2015 (Québec 2015b, 67). But mechanisms are framed as temporary fixes, with an assumption

that the market will somehow regulate itself and make homeownership a viable solution in the near future. Several of the Quebec programs introduced by SHQ were also described as "temporary assistance measures" (Québec 2015b, 67); none appear to recognize the need for long-term solutions.

The way the relationship between housing, economic development and Inuit wellbeing is presented by governments is especially vexing. Housing is positioned as a social policy. Social policies and social services are *not* the business of foreign investors or of corporations. There is merely an ideological assumption made that boosting the economy of remote communities (whether through employment opportunities and business entrepreneurship that are expected consequences of foreign investment into resource development) there will be a boost to the community's wellbeing. This is a neoliberal assumption based on the current logic of globalization (Whitebean, Marquis, and Karchut 2015). And it exposes the government's approach which always sees the economy as the solution, even as the answer to its treaty obligations. More unambiguously, the PN even stated that to "ensure the territory's economic vitality, the government intends to support communities *to attract* stakeholders that are willing to invest in and visit the territory or live there" (Québec 2020, 23 emphasis mine). In this view, community support is intended to meet the goal of inviting "economic players" to the region, who will be "encouraged to contribute to economic recovery" (Québec 2020, 5). Thereby, we see how this plan presumes corporate actors will invest in ways that will fill the gaps and responsibilities that fall under public sector responsibility, such as health, education, and housing. Even then, in the ideal world where there are many new economic players in the region, the link between corporate investment and the construction of social housing is never made clear.

This problem persists in the more long-term vision of the Plan Nord in "Towards 2035." There is no integration of a durable housing solution—one that Inuit have been insisting is an essential first step to begin resolving the social crisis caused by hidden homelessness, poor quality run-down houses, unhealthy living conditions, and mental and physical health challenges related to all of these combined problems. The inconsistency with which housing is addressed through the Plan Nord demonstrates that the provincial government continues either to willingly ignore the primary role housing plays in the wellbeing of Inuit communities or to cling to a trickle-down version of neoliberalism that assumes everything will be resolved through growth.

Housing Policies

> ***To date, the federal government has not recognized a universal entitlement to government-financed housing as either a treaty right or an Aboriginal right. It has taken the position that assistance for housing is provided as a matter of social policy, and its Aboriginal housing policy has been based on this premise. Thus, assistance has been based on 'need'. Federal, provincial, territorial and local governments have made a major commitment to assistance for housing for all Canadians […] in need***

(RCAP 1996a, 349).

Over a four-month period in the summer of 2016 the government of Canada launched a massive national consultation process called "Let's Talk Housing." It was to explore better ways to meet the national and regional housing needs of Canada's population. One outcome was the first-ever National Housing Strategy in 2016 (Canada 2016). Two of the written contributions addressing the specific demands of Inuit people can be found in the submissions by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) during this process and in the follow-up Senate Committee report on housing in Inuit Nunangat in 2017.

In its 2016 submission, ITK made the case that Inuit organizations were the best positioned to manage their own housing, but that the federal government of course plays a key role in improving housing for Inuit communities (ITK 2016b, 2). For ITK, housing was clearly a central part of creating a better more comprehensive social policy in the north. In calling for greater control over housing, Inuit across Canada signalled that housing was also a means towards self-sufficiency and wellbeing. It would also have a positive impact on their economy (ITK 2016b, 1). The ITK's submission critiqued the government's insistence that the best delivery method for housing was through bilateral agreements *with the provinces* who would then control how funds would be distributed locally. ITK countered, saying that the federal government should work directly with Inuit organizations because only they have the legitimate mandate to take care of the wellbeing of their beneficiaries. In fact, they already often manage housing on their territories; they have already established Inuit-Crown relationships through various land claims agreements, and; finally, they are in the best position to assess and respond to the unique housing needs of Inuit where conventional housing markets simply do not exist (ITK 2016b, 2).[173] The Senate Report had, after all, made the financial argument that providing funds directly to organizations would reduce high administrative costs that provinces were keeping (which in the case of Quebec, 4.57% of CMHC funding was held back from building houses) (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 34).

ITK also reiterated the value of the precedent set in 2016, when, as a pilot, money had flowed directly from INAC to Makivik. This had been a result of a Senate committee suggestion to CMHC and INAC prior to the 2016 budget announcement (Standing Senate

[173] Several regional Inuit organizations have even conducted their own housing needs surveys to gather Inuit-specific data.

Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 35). ITK had found that having funding flow directly to Makivik had produced better outcomes for Inuit, a result that admittedly still needed evaluating. Nevertheless, ITK knew that "to ensure the lasting impact of these and future investments, Inuit must be directly involved in the delivery of funding and in related decision making" (ITK 2016b, 2). The reason was not merely pecuniary: the Inuit want to develop their own housing policies. Doing so allowed them to determine program terms and conditions for the wellbeing of their own people, which eventually evolved into the 2019 Inuit Nunangat housing policy. In the government's consultation report, it had acknowledged the need for either distinct sub-strategies or parallel housing policies for Inuit (Canada 2016, 4 and 29).

In this sense, Inuit were making multiple arguments for why housing needed to be in Inuit control, and it was not principally because of the financial benefit (which the Senate Report had indeed demonstrated) but because of the manner in which housing delivery could evolve in the hands of Inuit organizations to *better reflect Inuit values and thereby create more wellbeing for them*. Power (in terms of control & decision-making) was not argued for the sake of power, or for the sake of simplicity, or for the sake of financial gain, but rather for the sake of increasing wellbeing. And wellbeing was more likely if the ones in control understand the needs better and share the same values.

When in 2017, Canada's Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples produced the report on the status of Inuit housing, *We Can Do Better: Inuit Housing in Inuit Nunangat*, more attention was suddenly paid to the quality of life for Inuit in remote corners of the country—places that had been entirely out of sight and out of mind to other Canadians. The report announced that despite all previous efforts, the crisis was getting worse, and the housing deficit in Nunavik remained at over 1000 homes. It listed all the

grim statistics that flowed as a consequence, including the particularly heavy impact of poor housing conditions on youth (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 20), the very population that development plans such as Plan Nord had targeted as an important labour force beneficiary. The Senate committee heard from numerous witnesses and summarized data from reports all of which concluded that while there are many factors that have contributed to the crisis, "key among these [...] are *the history of housing policies in Inuit Nunangat*, population growth and the high cost of constructing and maintaining homes" (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 22 emphasis mine). The report recommended involving Inuit in more policy decisions and planning. Unfortunately, the ensuing discussion in the report was more about shortcomings of the design process, where the architects interviewed had described their collaborative design process used in certain pilot projects (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 55–57), rather than about Inuit agency and autonomy. The report emphasized the need for stable *long-term* funding for Inuit to plan their housing solutions. It stated that to create the best environment for Inuit housing, "fundamental changes to the structure, provision and conditions of federal funding are needed" (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 33). While the word power is not frequently used in these kinds of non-academic reports, the assessment of the situation was essentially saying that the power balance needs to shift in favour of Inuit.

Federal

National Housing Strategy (NHS) 2018

On the national scale of housing, 2018 finally saw the launch of Canada's long awaited *National Housing Strategy* (NHS) called "A Place to Call Home." This was social

policy at its best. It spoke less to the economics of the problems with economic solutions, and addressed more directly the way the government can intervene to respond directly to the social needs of Canadians through housing. It arose in response to the growing housing problems encountered at all levels across the nation, such as access to mortgages, rising cost of homeownership, access to subsidized housing, higher rental costs, poor quality rental and social housing units, and the growing number of homeless Canadians (Canada 2016, 6). It recognized that affordable housing is a "launch-pad" towards the wellbeing of people in all other parts of their lives (Canada 2018a, 2). The strategy was believed to be "a vehicle for social inclusion" taking into consideration homeless people, low-income residents, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, immigrants, and seniors (Canada 2016, 3). It was not an Indigenous-specific housing policy per se, but an umbrella strategy that cut through all departments, in which Indigenous and Inuit housing would have its place within the "long-term vision to strengthen the middle class, promote sustainable growth for Canadians, and lift more Canadians out of poverty" (Canada 2017a). As such, it was a plan meant to overlap with other nation-wide policies and objectives related to homelessness, poverty reduction, the government relationship with Indigenous people, among other social and economic issues.

As a policy, however, it was siloed from political reform or from efforts to devolve the political power that Indigenous people had been asking for. Despite this, it represented a kind of change. It provided space for more Inuit voices in policy-making, and a recognition of the Inuit need and benefit from greater control over their own realm. Whether this would result in more actual houses being built and/or a housing system that has a bigger impact on the wellbeing of Inuit would need to be seen. But again, much can be gained by trying to understand what kind of outcomes the federal government *foresees*,

as well as its relationship with Inuit through this housing strategy. Are the values expressed here different from those in other Indigenous policies? Can this policy allay the persistence of the problem in Nunavik? Or are there indications that lasting, reliable change to the housing system for Nunavik communities may still not happen despite the lip-service paid to Inuit-driven reform?

An important aspect of the *National Housing Strategy* established that "First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation housing strategies must be *co-developed* and founded in the values of self-determination, reconciliation, respect, and cooperation" (Canada 2018a, 5 emphasis mine). In the 2021 update, the federal government claimed it had made a "commitment to working on a nation-to-nation, Inuit-to-Crown, government-to-government basis with Indigenous peoples," and therefore Indigenous Services Canada and CMHC would have to "work together with Inuit partners on housing strategies" (Canada 2021b). The Strategy claimed that there would be "funding in addition to the $40 billion" for "distinctions-based Indigenous Strategies"[174] (Canada 2018a, 7).

Canada presented this strategy as a "human rights-based approach to housing" that would target "vulnerable Canadians including women and children fleeing family violence, Indigenous Peoples, seniors, people with disabilities, those dealing with mental health and addiction issues, veterans, young adults, and those experiencing homelessness" (Canada 2018a, 4). Despite that the Inuit population disproportionately experiences all of the categories defined under "vulnerable people," the programming and budgetary commitments revealed that Inuit housing needs would only be met under specific funding

[174] The new terminology "distinctions-based" housing strategies was a term used on p.18 as Number 10 in Canada's Principles of their relationship with Ind Peo in 2018. (Canada 2018d, 18). Distinctions-based approach was also used in the 2018 Federal Budget, and it is an outcome of consultations, and describes it as an important approach "that recognizes the unique needs of First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation" (Canada 2018c, 132). It is used in the context of "distinctions-based housing strategies."

envelopes targeted for Inuit, sometimes for "Indigenous," and sometimes from money targeting "northern" populations. However, for Inuit in Nunavik, the funding for "northern housing" would not include them. They were excluded from the 10-year funding envelope of $300M earmarked for 3000 northern families in the Territories (Canada 2018a, 17),[175] which was described as funding to help them find an "adequate, suitable and affordable place to call home" that was in addition to funding for Indigenous communities (Canada 2018a, 17). Moreover, the $300M was not specific to *Inuit* in the territories, nor for what they started calling "distinctions-based" housing strategies and, because it was demarcated for Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, the Nunavimmiut would not benefit.

The only funding in the NHS that was specifically listed for Inuit housing was the $80M that had been promised previously, in 2016 (i.e. the same envelope that ITK had referred to in their public consultation submission as a positive precedent because the funding had been provided directly to Makivik). It was also the only Inuit-specific section in the NHS—and it had already been spent. The portion of the $80 million allocated to Nunavimmiut, $50 million, flowed straight from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to Makivik so that investments would be "directly delivered by Inuit governments and organizations in Nunavik, Inuvialuit, and Nunatsiavut to ensure that funds reach communities as quickly as possible and that they have the flexibility to plan for the construction season, purchase materials and consider innovative and new ideas" (Canada 2018a, 36). But at the time of the launch of the NHS, there was no further funding for Inuit housing mentioned beyond 2018, nothing further to help them plan long-term.

[175] Note that the $300M for northern housing is not earmarked for "Inuit" housing. There is money targeting Indigenous housing and northern housing, but it is clear that not all northern housing goes to Indigenous people, let alone Inuit, and if any of it goes to Inuit organizations it could be used to build for the organization's staff, which often are not Inuit, and not available to local staff. So, the target population of some money commitments matter; One cannot equate "northern populations" with Inuit. And in this case, Inuit of Nunavik are clearly not the target.

To its credit, the federal *budget* announcement (i.e. not the NHS) in 2018 actually included a ten-year commitment to Inuit social housing in Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, and Inuvialuit regions, totalling $400M for what it called an "Inuit-led housing plan" (Canada 2018c, 133). This figure was not mentioned in the NHS. However, the President of Makivik, Charlie Watt, announced that this was a longer-term commitment than they had seen in the past from the federal government, it alone would still fail to meet the extreme housing deficit across Nunavik (Makivik 2018, 12). Quantifying this is difficult, in part because of the way data is counted across different government levels. The 2022 Progress Report of the NHS showed that there was "NHS Funding Exclusively for Indigenous and Northern Housing." It included various envelopes, but data-reporting and evaluations often excluded Quebec's numbers because Quebec conducts its own reporting. Moreover, the NHS progress reports only referred to funding for housing such as for Northwest Territories, Yukon, urban Indigenous, emergency shelters, First Nations, on-reserve, urban Indigenous homeless and others, all of which did not include Inuit in non-urban parts of Quebec (Canada 2022b, 15–16).

The federal housing strategy was initially billed as a $40B plan; more recently the government claims to have committed over $72B.[176] The way these numbers are calculated is designed, of course, to display the state's generosity and to shed a positive light on the government's overall commitments to social wellbeing. This is fair enough, but it isnecessary to qualify the money calculated in the $72B ten-year strategy, because it actually included items for Inuit housing had already been committed and spent in the two years

[176] The initial NHS document launched in 2018 stated $40B (Canada 2018a, 4). In a report of a consultation with women in 2019 it was said to be a $55B plan (Canada 2019b, 3). The 2021 budget update indicated that the government would be committing $70B+ over 10 years. And today on the government website, the housing strategy is said to entail $72B+ of committed funds in 2022 (www.placetocallhome.ca).

prior to the NHS (including the $80M mentioned earlier). It also subsumes the funding for the National Homelessness Strategy—a perfectly valid inclusion due to the overlap between housing and homeless needs, but is not funding for *houses*, per se, as the housing strategy sometimes seems to imply. If the federal government wanted to appear holistic in its understanding of the housing crisis through the NHS, it would also have had to include much broader definitions of social capacity and cultural autonomy that Inuit leaders have been calling for from the outset.

Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy 2019

With all the discussion around the need for parallel Indigenous-specific housing policies, the *Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy* (INHS) was a momentous outcome of the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC). It was a result of the federal government's stated intent to *co-develop* housing strategies *with* Indigenous bodies. However, it would be unwarranted to say the government led this process. As we have seen, ITK had been developing and lobbying for an Inuit-specific approach to housing for decades prior to the launch of this new federal strategy. The INHS raised many areas left out in Canada's NHS. At the heart of these critiques was the slow speed and short-term delivery mechanisms of all government approaches. Inuit had long insisted that to emerge from a decades-long crisis required funding for multi-year advanced planning (ITK and Canada 2019, 11) and a radically new way of conceiving of housing, as ITK President Natan Obed has said: "reimagining the way housing works in Inuit regions [..] that is not just about building new houses" (Weber 2018).

In the INHS there is recognition of the need to coordinate diverse federal, territorial, and provincial initiatives happening on other social dimensions.[177] Specifically, the strategy ought to be synchronized with federal strategies such as its commitment to end tuberculosis in the North by 2030, its poverty reduction strategy called "Opportunities for All," its homelessness strategy called "Reaching Home," and its 5- and 10-year budget commitments that were made towards Indigenous Skills and Employment Training and the Inuit Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The INHS explicitly places the interconnectedness of these issues on a housing foundation: "The success of these initiatives will be directly or indirectly impacted by the success of the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy" (ITK and Canada 2019, 16).

Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement 2018-2028

The *Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement 2018-2028* was introduced not long after Canada had committed to the 2016 *Inuit-Crown Partnership Agreement*, the new permanent bilateral mechanisms to enable Crown-Indigenous cooperation to be sustained. What this meant in terms of the *Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement* in 2018 was that funding for Inuit-related housing for Nunavimmiut would not be part of the ten-year transfer to Quebec for housing. Quebec did not sign onto the National Housing Strategy which it justified by the fact that it has been in control of its own housing system with its own programs for over fifty years, and did not want interference from the federal government. The two levels of government have similar principal housing priorities which include reducing the housing need by increasing housing supply across all populations (CMHC and SHQ 2018, 4). In the Canada-Quebec agreement, "housing need" was

[177] Note that this is different from the Plan Nord ministerial committee that is only coordinating across provincial departments' actions that had overlapping economic goals with the PN.

defined as "a household whose housing falls below at least one of the standards of Affordability, Suitability and Adequacy, and the household would have to spend at least 30% of its before-tax income to access acceptable local housing" (CMHC and SHQ 2018, 3). Suitability was defined as having "enough bedrooms for the size and composition of households" (CMHC and SHQ 2018, 4).

However, funding committed in the Canada-Quebec housing agreement did not contain the $50 million for Nunavik social housing transferred to Makivik in 2016 and 2017, because that had occurred prior to 2018. And the Canada-Quebec transfer would not encompass funding for Inuit in Nunavik at all because funding for Inuit housing should be negotiated directly between federal and Inuit bodies. But the problem remains that the Canada-Quebec agreement is an agreement between CMHC (federal) and SHQ (provincial). And SHQ is the body tasked with housing in the province, which also reports on housing in Nunavik in its annual reports. SHQ is the provincial body that puts forward the homeownership and renovation programs for Nunavimmiut, such as *Aide au Logement Social Publique—Volet Inuit*, *Initiative habitation nordique*, and *Programme favorisant l'accession à la propriété et la rénovation résidentielle dans la région Kativik*. So there is much complexity in terms of which body receives the transfer payments, and who puts forward and makes *decisions* about housing programming Nunavik—which has always been SHQ, sometimes in conjunction with, or at a minimum endorsed by, KRG. The manner in which promises of partnership between Inuit and governments unfold and the way funding and transfer agreements unfold is not always parallel. This is another level of complexity in the Nunavik housing process.

Quebec

Quebec's Société d'habitation du Québec

The way the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) has spoken to housing issues in Nunavik over the decades has been unpredictable. In the 2002-2007 SHQ strategic plan the province acknowledged Nunavik's dire housing needs due to its quickly growing population. SHQ was observant of its responsibility for Inuit housing due to the 1980 transfer from Canada to Quebec, and with that, it suggested that its responsibility was being met by the five-year tripartite housing agreement signed with Canada in 2000 (Québec 2002a, 10–11). Six years later, in the 2008-2011 SHQ strategic plan, Inuit were not mentioned at all. That SHQ plan focused on poverty reduction (with some images of children, HLMs and multifamily housing units in Salluit and Kangirsuk (Québec 2008a)). This strategic plan was designed to contribute to the province's policy direction to fight poverty ("lutte contra la pauvreté"), with the goal to improve the wellbeing of people experiencing poverty ("améliorer le bien-être des personnes en situation de pauvreté") (Québec 2008a, 29). In this sense, Inuit would only find their place in the strategy if they lumped themselves in with "the poor" rather than as treaty beneficiaries with Indigenous rights.

The SHQ describes itself as a "bâtisseur de mieux-vivre en habitation"[178] (Québec 2008a, 5), recognizing that residential construction and the housing industry has "un effet direct sur la qualité de vie et le bien-être des citoyens"[179] (Québec 2008a, 7). Though Inuit were not mentioned in the 2008 plan, in 2011, the SHQ President stated that the goals of its 2008-2011 strategic plan had been met with an increased budget for HLM housing

[178] English translation by DeepL.com: "a builder of better living."
[179] English translation by DeepL.com: "direct impact on the quality of life and well-being of citizens."

(habitation à loyer modique)[180] across Quebec from $105M in 2007 to $274M in 2010 which also tackled some HLM construction in Nunavik (Québec 2011d, 5). SHQ's "social mission" was to help disadvantaged households improve their quality of life (Québec 2011d, 5). While it had ignored Inuit housing in the 2008 plan, in 2011—alongside the launch of the 2011 Plan Nord—SHQ's role in the North had come again to the forefront as a significant Plan Nord partner. The SHQ President claimed it would thereby "vigorously pursue its social housing initiatives in Nunavik to improve the quality of life, health and well-being of Inuit communities" (Québec 2011d, 6).[181] Accordingly, the 2011-2016 SHQ strategic plan referred to its plans for Nunavik more explicitly. It defined Nunavimmiut as one of its main "clients" and described its commitment to planning housing operations in the North to improve the supply and conditions of the housing stock through a combination of social housing, homeownership, and renovations (Québec 2011c, 5,10). The first iteration of the Plan Nord in 2011 clearly had an impact on the commitment by SHQ to address issues in Nunavik, as did the Katimajiit Conference which resulted in a greater SHQ commitment to build more units beyond the tripartite housing agreement in 2008-2010, totalling an overall plan to build 840 units in the Kativik region (Québec 2011c, 20–21). However, the SHQ's focus and commitment to Nunavik housing dropped off again by the time the new 2017 strategic plan was launched.

From June to December of 2016, Quebec had conducted a public consultation process in the "quatre coins de la province" (four corners of the province) regarding improving the delivery of housing (Québec 2017d). However, the consultations did not go

[180] HLM is low-income housing, "habitation à loyer modique."
[181] Original French quotation: "la Société d'habitation du Québec poursuivra également, et avec vigueur, ses interventions en logement social au Nunavik afin d'améliorer la qualité de vie, la santé et le mieux-être des communautés inuites."

north of the 55th parallel because: "Compte tenu des particularités de ce territoire, les résidents des régions situées en zone nordique ont en effet accès à des programmes spécifiques" (Québec 2017d, 2).[182] However, this justification was unconvincing given that one of the three main goals of the consultation was to implement more efficient programs *better suited to the needs of clientele and realities of different regions* (Québec 2017d, 1), which effectively sounds like an improvement Nunavik housing delivery would have benefitted from.

Following the consultation that excluded Nunavik, the 2017-2021 SHQ strategic plan equally let Nunavik issues slide. It looked back at what had been accomplished in the previous few years (Québec 2018, 16), but a renewed commitment to housing in Nunavik was no longer an SHQ priority in 2017. A photo of a northern village (Inukjuak) was once again included—it referred to the homeownership and renovation programs that SHQ was offering (Québec 2018, vi), and developing Nunavik housing was mentioned among a list of seven SHQ activities. Any momentum gained in the previous years to start catching up on the housing shortage through a commitment to social housing, was lost. This absence was mirrored in the insufficient housing priorities of the 2015 Plan Nord.

The strategic plans of departments and agencies are made to respond to Quebec's policies and directives. For SHQ, its action plans might address directions relevant to the province's economic policies, poverty reduction policies, or Indigenous policies. For example three SHQ actions in 2021 responded to the provincial Indigenous policy known as "Do More, Do Better"(Québec 2021c, 57).[183] While developing Nunavik housing

[182] Translation in to English by DeepL.com: "Given the particular characteristics of this territory, residents of regions located in the North have access to specific programs."

[183] SHQ responds to a multitude of overlapping Quebec government action plans whose objectives converge with their own as described in their 2018-2019 annual report. Contributing to 4 actions of *Do More Do*

continues to be part of the SHQ's eight areas of activities in the 2021-2026 strategic plan (Québec 2022, 2), no programming or commitments to Nunavik housing are mentioned over the next five years. This is reflected in the drop of attention to housing in Quebec's most recent 2020 extension of the Plan Nord, *Living in the North: Northern Action Plan.*

What we have is constant variations in the attention the provincial government is willing to give to the needs and rights of Nunavimmiut. With Inuit organizations continually insisting on the dire consequences of the housing crisis in the North, and without any reprieve in the crisis conditions in Nunavik, the status quo is an insufficient commitment to live up to the commitments made in the JBNQA or as provincial service provider expected to provide all Quebecers with the same standard of living. Even with new Inuit-state partnerships and collaborative approaches proposed, and with the clear intent of Quebec to improve the quality of life for Indigenous and Inuit people, the results do not pan out. The control of Nunavik housing remains in the hands of government strategic planners and policy-makers who repeatedly refuse to make long-term commitments. Moreover, despite federal funding now being delivered directly to Inuit-led organization such as Makivik in Quebec, the SHQ remains the official governing body that creates multi-year strategic plans for the whole province, including programming for the Kativik region, creating a complicated multi-pronged source and delivery of housing, as well as a complex tangle of power relations.

Better 2017-2022 ("dont la reddition de comptes est sous la responsabilité du Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones du ministère du Conseil executive p.63), 10 commitments (3 directly responsible, 3 co-responsible, 4 collaborating) of *Mobilisés et engagés pour prévenir et réduire l'itinérance: Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2015-2020*, committed to 5 priorities of *Plan Nord action plan 2015-2020*, 4 commitments related to a la *Stratégie gouvernementale pour assurer l'occupation et la vitalité des territoires 2018-2022*, responsible for 1 action item, and collaborating on another measure of *Plan d'action gouvernemental en matière de violence conjugale 2018-2023* (Québec 2019b, 61–63), on poverty alleviation, SHQ contributed to 12 action plans related to *l'amélioration des conditions et des milieux de vie des ménages à revenu faible et modeste* (but note it is not mentioned in 2019-2020 annual report of SHQ).

Homelessness policies

Canada and Quebec

During the consultation period for Canada's National Housing Strategy, an expert on homelessness made a poignant critique, stating:

> If you have something called a National Housing Strategy that does not address homelessness, it is [not] national, because it doesn't deal with the needs of our most vulnerable citizens; it is not about housing, because it is not addressing their need for homes; and it is certainly not strategic (Canada 2016, 22).

In examining homelessness policies one finds insights and definitions that are invaluable to the housing situation in Nunavik. In fact, homelessness strategies by both Canada and Quebec have shown a much better understanding of the target population for *housing*. These policies also demonstrate a greater understanding of the conditions Indigenous people with inadequate housing endure, and even more awareness of the unique nature of this problem in remote areas and cold climates. However, integration of this knowledge into policy and action plans differs between Canada and Quebec. At the most basic level, advances towards social justice on the national level simply do not appear to reach the Nunavik region.

Canada may have only introduced its first national housing strategy in 2018, but it had been working on a nation-wide approach to homelessness since 1999. This had included the "National Homelessness Initiative," the "Homelessness Partnering Strategy", and in 2019, its new "Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy," spanning five years from 2019 to 2024. This latest strategy more or less dovetails with the *National Housing Strategy 2018-2028*, even if they were not written together. In truth, it was due to the 2016 feedback from the NHS consultations ("Let's Talk Housing" 2016) that the

federal government decided to re-engage with the public on the topic of homelessness. The consultations conducted for the housing strategy and the poverty reduction strategy (as seen in a 2018 report) fed into the new homelessness strategy (Canada 2018e, 5).

Funding from the federal "Reaching Home" strategy was delivered to Quebec, as usual, through a separate bilateral agreement, called the *Canada-Quebec Agreement regarding Reaching Home 2019-2024*. The two levels of government have actually been partnering to address homelessness issues since 2001. In 2014, Quebec launched its own first-ever provincial homelessness policy called *Ensemble, pour éviter la rue et en sortir* with its interdepartmental action plan called *Mobilisés et engagés pour prévenir et réduire l'itinérance*.[184] Together, Quebec and Ottawa had a *Homelessness Partnering Strategy* (HPS) from 2014 to 2019, and then signed the current bilateral agreement for 2019-2024.[185]

Although the *Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement 2018-2028* stated that the two governments "share common objectives" that include reducing housing need and increasing housing supply, there appears to be less overlap in their homelessness policy directions (CMHC and SHQ 2018, 4–5). This divergence is evident with Quebec's policy focus which is "on *inclusion* and on getting everyone to participate in Quebec's social, economic, political and cultural life" (Canada and Québec 2019, 17) [emphasis added] as it has maintained in its approach to the Plan Nord. Canada's homelessness policy lines up with the NHS focus which is to boost the middle class, get people out of poverty, and

[184] More precisely, it is the *Politique nationale de lutte à l'itinérance* that is called "Ensemble, pour éviter la rue et en sortir" and the *Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance* is called "Mobilisés et engagés pour prévenir et réduire l'itinérance" 2015-2020.

[185] For this Agreement, Canada was represented by the Minister of Employment and Social Development, as the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Quebec was represented by the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister responsible for Canadian Relations and the Canadian Francophonie. These are different bodies than those usually signing housing agreements which are usually CMHC and SHQ.

promote growth for all Canadians (Canada 2018a, 3). More specifically, the federal homelessness strategy aimed to "help the most vulnerable people maintaining safe, stable and affordable housing and to reduce chronic homelessness by 50% nationally by 2027 to 2028" (Canada and Québec 2019, 14).

In Premier Pauline Marois' launch of the province's 2014 homelessness policy, she called on all citizens of Quebec to understand their role: "c'est la collectivité québécoise tout entière qui doit se sentir interpellée par le phénomène de l'itinérance"[186] (Québec 2014, 4). It was an attempt to address issues of discrimination directed towards homeless people: "Le gouvernement entend lutter contre les préjugés, la stigmatisation et l'exclusion à l'égard de ces personnes"[187] (Québec 2014, 28). The expression implies that discrimination, judgement, and stigmatization was only something the homeless population experience *due to* their homeless condition. Quebec's also expressed concern for how non-Indigenous people ("la population allochtone") view and respond to the conditions of Indigenous homeless people. The lack of knowledge about Indigenous people's history, socio-economic conditions, housing shortages, and overall social and cultural upheaval has led to tensions, exclusion, and marginalization (Québec 2014, 24).

There are many pathways to homelessness, but there are particular pathways that lead Inuit to homelessness. Inuit in Montreal make up 45% of the homeless Indigenous population, even though they are only 10% of the Indigenous population of Montreal (Québec 2014, 26). These are facts presented in Quebec's policy, including the alarming

[186] Translation into English by DeepL.com: "the Quebec community as a whole must be called upon to respond to the phenomenon of homelessness."
[187] Translation into English by DeepL.com: "The government is intent on combating prejudice, stigmatization and exclusion."

problem of hidden homelessness in Nunavik.[188] Quebec wants to support Inuit organizations such as Makivik with their own action plan for Montreal Inuit homelessness. It also wants the public to understand and reconcile. Unfortunately, it does this without acknowledging the actual colonial context in which the historical Inuit-state relationship unfolded. There is no acknowledgement or accountability of *how* the problems were caused, such as the decades of government policies that have perpetuated problems in the communities that have created a devastating quality of life for families in the North, resulting in Inuit finding themselves in Montreal without a path back home to housing options in their communities.

Quebec, after its extensive research and consultation processes, admitted that research on Indigenous homelessness in the province had been minimal (Québec 2014, 24). It altogether avoided giving a definition of Indigenous homelessness or pointing to systemic causes for Indigenous or Inuit homelessness in its 2014 policy. Quebec's policies tend to discuss the circumstances of Indigenous people in a passive voice: "les autochtones ont vécu des bouleversements sociaux" (Québec 2014, 24); "les adultes de tous âges et les familles peuvent être confrontés au racisme et à la discrimination" (Québec 2014, 25), and; "les besoins des autochtones en matière d'itinérance exigent des réponses qui tiennent compte de leur histoire, de leur culture"[189] (Québec 2014, 27). There is no sense that the "allochtone" government play any role in these conditions. It is a common theme of the Quebec government, admitting there are problems that it takes pride in addressing, but never describing them as systemic problems characteristic of its own current or historic

[188] I will elaborate on the meaning and use of the term hidden homelessness further below.
[189] Translation of French passive voice into English by DeepL.com: "aboriginal people have experienced social upheaval"; "adults of all ages and families may face racism and discrimination" and "the needs of aboriginal people in terms of homelessness require responses that take into account their history and culture."

actions and policies.

Through the years there has been a growing understanding of the need to be specific about solutions for homelessness in the North. In a 2018 national public engagement process, it was recognized that "homelessness changes as you approach the Arctic" and that "a distinct approach is needed" because rural and remote communities in the North experience homelessness in different ways than in the rest of Canada (Canada 2018e, 3). I argue that these important distinctions about the North that are recognized in homelessness strategies would be just as valuable to include in the housing dialogues. Understanding homelessness in the North, especially in terms of discrimination, stigmatization, hidden homelessness, exclusion, gives an important perspective of the affected population. This provides governments with a better understanding of how to address Inuit wellbeing through homelessness policies, but it would do just as well to consider these nuances for *housing* policies. Governments are indeed becoming clearer on the forms and causes of homelessness for Indigenous people in general and the specificities for Inuit. They have recognized different homeless statuses in order to start formulating tailored responses. This context needs to be recognized in housing policy development to translate into better housing options for Inuit.

Promisingly, Canada has taken strides to understand homelessness as part of a larger systemic problem in our society. Canada's new definition for homelessness was not just about a lack of *means* to acquire housing, it identified various other societal barriers too. The *Canada-Quebec Agreement regarding Reaching Home* has an appendix for Canada's definitions and policy directions, and another one for Quebec's. In *Canada's* definition of *homelessness*, it acknowledged the following::

> Homelessness is the situation of an individual or family who does not

> have a permanent address or residence; the living situation of an individual or family who does not have stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is often the result of what are known as systemic or societal barriers, including a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioral or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination (Canada and Québec 2019, 15).

The "systemic and societal barriers" would naturally vary across the different members of Canadian society. Also, the acknowledgement of racism and discrimination goes the distance of the UN's Right to Adequate Housing that includes the "principle of non-discrimination" which it acknowledges is "often at the root of structural inequalities within societies" (United Nations 2009, 10). In the 2018 review of the federal Homelessness Strategy, Indigenous participants were given particular attention; Indigenous homelessness finally received a more tailored response. Previous national strategies had not included a definition for how Indigenous people (and Inuit) experienced homelessness.

In the same homelessness agreement, Quebec included its own new definition of homelessness, which was considerably different:

> Homelessness is a process of social disaffiliation and a situation of social exclusion characterized by a person's difficulty in having stable, safe, adequate and healthy home due to a lack of housing or his or her inability to maintain one and, at the same time, in maintaining functional, safe and stable relationships in the community. Homelessness is explained by a combination of social and individual factors that constitute the life experience of men and women (Canada and Québec 2019, 17) (as seen in Appendix B that lists Quebec's policy directions).

Although it recognizes both social and individual factors, it avoids any classification of the "social," which suggests more cause might be attributed to the individual, more than one might extrapolate out of Canada's definition of homelessness. Avoiding the term and the admission of systemic issues such as discrimination, presents more of a blame-the-victim

type of description. A homeless person might be "having difficulty" to have a "stable, safe, adequate and healthy home" or have an "inability to maintain one." There was no definition of homelessness that both governments agree upon in this bilateral agreement. The joint vision of the agreement was to focus on "providing support and assistance both to protect people living on the street, and to help those who want to escape that way of living" (Canada and Québec 2019, 17).

By 2022, the federal government finally included a definition for *Indigenous Homelessness* in its Homelessness Strategy Directives in which it acknowledged the continuing effects of colonialism. This definition was in essence an admission. It did not relegate colonialism to the past; it stated that colonization and trauma is what is causing some Indigenous people to have no home today. Inclusive of Inuit, the strategy stated that Indigenous homelessness means:

> Indigenous Peoples who are in the state of having no home due to colonization, trauma and/or whose social, cultural, economic, and political conditions place them in poverty. Having no home includes: those who alternate between shelter and unsheltered, living on the street, couch surfing, using emergency shelters, living in unaffordable, inadequate, substandard and unsafe accommodations or living without the security of tenure; anyone regardless of age, released from facilities (such as hospitals, mental health and addiction treatment centers, prisons, transition houses), fleeing unsafe homes as a result of abuse in all its definitions, and any youth transitioning from all forms of care (Canada 2022c).

This is a significant admission of historical responsibility, as well as current day responsibility for ongoing conditions that contribute to Indigenous homelessness, and a responsibility to eliminate these various paths to homelessness identified in the definition. With regards to what this does to the relationship between the government and Inuit, it can be assumed that with Canada admitting a role in the causes of Inuit homeless, some of the

dominating characteristics of government approaches to problem-solving have to be reformed. An ethical response would be to do things differently.

Quebec's handling of Indigenous homelessness has taken a different tact. In 2014, the province dedicated an entire section to Indigenous and Inuit homelessness, yet only focused on the status and causes of *urban* homeless Inuit (Québec 2014, 24–27). No definition of Indigenous homelessness or hidden homelessness was given. In the Canada-Quebec homelessness agreement in 2019, Quebec reiterated its 2015 homelessness action plan which included:

> Actions for First Nations and Inuit populations, such as:
> - implementing and continuing actions adapted to the reality of the Indigenous population
> - acquiring better understanding of Indigenous homelessness and improving the coordination of services (Canada and Québec 2019, 19).

This did not speak to causes or conditions of Indigenous homelessness, but implied it was not yet a well understood phenomenon. By 2023, on the Quebec government website under the heading "Who are the homeless?" it acknowledged that for First Nations and Inuit populations "some characteristics of the *community itself* can also cause a person to leave, such as overcrowding, unsanitary conditions and lack of housing" (Québec 2019a emphasis mine). Here, the lack of housing in Inuit communities is understood to contribute to Inuit homelessness, but Quebec still refused to recognize discrimination or other systemic issues as persistent causes of homelessness. Rather, being in the city was what put them at risk of poverty. This kind of passive wording for Indigenous homelessness continues to subtly point to self-inflicted causes, and does not own up to any state-caused circumstances.

The reality of *hidden homelessness* especially in northern communities means that it

is a fundamental term needed to understand Inuit homelessness *and* to understand northern housing problems. In 2018, Canada had already expanded the definition of *chronic homelessness* to include the persistent nature of the Indigenous homeless population (Canada 2018e, 5). Accordingly, a broader definition of chronic homelessness is found in the 2019 Canada-Quebec agreement, accounting for individuals staying in: unsheltered locations, those in a variety of shelters, as well as the newly included category of those "staying temporarily with others without guarantee of continued residency or the immediate prospects for accessing permanent housing" (Canada and Québec 2019, 15). As with the concept of "couch surfing" including in the federal *Indigenous homelessness* definition, this part of *chronic homelessness* finally brought us closer to the recognizing the condition of the *hidden homeless*—the actual experience of homelessness in remote and northern Inuit communities.

We must repeatedly return to the concept *hidden homelessness* precisely because it is not yet a common part of the policy vocabulary, even though it rightly captures the housing conditions in Nunavik villages often described as "overcrowded." One notable exception was MP Adam Vaughan, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development (Housing and Urban Affairs) who, in the preamble to the Homelessness Strategy consultation report, defined the problem of "homeless Canadians [as] sleeping rough on streets or *hidden in substandard living conditions*" (Canada 2018e, 2 emphasis mine). He followed this by acknowledging the over-representation of Indigenous people in the homeless population, and that "homeless women and girls are many of the *hidden homeless* in Canada" (Canada 2018e, 3 emphasis mine).

This recognition is especially important for Inuit women in northern communities.

Canada's Homelessness Strategy acknowledged that women often experience homelessness differently. It confirmed that: there were higher numbers of shelter-use by Indigenous women than by non-Indigenous women; that one of the main pathways to homelessness for Indigenous women is violence in the household; and that "women with children tend not to experience absolute homelessness and will seek some other, if only temporary, means of housing rather than shelters" (Canada 2018b, 10). These are important new concepts finally identified by the Canadian government in its homelessness strategy. But I argue that it is equally important for better grasping the conditions of inadequate housing as well as for finding new paths to creating a better housing response in Nunavik. Not only is urban homelessness often a direct consequence of social crises in northern communities, the gendered nature of hidden homelessness proves that there could be no way of separating housing from a vast range of other social, health, cultural and economic problems. In essence, these hidden conditions for Inuit who remain in their home communities without adequate housing means that people are "housed" in overcrowded conditions (i.e. they have *someone's* roof over their heads), but should in fact be considered "homeless"—and should be treated with that urgency.

However, in Nunavik's case, the recognition and the promises made by the federal government are complicated by Quebec's avoidance of language that could tie it to the conditions found in Inuit communities through processes of sedentarization, colonization, and other systemic issues. Instead Quebec leans toward understanding homelessness through a conventional social welfare approach, focusing more on individual accountability, even as Quebec is known for its more generous social tradition in the name of public wellbeing.

Promisingly, Quebec's 2014 homelessness policy referred to the idea of *home* (chez-

soi) and connected it to wellbeing, identity, and social relations. It is indeed a concept close to the history of the Québecois' cultural identification as "maîtres chez nous," where a sense of nationalism makes Quebec literally more of a "home" than a "house." As a multifaceted term, *home* has the potential to bind together many of the issues, challenges, and solutions to housing and homelessness—issues that I will explore in my final chapter. On the issue of *home*, housing and homelessness, Quebec says:

> L'itinérance se caractérise par l'absence ou l'impossibilité d'avoir un « chez-soi », un lieu où l'on se sent bien et protégé, un lieu à soi, reconnu par les autres, où l'on retourne pour se reposer et pour se retrouver dans l'intimité. Ce lieu, c'est le domicile. Ne pas avoir de domicile, être sans adresse fixe ou dans des conditions de logement très instables, c'est être sans lieu à soi, sans chez-soi." [...] "le sentiment d'avoir un « chez-soi » est au cœur de l'expérience humaine. Il représente un levier au bien-être, à la citoyenneté, à la relation de la personne avec sa propre identité et avec son environnement social (Québec 2014, 29).[190]

This is a launching point for the *idea of home* in my final chapter. However, there are a few more *de facto* housing policies that I will quickly examine first.

Other *de facto* Housing Policies: Poverty, Youth, Elders, etc.

Housing and poverty issues overlap significantly. In fact, geographer Julia Christensen's collective body of work conducted in the Canadian North has powerfully demonstrated that the Indigenous homelessness issues are often framed in policy through the lens of poverty or through the lens of housing needs, and that this is done at the cost of understanding the role of colonialism (Christensen 2016a, 19). In fact, colonial forces of sedentarization and then housing policies created the social conditions that differentiated

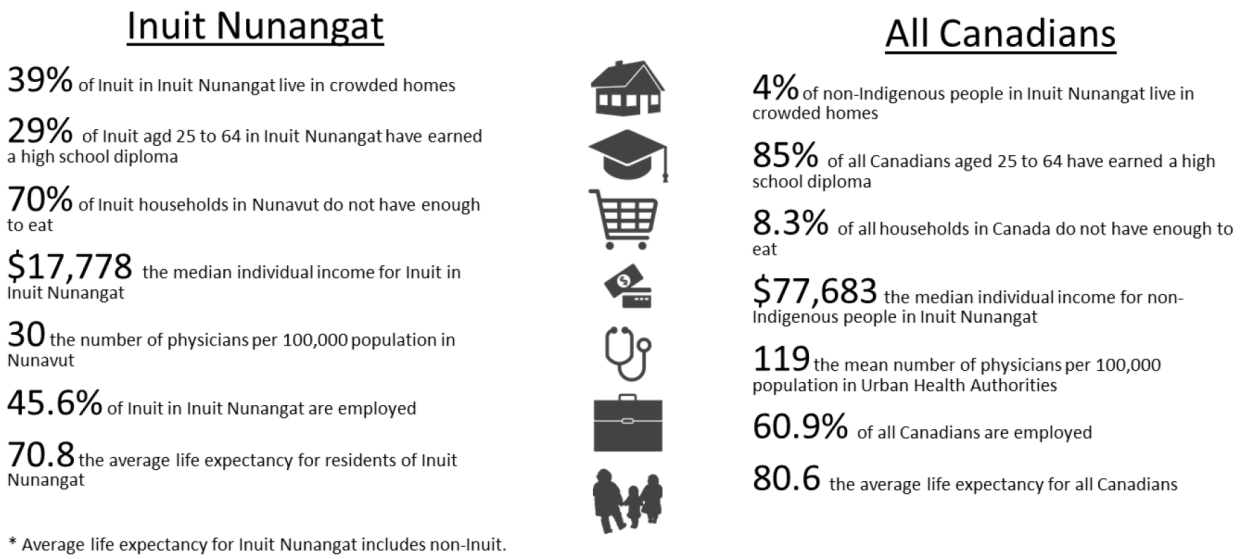
[190] Translated into English with DeepL.com: "Homelessness is characterized by the absence or impossibility of having a 'home,' a place where one feels comfortable and protected, a place of one's own, recognized by others, to which one returns to rest and find intimacy. This place is home. To have no home, to be without a fixed address or in very unstable housing conditions, is to be without a place of one's own, a place to call home. [...] the feeling of having a 'home' is at the heart of the human experience. It is a catalyst for well-being, citizenship, and a person's relationship with his or her own identity and social environment."

between those *with* a house and those *without* (Inuit "shacks" side-by-side with RCMP officers' new houses). Those in shacks were now seen as "poor" (Christensen 2017, 52; Tester 2006a, 241). Today, government poverty reduction strategies address issues of income, affordability, quality of life, accessibility to services, and wellbeing. Some wording has even identified some forms of discrimination as a cause of poverty. However, poverty has been dealt with from a welfare colonialism policy approach. And "dependency is both the outcome of, and the justification for, welfare colonialism" (Christensen 2017, 111). Dependents are by definition stuck in an unbalanced relationship. This inequality is a result of a neoliberal ideology that has been described as a politically motivated act of government (Christensen 2017, 111). Housing, especially Inuit housing and social housing, has been part of the same neoliberal government approach. However, neither housing policies nor poverty reduction policies are seen in terms of the dependency governments have on the resource riches of the northern territories that are the homeland of all Inuit and other northern Indigenous nations (Christensen 2017, 112). This two-way dependency is the very essence of the need for making treaties, signing agreements that each provide a party with some benefits and compensation alongside the compromises made. Seen in this way, through the lens of treaties, these poverty reduction policies or Inuit housing policies should not be understood as forms of dependency and unequal power.

In response to concerns as such, ITK presented a written submission in 2018 in advance of the first-ever *Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy* to provide an Inuit perspective on poverty. Through research in Nunavut, ITK identified poverty in Inuit Nunangat as a condition of colonization and an outcome of past policies related to settlement (ITK 2018, 15). ITK provided a definition of poverty for Inuit "as lacking economic wellbeing, lacking human capacities and capabilities, and social exclusion,

including loss of self-reliance and connectedness" (ITK 2018, 4). Statistics showed the extreme gaps between Inuit and other Canadians, including household crowding as a factor signifying the conditions of poverty.

Table 1: Household crowding by numbers: Gap between Inuit and other Canadians



(source: ITK 2018, *Inuit Perspectives on a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy*, page 14)

Priorities for Inuit were listed as: income security, housing security, food security, early learning and child care, education, health and wellness, and livelihoods (ITK 2018, 28). The description for housing security was extensive. ITK made a strong case about the spiralling link between the housing crisis and increased poverty levels. The connections go

so deep that some Inuit even stay in unsafe or unhealthy housing situations just so that they can continue to be eligible for social housing. What this means is that "forgoing opportunities [such as personal, educational, employment] and staying in unsafe conditions has also prevented Inuit from becoming more self-reliant and created long-term dependencies that only perpetuate poverty" (ITK 2018, 35). ITK reiterated its priorities for housing that it had already provided to the federal government in advance of its *National Housing Strategy* (ITK 2018, 35). For the purpose of the poverty reduction strategy, ITK made the following recommendations to ensure housing security:

1. Governments should work in partnership with Inuit when developing housing policies and programs.
2. An Inuit-specific approach is needed to ensure housing funding and programs include all Inuit across the four regions.
3. Inuit must have direct access to housing investments and social or other infrastructure investments, including shelters, transitional housing and early childhood development and wellness centres.
4. Inuit require flexible criteria for federal housing funding to meet the diverse needs of each of the four Inuit regions in Canada.
5. A National Housing Strategy must take into account both short-term and long-term needs of Inuit across Inuit Nunangat (ITK 2018, 6).

Each of these recommendations impress the need for more Inuit autonomy and more control over their own affairs—essentially to be less entangled by the uneven power relations that pervade government policy-making.

ITK also promoted an approach from the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction based on the Inuktitut concept of *piliriqatigiingiq* meaning "working together well, motivated by shared values and goals and our care for each other" (ITK 2018, 15). This Inuit-specific approach is necessary to meet Inuit realities, whereas poverty reduction strategies designed regionally for a broader context, such as the strategy in Quebec, do not

address the circumstances and unique needs of Inuit (ITK 2018, 16).[191] By putting upfront their requirement to work within their own set of Inuit values, Inuit are essentially saying that when playing by the "rules" or values set by outsiders, their own understandings and solutions are not possible. ITK had determined through an assessment of their own values that as long as their values were not front and center, they would not be in control of their own futures, a key part of wellbeing.

Nunavimmiut have likewise found it necessary to bring to light their values, approaches and perspectives when Quebec has designed other policies that touch on housing issues. When the rights and protection of youth in Nunavik were being investigated by Quebec (Québec 2007a), Makivik created its own a coordinating committee to address "the overall wellbeing of the whole region" (Makivik 2008, 79). With representation from all pertinent sectors, the Nunavik committee identified key issues affecting youth and identified insufficient housing as a major impediment to long-term change (Makivik 2008, 80). KRG and Makivik could refer to findings in Quebec's investigation to impress the urgent need to resolve the housing crisis to avert more harm towards Nunavik youth (KRG and Makivik 2010, 375).

Nunavik Elders have continually pressed the Quebec government with direct lobbying to address their issues with Inuit-specific policies. With Quebec revising its policy called *Aging and Living Together: At Home, in One's Community, in Québec*, Inuit Elders negotiated for three years for their own policy, approved in 2017 by KRG: *Senior's Policy and Its Action Plan: Building Together a Healthy and Inclusive Living Environment for Nunavik Elders* (KRG 2017, 108). Nunavik Elders' priorities were eliminating

[191] The report says that only Nunavut has a poverty reduction strategy that is Inuit-specific. Other Inuit Nunangat regions had not designed one as of 2018 (ITK 2018, 16).

loneliness, creating adapted housing, and home-care services. Housing for seniors was a prominent issue and intergenerational housing became one of Makivik's priorities too.

Clearly there are many routes to addressing housing issues in Nunavik. In order to keep up a semblance of a balance power in policy-making, Inuit organizations and groups are required to *continually* put themselves in the way, to request recognition or status, to remind governments of the difference between their needs and values and the *status quo* version of making policy. And the route to equality is often obscure. When Quebec was working on a new land-use planning and architecture policy called *Plan d'action pour assurer l'occupation et la vitalité des territoires* 2020-2022, Indigenous people consulted from the "milieux Nordiques" said that one of the problems they regularly encountered was that of the quantity of government plans and strategies. These multiple themes addressed often overlapped from different departments, making it difficult it is to see how they all fit together (Québec 2021a, 15–16). Once again, the complexity of the process of policy-making but also the convergence of overlapping policies (as demonstrated in this chapter about the many housing and *de facto* housing policies that affect Nunavimmiut), was a source for a sense of powerlessness in face of the large structure of government politics and policies.

Part II Summary: The policy-disconnect and conflicting values

What do all the housing and *de facto* housing policies indicate about how the power relationship between Inuit and the state affect the persistence of the housing crisis in Nunavik (and in all of Inuit Nunangat)? Let's take a step back. When looking at the disconnect between state policies at various levels on the one hand, and Inuit interests and demands on the other, one could ask: is this just a question of conflicting values? Is the

articulation of normative language by both sides merely a means to an end? It is clear from the way Canada and Quebec have approached the North (the former from a strategic-state perspective, the latter from a nationalist-development perspective, and both from neoliberal logic) that their interests are often normatively inconsistent with the way Inuit have articulated the meaning of housing: as something indistinguishable from wellbeing.

However, one might also argue that Inuit have resorted to certain ways of identifying solutions to the housing crisis that are influenced by the economic discourse of their counterparts at the tables. Identifying a more narrow range of solutions, such as the repeated emphasis on homeownership as the central alternative to social housing, might be explained through the value Inuit place on building relationships, being adaptable, resilience and survival, and consensus, as well as seeing homeownership as a source for autonomy and self-determination. What this might mean then, is that the political agency of Inuit in the roles they take on in their communities and in their relationships with the state where they insist on Inuit housing as a policy priority, may be coming at a cost. Perhaps, from another angle, a reason for Inuit to emphasize certain market solutions that appear to conflict with other Inuit values may be because economic independence (which can only be had by "joining" the free market and becoming dependent on the forces of the market) is precisely seen as a route towards Inuit autonomy and self-determination within our current modern society. Inuit have a role in the policy process (albeit not as the final decision-makers), but could their adaptability be forcing them to make concessions in order to get some results, any results? How can one judge when and whether the concessions are too much or the cost is too high? Without answering this question, one can still proceed with the analysis of values, and suggest what kind of paradigm shift could moderate the gap in

the power imbalance, and allow more space for other ideas, ontologies, and solutions to become central to the Inuit-state relationship.

Besides, there is an unresolved tension in the interpretation of nation-to-nation negotiations (or Inuit-Crown, in this case). And the neoliberal direction our governments have been taking makes it harder and harder find the space to understand what a healthy nation-to-nation relationship would look like. What can be said, is that in so far as the mechanisms of decision-making remain principally within the federal and provincial governments, the commitments made to UNDRIP and Indigenous rights, the Accords, Partnership, and Principles of engagement are generally inherently incapable of mediating conflicting values in an equitable way. The place where the power imbalance becomes most critical is at the policy stage when more concrete commitments—that have monetary consequences—are spelled out. The identification of the policy disconnect provides us with a way of interpreting how and where power plays out in the Inuit-state relationship.

Nevertheless, a willingness to sustain dialogue with Indigenous peoples in the North has been evident by both the Quebec and Canadian governments. It is also clear that for the most part, the Inuit of Nunavik genuinely want to remain within Canada and Quebec. The issue is: how to reconcile divergent conceptions of the good—of values—within a political order than has limited pathways to allow for difference? Nonetheless, the value of having discussions, collecting different viewpoints, establishing needs, and listening, has shown the there is some capacity for new normative standards—revealed in the governments' awareness of expectations, public image, and possibly even valuing the process of *sharing* perspectives—that can co-exist within confederation. I would argue that all this exhibits the value that has been placed on *knowledge* and *dialogue*. It grew out of the Kelowna Accord process whereby the Canadian government pledged to work

inclusively to develop Indigenous policy and to strengthen policy *partnerships*. Whatever shortcomings there have been in practice, Canada acknowledged that the treaties were a commitment to a deep-seated principle of *mutual respect*—an absolutely essential first step in recognizing shared values *and* accepting other values that are not shared.

PART III: Is it desirable?

Introduction to Part III

The question remains: *Is this desirable?* It is the third key question in phronetic research. As to whether the Inuit-state relationship is moving in a positive direction, open to partnerships, collaboration, inclusivity, consultation, dialogue, and identifying shared values, one can see the improvements over the years. As to whether the status of the current Inuit-state relationship is desirable in a way that responds to Inuit needs and rights in terms of Inuit housing, there could only be one simple answer: No.

No, because the Nunavik housing crisis persists.

The question about whether it is desirable is essentially pointing to whether social justice has been met. However, social justice can have many meanings, and to analyze the full complexity of the political Inuit-state relationship is a large order. Therefore, in order to construct a feasible assessment as to whether the housing system in Nunavik is desirable (besides the glaringly obvious data identifying the housing shortage and health status of Inuit) I suggest that the litmus test is to determine whether Inuit housing is sufficiently supporting Inuit *wellbeing*. Individual and community wellbeing is not only something Inuit tirelessly work towards, it is also *the* stated goal of almost all government social and economic policies—that is, to improve the wellbeing of citizens. Therefore, to determine whether the current situation is desirable is to answer: Has Inuit wellbeing been adequately supported by the Inuit housing system?

But how can this question be answered without more clarity on the meaning of wellbeing for Inuit and community wellbeing? Since wellbeing has been left undefined in policy documents, and where expressions economic wellbeing have often stood-in for

general individual and community wellbeing, I provide a brief review of Inuit wellbeing as described in research, health surveys, and by Inuit organizations. This will provide a series of elements that can be part of a working definition of Inuit wellbeing. With this we can unpack some of the assumptions being made in the housing policies that credit their approach as the solution to creating wellbeing.

Chapter 8: Is wellbeing created through housing?

A working definition of *Inuit wellbeing*

The connection between housing, home, and wellbeing is one of my central themes; "Wellbeing" is a word that actually pops up a lot in housing literature.[192] But what does it really mean? So many government policies assert that the objective is to create Indigenous and Inuit "wellbeing." But this is done without any defining qualities of what it means, which is, in my opinion, the first of many foundational assumptions being made: the assumption that we all have the same understanding of what is meant by wellbeing and what conditions are needed for wellbeing.

There have been many indicators designed to measure aspects of our society. And what are we measuring if not ultimately whether our society is *doing well or not*? But readings of some of these measurements can provide conflicting results. To illustrate, we have an example from the years 1998 and 2003 when the measurement of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was applied in Nunavik. In those years, Nunavik's GDP *increased* twice

[192] The term is spelled many different ways in the literature: wellbeing, well-being, and well being. In French literature we see the terms "mieux-vivre" or "bien-être." I have chosen to use the spelling that indicates a single noun: wellbeing.

as quickly as in the rest of Quebec. Yet at the same time, the employment rate *decreased* in Nunavik (while it increased in the rest of Quebec). Read only in narrow economic terms, the region presented contradictions. But even more paradoxes were found at the same time. In a study with Nunavik residents, ironically, "more than three out of four respondents declared they were satisfied with life in their community" *despite* high unemployment rates (Duhaime and Édouard 2014, 332). Clearly there are many other factors at play than jobs and GDP growth. These numbers alone cannot give a clear answer as to *whether our society is doing well*. Indicators and measurements provide invaluable data. However, especially when decent housing becomes one of the "goals of development in their own right" (Duhaime and Édouard 2014, 326), accurately reflecting cultural relevance and nuances about wellbeing, satisfaction, and housing becomes crucial. A working definition specific to wellbeing in an Inuit context is an irrefutable necessary starting point.

Many disciplines have defined wellbeing. Notably, however, research that refers to Inuit wellbeing often indicates the difficulty of combining the cultural, social, health, economic and political needs all under one umbrella concept. What we do know from the research is that the wellbeing of Inuit "is of crucial importance to public health efforts in Nunavik" (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 3), and that qualitative research has shown that housing is a *fundamental* part of Inuit wellbeing (Nunavut Housing Corporation and NTI 2004; The Bayswater Consulting Group Inc. 2005; Pelletier 2012; P. Morin 2013; Duhaime and Édouard 2014; Laneuville 2015; Bouchard 2017; Québec 2017d; Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020; Perreault et al. 2020).

Starting with official *wellbeing* indexes, we find the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) has been using a Human Development Index (HDI) since 1990,

that "defines well-being in terms of educational attainment, income and life expectancy" (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 3). HDI is a measurement used across approximately 170 countries. Yet, when Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada wanted to use the definition to conduct a survey, it was noticed "that well-being varied greatly across Aboriginal communities and that the Inuit HDI, therefore, might be providing an incomplete picture of well-being" (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 3). And so, they developed a Community Well-Being (CWB) Index designed to take community perspective on wellbeing to complement national- and regional-level HDI in Canadian Inuit and First Nation communities (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 3). With the four components in the CWB Index, namely, income, education, housing, and participation in the labour force, it shed light on the state of Inuit *regions* (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 2). Housing consisted of two subcomponents: quality and quantity. Quality was established through a self-reporting mechanism based on whether the resident believed that the dwelling was in need of major repairs or not. Housing quantity measured the levels of crowding based on whether the dwelling lodged one person per room or less (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 16–17). These CWB Index has provided longitudinal data over several decades to see the differences in wellbeing between non-Indigenous communities and Inuit communities, as well as fluctuations and differences between the four Inuit regions in Canada.[193] This score also indicates the gap in the *housing* component between non-Indigenous communities and Inuit communities,

[193] On average, the CWB wellbeing scores improved over the 25 years for all four Inuit regions. But the results of this study also revealed Nunavik as the region with the lowest wellbeing scores and the lowest housing scores. Housing quality dropped the most dramatically. It was the best in 1996 (tenants expressing satisfaction with the housing quality) to being the significantly lower on the scale in 2006 than in the other Inuit regions. In 2006, it was even lower than when the first measurement was taken in 1981. This could indicate of a host of related factors such as the lack of funding for repairs and renovations resulting in lowering quality of housing, and also due to the expected short lifespan of the buildings that are known to deteriorate quickly in the harsh climate and often become uninhabitable within 25 years.

showing correlations between the drop in the housing score and the drop in the wellbeing scores in Nunavik (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 19).

These indexes provide a measurement in the form of a number. As such, qualitative nuances are hard to capture. Moreover, the measurement is limited to data collected by Statistics Canada socio-economic census questions. Admittedly, the varied regional histories and their impacts cannot be grasped by the CWB Index and neither can other important wellbeing indicators such as physical and emotional health, cultural continuity or the contribution of traditional economic activities on one's wellbeing (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012, 6, 7, 11). However, the CWB Index created a space to recognize the significant impact that housing has on community wellbeing, a factor not captured by the

Ground-breaking work in 2000 by Naomi Adelson in *'Being Alive Well': Health and the Politics of Cree Well-Being* (Adelson 2000) examined ontological differences in concepts of health and wellbeing from Indigenous (specifically Cree of Whapmagoostui)[194] and non-Indigenous perspectives. Challenging the Euro-Canadian concept of health defined narrowly as the absence of disease (Adelson 2000, 8), Adelson described wellbeing from a Cree cosmology perspective. Together with her Cree researchers, they confronted Western assumptions and "universal" liberal understandings of individualism; with that they extended health and wellbeing "beyond the state of the physical body" (Adelson 2000, 9). Health and wellbeing came around to a question of identity that was "linked to a larger strategy of cultural assertion and resistance in a *dynamic balancing of power* between the State, the disenfranchised group, and the individual" (Adelson 2000, 9 emphasis mine).

[194] Great Whale River is the English settler name for the village where Aldeson conducted her research. Whapmagoostui is the name the Cree use to refer to the place. Inuit live in this community as well, though in somewhat separate parts of the village. Inuit refer to their village as Kuujjuarapik. While Adelson's work was conducted exclusively with Cree and not with Inuit, there are important ways that Adelson highlighted how Western ways of thinking about wellbeing have been not just inadequate but harmful to Indigenous concepts, health, future,

This meant that "health is political," in that it needs to be understood within its historical, social, and cultural context. The concept of Cree wellbeing illuminated a profound link between health, politics, and identity (Adelson 2000, 9).

With this Cree perspective on wellbeing, research conducted in Arviat, Nunavut revealed that Inuit concepts of health and wellbeing were very similar, and more importantly that they were *not* the same as Qablunaat (white people's) concepts of health (Blakney 2009). Blakney (2009) offered a critical analysis of the connections between political power and the loss of wellbeing due to the rapid cultural change of the Arviarmiut that had caused a distancing from the land. Health was directly associated to hunting, freedom, and Inuk identity, as well as to western habits and lifestyles that came with living in the hamlet and in houses. Essentially, "to be healthy is to be Inuk. [...] Being Inuk means being mobile on the land and not being confined to the hamlet" (Blakney 2009, 232). Quotes from the Inuit participants in the research showed that the housing factor in the community had a damaging impact on overall Inuit wellbeing. The difference was in being on the land compared to being in the hamlet, where it felt like "things are going out of control" (Blakney 2009, 155). In the large houses they had a lot of new responsibilities that they "never used to think about." Life in the settlements did not make things easier. Hardship was restricted to the settlement which was "a place of worry, stress, crowding, rules, and a place where proper relations had broken down" (Adelson 2000, 161–62). To be Inuk was to be aware of "what is going on outside of the house or dwelling ... The whole environment" (Blakney 2009, 154). The Inuit participants revealed that "an important aspect of Inuit health and wellbeing involved having cabins on the land" (Blakney 2009, 161). The work was a critique of current policy that ignored the connections between health, relationship to land, political power, and overall improvements to wellbeing.

Blakney inferred that even if all the health indicators of Inuit were resolved, such as lowered levels of TB, suicide, fetal alcohol syndrome, etc., Inuit would still not consider themselves "healthy" in cultural terms because wellbeing is about one's *overall* quality of life (Blakney 2009, 153).

Research in Nunavik through the 2004 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey *Qanuippitaa?* (How are we?) found that wellness was based on "respect and care for others in the extended family and community as well as for the land, animals and environment" (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 2). The survey results defined a healthy person as someone who "gives importance both to self-sufficiency and to interdependence" (2007, 2). Interestingly, this understanding of wellbeing showed how wellness cascades into decision-making skills and abilities. The dual qualities of self-sufficiency and interdependence appeared as decision-making skills in the form of resiliency, innovation, and resourcefulness. These skills are built upon the values of openness and inclusivity towards others, and are practiced through discussion and exchange, ideally resulting in consensus (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 2). This description of mental health and wellness in Nunavik, based on both medical and psychological research as well as in Inuit cultural traditions provides a basis with which to understand foundational elements of wellbeing in both individual terms and collective terms. It provides an understanding of how wellbeing is not only related to questions of health, mental health, and identity, but also suggests that wellbeing is based on particular values that feed into other facets of life such as relational, social, and political realms. Similarly, the definition of mental wellness used in 2001 by the national organization representing Inuit across Canada, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami), was "self-esteem and personal dignity flowing from harmonious physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellness and cultural identity" (quoted in

Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007, 2). These aspects of wellbeing, if integrated into Inuit housing, point not only to the way the living conditions should exist, but describe the way housing (at all levels, from funding, construction, to residency and management) should be decided, by integrating the concepts of openness, inclusivity, exchange, in order for Inuit to bring their values of self-sufficiency, interdependence, resiliency, innovation, and resourcefulness into the entire housing process. With Inuit included *as decision-makers* in the social and political realms of the housing process, housing becomes about dignity, identity, and control.

In 2011, in an article on Inuit youth suicide in Nunavut, the authors identified the need for a better definition of Inuit wellbeing. It was found that central to Inuit wellbeing were three parts: "the family, talking/communication, and traditional Inuit cultural values and practices" (Kral et al. 2011, 426). In their study, the authors had focused on "Inuit experiences of well-being or happiness (*quviasungniq*) and unhappiness [...] and Inuit meanings of these terms" (Kral et al. 2011, 428). The research objective, designed and executed in collaboration with Inuit research partners that included community members, youth councils, social development councils from several hamlets, and an Inuit Steering Committee, was to determine "Inuit meanings and experiences of wellness" and "the experiences of recent change in each community that have affected experiences of well-being" (Kral et al. 2011, 428). Kral et al. (2011) framed the research with the understanding that colonialism has had a big impact on the ability to attain wellbeing and was described in this research as an underlying "psychological and social perturbation" (2011, 427). Through this qualitative, multi-methods, collaborative study, the research provided a foundational notion of wellbeing for Inuit in Nunavut. The case studies took place in Igloolik and Qikirtajuaq but the authors believed that the community's actions for

community wellness are part of the "larger movement of Indigenous self-determination" (Kral et al. 2011, 426).

Family and kinship were central to Inuit wellbeing: "Being with family, speaking with family, visiting, going on the land together, sharing food together, and many other family-related activities [...] closely associated with wellness, happiness, health, and healing" (Kral et al. 2011, 430).[195] Happiness was the next most prominent theme, and was related to "being on the land, usually with family" (2011, 430). On the flip side, unhappiness, "was tied to not being with family, not visiting, and with anger, alcohol, drugs, sexual abuse, and violence often associated within the family context" (Kral et al. 2011, 430). Specific aspects of housing and the related changes in their sedentary village life were identified as having crucial consequences on wellbeing. For example, the value of communication within and between families had recently deteriorated. The large size of the communities, the increase in construction, the placement of the houses, and the distance between the houses, were all new spatial arrangements that have contributed to changes in Inuit social relations such as not visiting each other much anymore. Elders spoke about sitting at home alone for prolonged periods of time looking out the window at those passing by but not visiting, and the younger generations reported that they no longer visited their Elders to help out because they were just staying home (Kral et al. 2011, 431).

Inside the houses, regarding family bonds, respondents expressed their concerns about the social and physical changes brought on by the new houses as follows:

> We are now living in houses with so many rooms. Family members may come in and show some concern on their faces, but they immediately go to

[195] The factors closely reflected values identified as Inuit knowledge known as IQ (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit) expressed as: "knowledge about or going on the land, hunting, camping, eating country food, spending time with elders, making traditional tools, skin clothing, building an igloo, and Inuit beliefs and cosmology. Family/kinship and communication are also an integral part of IQ" (2011, 430)

> their room and you didn't have time to ask them what it is that is wrong (Kral et al. 2011, 432).

The physical realities of the Western-style house design had interrupted the flow between the dwellings and the bonds of family and kinship within the building, which consequently affected the opportunity for healing through talking. Both Elders and youth respondents acknowledged this loss. Housing was the physical reality that has changed communications, identified as key to wellbeing. The researchers identified the interruptions to wellbeing as a result of "internal colonialism imposed by the Canadian government in the 1950s and 1960s" (Kral et al. 2011, 426) during the key period of sedentarization and the first government housing programs. These factors of Inuit housing, in terms of the physical changes that sedentary life in villages houses has brought to Inuit families is another key factor in Inuit wellbeing that northern housing policy has not addressed. Housing policy, as shown in the earlier chapter, has relied on the idea that with housing, then jobs, investments, and business opportunities will flow to the communities through the usual market logics. And spin-offs from these changes will bring Inuit wellbeing. The issue of what "housing for wellbeing" looks like has never been part of the policy commitments or agreements by governments.

Happiness is another aspect that has been factored into determining wellbeing in some studies. In two back-to-back studies in 2013 and 2014, conducted across several Inuit communities in Inuit Nunangat, the research team Gérard Duhaime and Roberson Édouard investigated the relationship between one's material circumstances and the access one has to subjective kinds of wellbeing such as satisfaction in life, happiness, freedom, and agency. In one study, the team looked at the *meaning* of capital, rather than the presence, absence, or value of capital in a person's life. They believed "that economic performance,

as measured by inflation rate, social inequality or unemployment is not relevant in itself, but only indirectly as a means to an end," an end considered here as "an increased feeling of well-being" (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 374). The second study was a capabilities approach analysis which is a broad analytical framework which "claims that neither the level of resources nor the level of maximization of individual utility suffice to appropriately assess a person's real situation, insofar as these provide no information about his or her real opportunities for exercising agency" (Duhaime and Édouard 2014, 326). They explained further that the situation in which the person lives is dependent not only on the individual's resources or abilities, but on the *possibilities* available to them given the social structures in which they exist (2014, 327). This research broadened the field significantly by considering wellbeing in terms of agency, freedom, and the acknowledgment of emotions.

Both approaches pointed to the fact that "wellbeing" or the assessment of an improvement of a person's "real situation" needs to be seen as an end result, or even as a goal. All the other features that factor in are the "means" to the end, which included adequate housing. In these two studies, the authors raised key questions about many non-material factors that contributed to the goal of wellbeing and satisfaction in life and they also related these factors back to the essential material circumstances of living conditions, including housing.

Édouard and Duhaime's 2013 study called "The Well-Being of the Canadian Arctic Inuit: The Relevant Weight of Economy in the Happiness Equations" was the first happiness study conducted in an Inuit, or even Indigenous, context that examined the connection between wealth and happiness (2013, 376, footnote). The authors used existing data about health and living conditions. Then in order to determine the social factors contributing to Canadian Arctic Inuit's subjective wellbeing, individual assessments were

conducted by the respondents themselves, determining their levels of satisfaction and/or despair. One of the benefits of the subjective assessment was recognizing that "no one better than Inuit themselves can appropriately evaluate their life as a whole,"[196] besides which, there is no consensus in scholarly work on a definition of "happiness" (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 375). There were criticisms made regarding the qualitative self-assessed measurement of happiness because a self-assessment tool is considered non-conventional, unreliable, and unverifiable (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 375). However, the researchers' choice to include a self-assessment tool was indispensable to allow for cultural characteristics to come to light, such as Inuit expressions of happiness and sources of happiness, even if they could not be clearly parsed out through this method. In their search to understand what brought happiness, they framed wellbeing with these four major factors: "wealth, safety, freedom, and solidarity" (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 376). Although housing was not the focus of the study, the manner in which happiness and wellbeing were explored revealed that the essential material conditions of life such as wealth, income, and housing, needed to be read in terms of the person's emotional, psychological, and relational conditions of life. Two best predictors for satisfaction with life were "*status on the job market and the condition of housing*" (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 386 original italics). On the flip side, it was found that "the best predictors of the feeling of despair are, respectively, in decreasing order of significance: strength of the family ties; support of the extended family in times of need; *condition of housing*; geographic mobility index; and economic family income" (Édouard and Duhaime 2013b, 387 emphasis mine). Moreover, results showed that: "Inuit living in housing that is in good condition are less likely (slightly

[196] The approach of measuring wellbeing in terms of how people self-rate their satisfaction in life has been used and accepted in many studies as a valid measure.

more than half the chances) to experience a feeling of despair than those whose housing needs major repairs. The same applied to those who can rely on strong family ties as compared to those who cannot, and those who have no intention of moving as compared to those who are considering moving" (2013b, 387). Through their research, the authors confirmed that adequate material conditions are unquestionably necessary means to attain a better quality of life, though they cannot *ensure* wellbeing.

The discrepancy between why gains in material welfare for Indigenous populations rarely point directly to increased wellbeing remains a central point of concern in the quality of life literature (Salée, with the assistance of Newhouse, and Lévesque 2006). Identity plays a big role in wellbeing, as seen in the different values placed on "being" versus "having." For Inuit, "being" on the land and doing traditional activities contributed more to happiness than "having" things, such as housing (Édouard and Duhaime 2013a). This literature treats wellbeing in a more holistic sense, in which all dimensions of life play a role in one's perception of experiencing a good life. Wellbeing is related in large part to "personal healing and the process of reclaiming control over one's personal life" (Salée, with the assistance of Newhouse, and Lévesque 2006, 7). Extending from this idea, one could project that "being" in control of one's housing choices may be just as valuable as "having" housing.

This changes our understanding of the relationship between housing and wellbeing. Housing cannot be an end in itself. Housing for Inuit is indeed a "primary" and "essential" need especially because it is "the *leading* source of all ills in Nunavik" (Laneuville 2015, 9). And yet, housing does not guarantee wellbeing. Nor freedom. Nor happiness. "*Not feeling at home* was a source of discontent," as found through interviews with one hundred and eight Nunavik women (Laneuville 2015, 14). Just as homelessness and inadequate housing

was a sure basis for feelings of despair (Édouard and Duhaime 2013a). However, "having" a house only provided the *potential* to feel happiness or satisfaction in life. Agency in housing was another central component of Inuit wellbeing.

During the Nunavik-wide *Parnasimautik* consultation process in 2013, Makivik Corporation described the dire consequences of the colonial legacy of the Inuit-state relationship. When the term wellbeing was used in the report, it was in conjunction with the demand for greater autonomy and self-sufficiency (Makivik 2014b, 35). Wellbeing for the community required a return to Inuit values (2014b, 53). It was explained that the loss of autonomy was a direct result of the paternalistic state and its dehumanizing doctrine of assimilation which was particularly intense at the time when governments had assumed control over the "wellbeing" of Inuit who they (falsely and tyrannically) believed were not able to govern themselves (Makivik 2014b, 66). In the *Parnasimautik* report, it stated that "decolonization offers us a means to change this reality, towards improved well-being in our families, and our communities, but it requires time, conversation, understanding, and reconciliation" (2014b, 67).

On the material side of things such as economics and development, the report stated "well-being and wealth creation are building blocks of autonomy" (2014b, 121). And finally, in relation to housing, the social wellbeing of the Nunavimmiut was seen as threatened with the increase of overcrowding, confirming in their vision that "the housing crisis must be resolved on an urgent basis" (Makivik 2014b, 101 and 110). Again here, the material conditions, such as adequate housing, were a means to an end, though not a direct line to wellbeing. With material stability and safety one could build more autonomy and self-sufficiency to extract themselves from the control by the state. The material stability of housing was but one way to change the power dynamic. But only if understood that housing

not only requires some autonomy to be considered adequate housing, but also if framed as a means to more autonomy.

Ongoing colonialism is always a force to contest in all attempts to change the power dynamics and improve the wellbeing of Indigenous people. As scholars have said, "colonialism is indeed the broadest and most fundamental determinant of Indigenous health and well-being in countries where settler-colonial power continues to dominate" (de Leeuw, Lindsay, and Greenwood 2018, xxii). Yet there are also poignant reminders by Elders and knowledge keepers about how holistic approaches and balance are required to reach a desired outcome because "the holistic perspective is understood to be a protective factor for Inuit well-being" (Tagalik 2018, 94). Shirley Tagalik is an educator, writer, and scholar of IQ from Arviat. With voices of Inuit Elders she had interviewed, they discussed the importance of taking a "holistic view of the world" in order to have a good life. For them, personal and collective wellbeing comes when balance and harmony bring together "the physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual" (author's personal communication with B. Utuq quoted in Tagalik 2018, 99). Tagalik discussed the sense of loss experienced when things are unbalanced, resulting in a diminished sense of belonging and wellness. The complexity and interconnectedness of Inuit autonomy, health, and wellbeing is something that is on the one hand clearly related to power dynamics, control, and agency, and on the other hand requires a thoughtfulness to consider balance, emotions, belonging, and the spiritual part of the person and society. Most often, the welfare of Indigenous communities has been measured in socio-economic terms, but it is widely acknowledged that there are many interrelated issues. To understand Inuit wellbeing requires a more nuanced understanding of the physical conditions of life and their cultural, spiritual, and political relevance.

The literature had not, to date, provided a comprehensive definition of Inuit wellbeing that brings together these many key themes and interconnections. However, new research results published in 2024 by the research team led by Christopher Fletcher and Mylene Riva have made the most significant contribution to knowledge on this front yet.[197] Their analysis of Nunavik's most recent regional health survey, *Qanuilirpitaa*? conducted between 2017 and 2018, has synthesized Inuit ways of establishing health and wellbeing determinants founded on Inuit experience. With a research methodology based on Inuit values and through research conducted at the community level, a new Inuit model of health was produced. Based on three key concepts, expressed in Inuktitut as *ilusirsusiarniq*, *qanuinngisiarniq*, and *inuuqatigiitsianiq*, the model is called the "IQI model of health" (Fletcher et al. 2024, s24-5) which is "grounded in Inuit epistemology, ontology, language, and lived experience" (2024, s28). I provide an overly simplied summary of the Inuktitut terms for which there are no English equivalents: *ilusirsusiarniq* is about physical health that allows one to be "able to carry out the tasks required of everyday life"; *qanuinngisiarniq* is about being well due to an absence of factors that cause worry, pain or distress; and *inuuqatigiitsianiq* encompasses the social wellbeing aspect with a sense of caring, relatedness, and good relationships both within the family and community circle, as well as in leadership, including relations with non-Inuit and "people with whom Inuit ineract in the south, for schooling, work, and government" (2024, s25).

The IQI concept takes a step in the direction of "cross-cultural intellectual innovation, social justice, Indigenous capacity, and equity in health research" (Fletcher et al. 2024, s21). Housing has not been included as a separate component in the eight

[197] Note that since Fletcher et al's 2024 research emerged during the very last weeks of my research process, the important, relevant, Nunavik-specific concept of Inuit determinants of health and wellbeing have not been integrated fully into my overall results, though I have included them in this chapter.

community determinants of health—listed as community, family, identity, food, land, knowledge, economy, and and services—although the determinant of *community* includes "social, physical, and built spaces of the villages of Nunavik" and as such, contains housing (Fletcher et al. 2024, s26). What is especially unique about this new concept is not only that it was developed by Nunavimmiut for Nunavimmiut, as a purposeful addition to the traditional epidemiological region-wide health survey, but that it was a form of knowledge creation done with the specific intent to separate health care from colonial processes (2024, s27). This echoes Christensen's (2016) work on northern Indigenous health and housing which likewise called for the decolonization of policy (Christensen 2016b). On a practical level, the IQI model provides a conceptual framework intended to support the development of policy, interventions, and health programs (2024, s28).

Fig. 8 The IQI Model from Nunavik's Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Health survey

(source: Fletcher et al. 2024, s25)

The IQI model of health is based on the foundation of Inuit language and Inuit culture, with three key IQI concepts and eight determinants of health. However, this is a model—one that Nunavimmiut depicted visually as seen in Figure 6—and by the very nature of a model, it is an oversimplified depiction of an interconnected cultural complexity that forms the foundation for life and survival (2024, s26-7). As Kral et al.'s (2011) research on wellbeing noted, there is "great overlap across themes. This reflects an Inuit holistic perspective, in which significant aspects of life are viewed as intertwined rather than discrete" (Kral et al. 2011, 429). In this model, therefore, one can extrapolate that as housing is embedded as a health determinant of *community*, it is also implicated and intertwined in the three community-level sources of wellbeing that envelop "the basis for life for Inuit [...] to survive and thrive in the north" (2024, s24). As observed in much of the research related to Inuit wellbeing, the political dimension of Inuit life is not expressly

articulated by Inuit as an aspect vital to wellbeing; it does not appear to be part of the IQI model as such. However, I might suggest, that the very fact that there is a need for this kind of model, described by the authors as part of an approach for "epistemic inclusion" to guide dialogue, policy development, interventions, etc., it is a counterbalance to an experience of *exclusion*, one that has been sustained by the colonial relationship in which Inuit are implicated. And I might argue that designing a new conceptual framework because it is desperately needed in order to to build meaningful health policy and programs is in effect fulfilling a political need, and a path forward in the Inuit-state relationship.

Returning to issues identified in the last chapter on Nunavik housing policies, in that the term wellbeing is repeatedly used in government policy, one must question what kind of an understanding of wellbeing has been implied in the design of policies and action plans? Have policy-makers addressed, or even been aware, of these multi-layered elements of Inuit wellbeing through their plans and strategies? To attend to Inuit wellbeing in the context of housing discussions and in creating housing policy, I propose that the following aspects play an important role, based on the literature surveyed above. I argue, that without attention to the following elements during policy-making, Inuit wellbeing will continue to just be a term thrown around without offering any real foundation for more concrete outcomes in housing processes. Therefore, based on the literature, I propose that Inuit wellbeing for the purpose of housing policy might include elements of the following ideas:[198]

[198] It must be stated that my proposal is in no way intended to override or subsume the IQI model that has been taken up by people in the health system in Nunavik. These factors listed are the hightlights from the sources on Inuit wellbeing that I have reviewed, and is intended to feed reflection and another perspective based on research previously conducted with Inuit, as well as feeding into a connection between wellbeing and home.

- Wellbeing is about quality of life, not defined only by physical health or by the absence of disease (Blakney 2009; Édouard and Duhaime 2013a; Duhaime and Édouard 2014; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Wellness includes the value of caring for others, kinship, family bonds, and a sense of belonging (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Kral et al. 2011; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Wellbeing requires a holistic approach to balance the interrelated factors of physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and spiritual collective wellbeing (Kral et al. 2011; Tagalik 2018; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Wellbeing values and requires *both* features of self-sufficiency *and* interdependence (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Makivik 2014b);

- Wellbeing means one has a level of agency, voice, access to decision-making, and the opportunity to reclaim control over one's own future (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Duhaime and Édouard 2014; Makivik 2014b);

- Wellbeing is political (Adelson 2000; Blakney 2009; Makivik 2014b);

- Wellbeing includes a connection to the land, access to land, the ability to care for the land which is connected to Inuit identity (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Blakney 2009; Kral et al. 2011; Makivik 2014b; Tagalik 2018; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Wellbeing contains both individual terms and collective terms (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Tagalik 2018)

- Wellbeing needs to be assessed on the community level as well as on the individual level (Penney, O'Sullivan, and Senécal 2012; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Adequate housing can *set the stage* for wellbeing but housing alone does not create wellbeing, though it is a necessary means towards wellbeing (Makivik 2014b; Édouard and Duhaime 2013a);

- Wellbeing for Inuit can be advanced through the movements of reconciliation and decolonization (Kral et al. 2011; Makivik 2014b; Fletcher et al. 2024);

- Wellbeing is based on these basic sets of values above, and must involve a respect for and return to these Inuit values (Kirmayer, Paul, and Rochette 2007; Makivik 2014b; Tagalik 2018; Fletcher et al. 2024).

Part III Summary: Do government housing policies address Inuit wellbeing?

The simple answer is still: No.

The aspects of Inuit wellbeing summarize above, that are also found in reports submitted by Inuit organizations to government bodies during consultations or policy development, are mostly not reflected in government housing policies. The policies are centered on socio-economic factors, fulfilling the role of the government as welfare provider, attempting to respond to what is seen as pressing, though one-dimensional health needs to be met through social services. It is evident that there are a lot of assumptions being made in policy about how housing will create Inuit wellbeing. All the features of wellbeing that housing policies have *not* addressed are actually crucial to Inuit wellbeing such as: autonomy, agency, control, spirituality, relationship to land, cultural relevance, social relations, community, etc. The soft promises made by the state, on the other hand, speak more directly to some of these aspects of Inuit wellbeing. The values expressed in the soft promises imply a willingness to understand, respect difference, and to act ethically. Soft promises talk about dialogue, collaboration, partnership, equity, etc. The disconnect then appears to emerge at the policy stage, when it comes down to government action.

Does the policy disconnect happen due to a lack of understanding? Fear? Reluctance? Ontological barriers? Ideological impasses? Disparate sets of values? Disrespect? Discrimination? Lack of trust? Sense of superiority? Paternalism? Ongoing colonial attitudes and mindset? Unethical intentions? Ignorance? Blindness? Different interpretations of duty and who is responsible? Or simple unwillingness to live up to responsibilities and duty of treaties?

I believe that several of these barriers are at play, as many scholars have shown. But I also believe that a lot of these barriers come down to the *habit of making assumptions* about what is best, normal, and universal, and about what our shared values are. It is for

this reason that I propose a way of reaching deeper into an ethical understanding of the meaning and potential of housing, of making those connection between housing and wellbeing in a way so that everyone can relate to it in some profound way, with an ethics of care. We all know, want, and relate to the unique human feeling of *home*. If we can find a focal point that we can all universally relate to, by reaching into our sense of humanity, (even if we have different interpretations of the same inherent need to feel at *home*) then we can start to pull away at the fear, the ontological barriers, the power imbalance, the lack of trust, even at the discrimination, that has prevented us from advancing in a significant way to alleviate the pain and suffering caused by inadequate housing, and to move towards more ethical understandings of each other and therefore more ethical actions and behaviours.

My contribution to the housing discourse in the next and final Part IV will expand more on the direct link between wellbeing and housing through the concept of *home*. It contains a significant overlap with the above features of Inuit wellbeing, but most importantly pertains specifically to the housing context and is therefore a key tool to understand housing through our sense of humanity. It will provide a way forward to discuss housing in terms of social justice for the purpose of creating Inuit wellbeing. The current policy discourse and Inuit-state relationship in which the housing discourse occurs is not desirable. Given the government stated objective to meet Inuit wellbeing, what should be done? I will propose a prospective path forward that actually upholds our democratic principles, while providing a framework for connecting housing solutions to meet the needs and rights of Inuit wellbeing. It is a path towards social justice for Nunavimmiut. Though it is evidently a path that would need to be refined and defined by Inuit themselves.

PART IV: What should be done about Inuit housing?

> ***In the North […] there are many viable small communities. Most northern Aboriginal people still call such places home, wherever they might live.***

(RCAP 1996 Volume 4 Chapter 6, p.275)

Introduction to Part IV

Home is a word that conjures up a sense of care, understanding, comfort, and strength. It has entered the language of government public policy in recent years. The latest national homelessness policy commitment is called *Reaching Home / Vers un chez-soi*, and the Société d'habitation du Québec's has stated that *Être bien en soi et chez-soi* (feeling well in yourself and feeling at home) are profoundly connected to each other and to stable quality housing adapted to individual needs (SHQ 2016). However, the leap from recognition to deeper understanding has not been part of housing policy development. The power dynamics entrenched in Inuit housing are built upon layers of assumptions connecting housing to the physical entity of the house, and to economic development and market forces. I argue that not only is the connection to home key in creating better housing policy with much greater potential of properly supporting Inuit wellbeing, but that it is essential if the government's commitment to creating wellbeing through housing is genuine.

The purpose of this research narrative so far was to assess the housing crisis by finding new ways to understand where we are going, explored in its historical context, to assess what kind of power mechanisms have been in place that have allowed some players to benefit while others would lose, and, whether this situation is desirable. The final part of

a phronetic research approach is to take this reinterpretation of the current situation and provide a potential path forward. The power analysis has uncovered dominant modes of power (Todd Landman chap 3 p.43-44) that have created undesirable housing conditions for Inuit, something Nunavik's Inuit organizations have been asserting for decades.

This final part of this dissertation will lead us into new ways of thinking about housing in a way that can shift the ethical foundation of our Inuit-state relationship. By thinking about all the myriad of ways that housing is connected to everything else, and to reveal the key ways that housing does not only support Inuit agency, but that housing that connects properly to Inuit wellbeing *requires* Inuit agency—ultimately, Inuit control over their own housing, self-determination, autonomy—even while actively participating in an ethical, respectful Inuit-state relationship.

This comes from a profound *trust* in the humanity we each have within ourselves. *Home* is the extension of our humanity and becomes something so much more: it is expansive, imaginative, relatable, embodied, material, palpable, and possible. With this lens of *home*, we can have a comprehensive framework that can deal with the whole complicated housing system, the related unequal power dynamics, the questions of wellbeing, identity, self-governance, cultural relevance, design, construction, and more. I argue that clarity of this concept for Inuit is essential in order to also avoid returning to a path of solutions based on *new* assumptions about what we *think* home means for everyone. The only way to do that is to create space for a dialogue about home that is not founded on fear, threat, or disdain. It needs a place in our political realm to be discussed and debated so that new ideas and solutions can emerge based on ethical, common sense knowledge, not just technical, practical knowledge. In the following chapter about the idea of *home*, I present a historical, contextualized, documented basis for the idea of home.

The idea of home that I propose is guided by Christensen's (2016) four features of home described as material, relational, emotional, and spiritual, and on top of which I add the political element of *home*, which I believe needs to be acknowledged so that it can provide the foundation for a conceptual framework that would require the housing discourse in Nunavik to be about *more than houses*. I also end the chapter with a case for returning to the basis of a liberal democratic system that could make room to accept authentic ways of being in the political relationship. This entails a new kind of dialogue that allows for new ideas to emerge and to exist with a pluralism of identities expressed in the political realm, thereby contributing to a healthy democracy.

Chapter 9: The idea of *home*: A bridge to a new political discussion

> ***Ma cabane c'est chez-moi. Ma maison dans la communauté c'est aussi chez-moi, mais pas vraiment mon chez-moi comme ma cabane.***

an Inuk man from Kangirsujuaq, age 60[199]

When a house is not a home, and when home happens elsewhere: A basis for a conceptual framework.

If we are to change the housing debate and allow for a multiplicity of identities to express their needs and rights with regards to housing, I argue that a focal point to which everyone can relate on a personal level might provide the necessary entry point. Home is a

[199] Quote from interviews conducted with Inuit in Nunavik in M.A. research by Andréanne Brière (Brière 2014, 65). English translation: "My cabin is home. My house in the village is also home, but not really home like my cabin."

familiar term. It has been understood as something that can "provide for both individual agency and collective well-being" (G. Anderson, Suski, and Moore 2016, 5). It is seen as something that is uniquely part of the human condition—something everyone can relate to. It has been designated as "an inevitable part of what it means to be human" (G. Anderson, Suski, and Moore 2016, 3; Ingold 2012). This familiarity makes it an interesting conceptual tool which I believe can be applicable to either the commonplace terrain of policy-making, or a contentious process of negotiation. With a familiar term in which one might feel conversant, one's own pre-conceptions of the term will come to the fore when presented with new meanings revealed by others that challenge our own assumptions. These are also unexpected hidden, assumed, gendered, divisive, or marginalizing underpinnings of *home*, which if left unexamined, can lead down a path of unsolicited and unwelcome social, economic, cultural, and political impositions. I make the argument that to *include* an expanded idea of home into the northern housing discourse can bring a much more informed, caring, inclusive, place-specific, and culturally-relevant perspective. A "housing shortage" expressed in policy terms often presents as an unremarkable, even "normal" problem that assumes the solution requires simply erecting "more units" for families to live in. *Home*, on the other hand, adds depth, addresses complexities, and requires an openness about confronting one's ideological assumptions about the purpose of housing. How can it accomplish this?

Specifically, I argue that the idea of *home* has the potential to represent and help express the many features associated with housing that connect to Inuit wellbeing. I will present these facets within a framework of home based on the work of Julia Christensen (2016) who examined the disconnect between housing policy, health, and northern Indigenous conceptualizations of home through the lens of cultural safety by working with

Indigenous homeless people living in the North (Christensen 2016b). She presented "practices and ideologies that are enacted in the pursuit of creating home" for northern Indigenous populations, referring to the following four deeply interconnected facets of home:

- Material
- Relational
- Emotional
- Spiritual

(Christensen 2016b, 84). These facets of home flow through her work, in the descriptions of the lived experiences of Northern Indigenous people facing homelessness as well as through her analysis of homemaking and homelessness.

My policy analysis uncovered social, cultural, and economic assumptions upon which housing policies and programs are predicated. It showed the limitations of the current housing debate. Now the question is how to move discussions into a new realm of awareness and epistemological understanding. My research has shown that the housing foundations for wellbeing requires more than just upgrading the physical condition of the dwellings. Wellbeing for Inuit has many more layers. It is connected to adequate housing in non-linear ways. If we keep the housing discussions at the technical level, only focusing on funding, technology, design, and sustainability, as well as Inuit job creation, then we will continue to miss the other essential elements that make housing the foundation for Inuit individual and community wellbeing.

I propose a way of actively thinking about Inuit housing and solutions and housing policy and programs through the idea of *home* as an ethics of care, mutual understanding, connection, and exchange. I start with the premise that Inuit housing policy embodies and reflects the counter-productive elements of the Inuit-state relationship. It has been a factor

in maintaining unequal power relations between Inuit and the Canadian state in a myriad of ways, and it contributes to the ongoing disavowal of Inuit self-determination. The concept of *home* provides a way of seeing the power and control that has been expressed through government housing policy, as well as embracing the agency and knowledge of Inuit.

Generally, it is fair to say that the home, or the idea of *home* at least, is associated with a "good thing" (for example, consider the expression "home sweet home"). It is typically expressed in positive terms, often sounding something like this: home is "a safe and secure place to call your own, where freedom, comforts, and needs are met, and where people have access to jobs, education, and supportive communities." This is an example from the Ontario Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness (McMeekin and Matthews 2015, 6). "Housing needs," consequently, are mostly ascertained at the material level, to fulfill the physical human need to have a roof over one's head, ideally accompanied by access to employment and services. Bonnycastle et al. (2016) refer to this as fulfilling an "immediate need" described as a first level need (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016, 137). Nevertheless, the meaning of home is dependent on one's perspective (ontology) and one's identity. "Relative needs" associated to housing are secondary needs that tie in to the person's ontology and identity. It is commonly agreed that a home is more than shelter (Goyer 2016, 165); It is also symbolic. *Home* provides a foundation for "cultural and collective identity, a social network, and social support and security to its inhabitants... anchoring them spatially, personally, socially, and institutionally" (Goyer 2016, 154). However, the research shows that these qualities of *home* are not being met for Indigenous populations in Canada (Patrick 2014, 13). For example, Indigenous teens in Ontario have critiqued the problem when "the notion of home is more about meeting basic living requirements than being a place where emotional needs are met" (Patrick 2014, 14). The

analysis of housing policies in Nunavik shows that most housing-related policy is limited to immediate needs, not relative needs.

I posit that *home* is not something that can be *offered* or *given*, because it must be *created*. With that premise then, logically, the house, the built structure, is not a *home* just because it exists at the material level, nor because it can be rented, nor because there are programs promoting "homeownership." Home cannot be "created" through housing policy; it cannot be created by outsiders. In order to create *home*, there are many layers that the dweller must be at liberty to express through their own ontological and epistemological viewpoint. I argue that when conditions restrict this liberty with power imbalances such as colonialism, paternalism, racism, capitalism, and basic ignorance or assimilationist intentions, when the power of decision-making regarding housing conditions is wholly external to the dweller, then considerable loss is borne and there is much harm done at the individual and societal level. This loss interrupts the potential for individual and collective wellbeing. For Indigenous people experiencing this extreme multifaceted loss, I argue that it interrupts and intrudes on self-determination.

The literature on Indigenous homelessness reveals what is lost, harmed, and missing when *home* is unattainable. With this lens on housing policy, the harm being done in current and past northern Inuit housing policy discourse is revealed. More importantly, I suggest that the housing discourse has benefitted from being at the periphery of the Indigenous self-determination discourse, therefore, benefitting from being under-examined. What this means is that the separation between self-determination, autonomy, devolution, self-government on the one hand, and housing negotiations, policy, and funding on the other, means that it is normalized to address housing at the material level, housed in the world of social policy yet outside of the realm of political power. I argue that

government has benefitted from this limitation. Inuit organizations and representatives, on the other hand, have appealed to the all-encompassing issue of housing that affects all aspects of Inuit life, as the foundation for wellbeing.

Note that this examination of the literature is not to be interpreted as a determination of what home means or *should* mean for Inuit. It is a signal to non-Indigenous decision-makers and stakeholders, as well as to Inuit stakeholders, that the current political discourse on housing effectively eliminates other viewpoints, ignores the more delicate nuanced issues that link to wellbeing, fails to make space for Inuit ontologies and identities, and rejects the connection that housing has to territory and autonomy. It is to signal the need for a paradigm shift in how housing is conceived. I argue that it is the Western ideological underpinnings of the housing discourse and the neoliberal tendency that is a central obstructive factor. However, a simple idea such as *home* has the potential to disrupt layers of conventions and assumptions to redirect it towards relevant social connections that are expressed through larger issues of territorial access and use, local significance and application, cultural practices and knowledge, Inuit voice, Inuit control, and ultimately, Inuit self-determination and social justice.

Below I will present many examples that point to a fundamental need to create, to be connected to land, culture, history and relations. It is about having a level of control over the process in order to experience and fulfill the idea *home*. In other words, creating *home* is about a certain level of agency and autonomy in determining what, where, and how *home* happens.

Housing policy and programs may only be one portion of a much larger multidimensional process. Yet, I believe that housing policy must be 100% occupied with the issue of Inuit agency and autonomy in housing decisions if policy-makers are to be

committed to creating Inuit wellbeing and contributing to Inuit self-determination through adequate housing.

Home: Part of our humanity

An exploration into the research on the concept of *home* is an indispensable exercise to show not only that *home* is something uniquely and essentially *human* that we all share, but also to show that *home* is an idea that has resonated for the Inuit over space and time, including in Nunavik. This is not a term or concept that resides only within an academic discourse; it is palpable, lucid, individual, collective, relational, political concept connected to the public sphere and to the internal emotional worlds of people and places.

From the latest literature on *home* based on Indigenous knowledge and experiences, especially in the northern Canadian context, Christensen's four main facets of homemaking, namely *material*, *relational*, *emotional*, and *spiritual* (Christensen 2016b, 84) will be the inclusive notions that intersect and overlap within the idea of home. With these in mind, I will present many other wide-reaching features of *home*, as well as uncovering the risks of a concept that has potential to be alienating or exclusionary. As such, with the exploration of the idea of home presented below in its historical and cultural context, extrapolated from the housing literature and from research with Inuit on related health and policy topics, I maintain that it is important to make explicit that there is a political element to *home* that is constant, if perhaps often understated. I will draw connections to research in Inuit Nunangat that point to the importance of land and relations that have been denied through processes of dispossession and the denial of *home* to insist that home is an essential element to consider when talking about housing.

Home and Homelessness

Home can embody a *sense of loss*. This is especially felt through forms of homelessness. Through this sense of loss, layers of material, relational, emotional and spiritual aspects of *home* have been fleshed out. Homelessness is a complex social, economic, political, and often racialized issue. As the numbers of homeless increase in the North, the line between those with a home and without a home is more starkly drawn along race lines and power dimensions linked to our colonial legacy. "Homelessness" can be a powerful political tool to expose the inequalities lived by marginalized Canadians in our cities and towns, and to demonstrate the way our neoliberal policies affect Indigenous populations in terms of where they sleep. And yet, deplorable living conditions in Nunavik have not been understood in terms of homelessness; they have been framed within the "housing crisis" phenomenon, which has allowed policy to likewise ignore the political complexity of housing.

The consequences of inadequate housing policy often result in or perpetuate different forms of homelessness. As seen, the extreme housing shortage in Nunavik has been repeatedly addressed by introducing new government policies and programs that fail to actually reduce homelessness numbers, and it can be argued that these policies instead succeed in *maintaining* elevated forms of homelessness through: 1) "hidden homelessness," which creates overcrowded conditions in many of the Northern Village homes; and 2) migration, by Inuit leaving their home communities to search, often unsuccessfully, for housing solutions in larger towns and cities. While my purpose is not to frame the lack of housing in Nunavik as a "homelessness issue," it is through the literature on homelessness that a vital perspective of the meaning of *home* has been revealed that I maintain can inform the discourse on Inuit housing. In tandem with a quote from Christensen based on

sociologist Somerville who says "to understand homelessness, we must understand home" (Christensen 2013, 822), I believe that to understand home, we must understand homelessness. It helps explain the complex sense of loss that occurs alongside the current extreme housing shortage in the North.

Indigenous homelessness studies have fleshed out these different conceptual elements of *home* mostly through urban contexts, not remote Arctic community contexts.[200] However, the dire housing conditions in remote arctic villages are understood as a "pathway to homelessness" (Christensen 2013; P. Memmott et al. 2005). The housing shortage forms the basis for the influx of Indigenous people into larger city centers; they come to access services, potential housing options, and employment opportunities not readily available in remote locations. The overall state of hidden homelessness among Indigenous populations has not been adequately documented. This gap in the research exists because most research focuses on conditions of "absolute homelessness" (Peters 2012, 322). But it has been argued that hidden homelessness is likely a much larger percentage of those experiencing homelessness than those living on the streets and in shelters (Peters 2012, 323). Notably, the only form of homelessness that does occur in remote northern villages *is* hidden homelessness; the harsh climates prevent street sleeping and there are few if any shelters in which to count the homeless for data gathering purposes.

Hidden homelessness is also sometimes understood within the context of particular social and family relations as well as cultural traditions among Inuit that encourage

[200] Indigenous homelessness in Canada has garnered increasing attention from quantitative and qualitative researchers, especially geography and sociology (Patrick 2014; Peters and Christensen 2016; Y. Belanger, Weasel, and Awosoga 2012; Thistle 2017; Mccallum and Isaac 2011; Christensen 2013; 2017; Kidd et al. 2018; Webster 2006; Y. D. Belanger 2013; Waegemakers Schiff and Schiff 2016).

intergenerational living and living with extended family members. The upshot of this is that a cultural solution that tackles *absolute* homelessness is part of a cultural understanding of *home* for Inuit. But the problem is that the "solution" for absolute homelessness for Inuit unfortunately often results in extremely overcrowded households, i.e. hidden homelessness.

The issue is complicated by government definitions of "overcrowding" that are usually not applied in culturally sensitive ways so that some cases are deemed "overcrowded" according to Euro-Canadian standards of the nuclear family household, but are not deemed overcrowded by Inuit standards. The distinction could likely be clarified by determining whether the crowded living conditions are *forced* (i.e. based on need or lack of options) or whether it is part of a *choice* based on preferred family dynamics and relations. Either way, the dwellings may not be designed to respond to the chosen living arrangements.

The nuance between imposed or chosen living conditions leads us to the aspect of agency within the idea of *home*. There is considerable harm caused (physically,emotionally, and psychologically) by the daily stress on individuals who stay with others just to keep off the street. They have to employ specific assessment strategies to decide whether or not to move again before becoming a burden on their hosts; and this is a constant stress (Peters 2012). Research suggests that although these individuals have agency and employ strategies to negotiate the relationships that allow them to have a place to stay, they do not express a sense of *home*.[201] The respondents convey a sense of loss despite having some agency, such as in the following comments:

[201] This is from research conducted by geographer Evelyn Peters (2012) with First Nations in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, based on interviews with fifty-six men and women who were currently living with friends or family and who would otherwise be in shelters or on the street (Peters 2012)

> *Well you don't have your own privacy. Don't have a say in what you're gonna do from day to day and that risk is there where they tell you that you have to go. You don't have no say. You don't even have security. You don't have anything. You lose confidence in yourself day to day and day after day, slowly breaking down. You know who you are. What your intentions are but it's hard eh*? (Peters 2012, 334–35).

This is just one example of the loss experienced by those who have agency in where they stay, but who do not have a place to call their home.

If *home* has the potential to be a place of security and safety where one can simply be one's self (thereby fulfilling one's identity), then homelessness would presumably be the opposite, a place where one cannot experience "home" and therefore not be one's self. It is not that simple though. One concept naturally plays off the other but in rather complex, non-linear, and also in interrelated ways. Defining the parameters of the meaning of *homelessness* is no easy task, although it has been argued that a working definition should be established because the definition that an organization uses directly affects the way the issue is treated in research, by social services, and in policy (Peters 2012, 322). The same should be presumed about how *home* is defined for the purpose of research, services, and policy analysis.

We need new conceptual tools and theories to "destabilize dominant ideologies of home" (McCarthy 2018, 980). There are important nuances to discern in the usual dichotomies, such as the public-private and home-homeless contrasts. One approach to addressing the problems in dichotomy was through the idea of a "home-to-homelessness continuum" (McCarthy 2018, 961). The continuum has street sleeping on one end and concludes with homeownership on the other extremity. Through the middle, it represents "a range of 'concealed' temporary and inadequate living situations" (McCarthy 2018, 961). This continuum challenges the public-private dichotomy within the home-homelessness

divide, revealing that sometimes a sense of homelessness can actually be experienced *within* housing, and conversely, activities that conjure up a sense of *home* can sometimes take place *outdoors*, or in a public space. This model had advanced the idea that home and housing need to be considered as a social and cultural construction (McCarthy 2018, 961). But a linear continuum can assume a kind of hierarchical interpretation with "permanent housing at the top and rough sleeping at the bottom" (McCarthy 2018, 961). And the problem is that permanent housing at the "top" does not, in fact, ensure safety, security, and nor should it presume a sense of *home* in the domestic space, for example in predicaments of domestic violence.

Another conceptual approach that attends to the multiple facets that make up a sense of *home* was the "six signifiers of home," set in opposition to corresponding features of homelessness. The signifiers are: "shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, roots, abode (and sometimes additionally, 'paradise')" presented by sociologist Peter Somerville through the two tables found in Table 2 below. The tables depict different levels regarding the sense of security one feels including the physical, the emotional, the ontological, the territorial, and the spiritual. These features are not dependent upon each other. This means that even if one may not currently have the material underpinnings of "home", or has never even *experienced* home, that person might nevertheless know what their *idea* of home could be, as an ideal. And moreover, some can "find their own sense of home as hearth and heart in conditions of extreme stress and utter misery" (Somerville 1992, 534). What this depiction allows for is that an individual's circumstances can simultaneously express, for example, "privacy" on the one hand (home) but "rootlessness" on the other (homeless), and therefore have a sense of homelessness or loss within the particular sphere of their living conditions. This shows that 'home is [...] set in a complex context of social status relations"

(Somerville 1992, 534).

Table 2: Somerville's Meaning of Home and Meaning of Homelessness

The Meaning of Home

Key signifier	General connotation	Sense of security	In relation to: Self	Others
'Shelter'	Materiality	Physical	Protection	Roofing
'Hearth'	Warmth	Physiological	Relaxation	Homeliness
'Heart'	Love	Emotional	Happiness	Stability
'Privacy'	Control	Territorial	Possession	Exclusion
'Roots'	Source of identity	Ontological	Sense	Reference
'Abode'	Place	Spatial	Rest	Living/sleeping space
'Paradise'	Ideality	Spiritual	Bliss	Non-existence (?)

The Meaning of Homelessness

Key signifier	General connotation	Sense of security	In relation to: Self	Others
Lack of shelter	Material deprivation	Physical	Exposure	Rooflessness
Lack of hearth	Coldness	Physiological	Stress	Alienating
Heartlessness	Indifference	Emotional	Misery	Instability
Lack of privacy	Powerlessness	Territorial	Surveillance	Vulnerability
Rootlessness	Anomie	Ontological	Senselessness	Lost
Lack of abode	Placelessness	Spatial	Restlessness	(Impossible!)
'Purgatory'	Ideality	Spiritual	Suffering	Non-existence (?)

(Somerville 1992, 533)

This reveals one of the main problems with homelessness policy: it deals only with the "lack of shelter." According to these signifiers, "shelter" only addresses the material deprivation of "exposure" and "rooflessness." By parsing out the different parts of home and homelessness, I believe we gain more understanding of areas where housing policy objectives might also be deficient (whether housing policies or *de facto* housing policies). Understanding the complex and layered meaning of home forces one to consider the assumption that there is a simplified linear causal relationship pointing from housing to home. To be willing to address the disconnect, one needs to avoid what Somerville calls "the wider climate of coldness and indifference" (Somerville 1992, 534), and instead,

"place home and homelessness in the context of the economic and political system [...] in terms of wider social forces" (Somerville 1992, 536). I would say that it also requires the examination of place and relations, including social and territorial relations—relations that can either support or inhibit *home*, and I argue that this can only be accomplished with a sense of ethics and awareness of the status of values in our society.

Home and Indigenous homelessness

Much of the literature on homelessness in general (as seen above) and the literature on Indigenous homelessness overlap.[202] Somerville's six signifiers provide nuance, and they help parse out, for example, the way one might simultaneously have one facet of home fulfilled such as "shelter" while not having a sense of "security" within that same space. Research conducted with Indigenous people explain *home* and *loss* as an interconnected reality. Only by identifying and defining exactly what qualities are met when one *has* a sense of *home*, can one "understand better what is missing from the lives of the homeless" (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016, 117). Again, it was explained that "a sense of home is complex; it combines different visible and more elusive factors related to space, time, security, relationships, mobility, loss, and belonging" (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016, 128).[203] However, *home* could be seen as fulfilling two larger categories: 1) immediate needs, such as the need for shelter, security, and comfort reflecting issues of immediacy and survival, and 2) relative needs, such as the need for belonging, ownership,

[202] A fair number of research initiatives and reports from organizations and governments on Indigenous homelessness have introduced to me valuable perspectives and insights into the meaning of home for my purposes (Y. Belanger, Weasel, and Awosoga 2012; Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016; Christensen 2016b; Christensen et al. 2017; Christensen 2017; Kidd et al. 2018; Mccallum and Isaac 2011; Patrick 2014; Peters and Christensen 2016; Thistle 2017; A.-M. Turcotte, Lévesque, and Cloutier 2015; Webster 2006).
[203] This is according to research with Indigenous men and women living on the streets, in shelters, and on the outskirts of Thompson, Manitoba, conducted by Marleny M. Bonnycastle, Maureen Simpkins and Annette Siddle in 2016. They worked with the stories shared by the research participants to co-construct a concept of home (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016).

family, and access to services, expressed in phrases such as "a place to be yourself" or "a place to eat whenever we want" (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016, 137). Although *home* is experienced differently among the northern peoples such as the Dene, Métis, and Inuit, there are meaningful similarities, notably: many elements of home are expressed through the *land* and the *family* (Christensen 2016b, 86). However, with the displacement of Indigenous peoples away from their ancestral lands, colonialism has "disrupted Indigenous homemaking practices" (Christensen 2016b, 84). Even in urban contexts in the North, it has been observed that social policies attempt to both limit government spending as well as manage and control Indigenous populations, all while "men and women themselves are seeking family, place, identity—*home*" (Christensen 2017, 7). The central themes of the impact of colonialism, paternalism, sedentarization and housing policies cannot be ignored in the Indigenous homelessness literature. Yet there is relative agreement on the view that the sense of *home* exists on dimensions that are at once ontological, territorial, *and* spiritual (Bonnycastle, Simpkins, and Siddle 2016).

Home as place: a theoretical investigation into home

Home is *place*. It consists of material and social processes that make meaning of place and intersect with identity and politics. Understanding home as a *place* offers a distinction essential to understanding *home* in Inuit Nunangat, where the land and territory is central to the idea of *home*. This way of thinking about *home* is the idea that a place is a *set of social relations*. Space has often been depicted as static (through a positioning of *space* in opposition to *time* which changes and evolves). But geographer Doreen Massey[204]

[204] Dorreen Massey, a renown geographer, who wrote a seminal text in 1994 called *Space, Place and Gender*, that made a significant contributed to debates ongoing since the 1970s about the connections between place and identity (Massey 1994) which has also been theorized in depth by David Harvey and Gillian Rose who contributed to transformative understandings of space, place, and identity.

(1994) challenged this to say that the spatial is a "particular articulation of those relations" because she saw both space-time as something formed out of social interrelations that go beyond the relations expressed within that place. What this means, is that space cannot be fixed—it is not "a flat immobilized surface" (Massey 1994, 4), which had in fact been part of nationalist and regionalist view of certain places, especially far away places that allowed nations to "endow them with fixed identities and to claim them for [their] own" (Massey 1994, 4). This traditional depiction of place exposes a set of values that have been expressed by nation-states scrambling for their sovereignty over vast tracts of land, giving those places an expedient identity, deemed as a "site of authenticity" that is "unproblematic in its identity" which ostensibly de-politicizes that place and fixes it *in space and time* (Massey 1994, 4–5). With this, we see an idea of *home* that is a place created *through* a set of social relations. It becomes a complex ideological and ethical construct. And it exists as a physical experience *as well as* an undeniably politicized space with competing concepts of the home place as either static or fluid. Furthermore, this understanding maintains that communities and places are composed of a set of social relations which are "increasingly stretched out over space [...] from the household to the local area to the international" (Massey 1994, 154).

A part of this definition of place is that it is a "particular, unique, point of intersection" of networks of social relations, as articulated moments (Massey 1994, 154). Places are articulated processes, without enclosures, without a unique single identity, and full of internal conflicts, though "none of this denies place nor the importance of the uniqueness of place" (1994, 155). Moreover, a "sense of place" should not be based on history or "internalized origins" (1994, 153–54). Massey sets us up for a gendered understanding of space and place in order to examine the link of *home* and identity. She demonstrates that

space and place have been imagined through dominant western concepts in the same problematic way that gender has been conceptualized (Massey 1994, 13). Evidently, the place of *home* has often been associated with a nostalgic thing; place has been "interpreted as being important in the search for identity" (1994, 10). However, she says that feminists are often suspicious of such sentimental opinions because "the fact is that the home may be as much a place of conflict (as well as of work) as of repose" (1994, 11). This framing of place, and thereby *home*, helps to maintain checks and balances against idealizing *home*, or assuming that having a house must mean one has a home. We must consider the gendered, social and political dimensions inherent in the idea of *home* as a physical or as an ideological place. Only by addressing these aspects of the home—the place—can we begin to approach housing as a place to call home.

Massey insists that we must consider the "issue of *whose* identity we are referring to when we talk of a place called home and of the supports it may provide of stability, oneness and security" (Massey 1994, 167). Identities are essentially relational. However the potential of this relational feature of home has been stifled by assumptions that it must be "bounded, negative counterpositions, of inclusion and exclusion" (1994, 169–70). Identity has been studied a great deal, personal identity has been problematized, but Massey notes that "the notion of place has remained relatively unexamined" (1994, 167). The identity of a place is always being formed. But the past is also always being shaped. Massey refers to bell hooks, who described "a politicization of memory that distinguishes nostalgia, that longing for something to be as once it was, a kind of useless act, from that remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present" (bell hooks quoted in Massey 1994, 171). I believe this connection—between the re-interpretation of the past, that might be nostalgic, but also has to potential to make sense of the relational place that is today—offers and interesting

avenue for exploring place, space, and home in an Inuit context. This connection also provides an avenue to phronetic research to include the historical and social context in interpreting that status of values, interests, and relations of society in order to work towards social change.

At the same time, place cannot be purely reduced to a set of social relations either. There is also a physical part of place that is essential—a part that is also *interpreted* (Massey and Harvey referred to in Easthope 2004, 129). More recent ideas that have built on these theories of place and home,[205] show that place cannot be reduced to a physical entity, nor is it is merely an ideological thing. For example, larger social groups such as institutions will often agree upon an "objective" social construction of space and time. Yet the social construction of "place" is more contentious and disputed. Part of the reason for this is that "'cultural politics in general [...] and political economic power intertwine in the social processes of place construction'" (Harvey quoted in Easthope 2004, 128), making place more politicized—by extension, making *home* politicized. Moreover, contentions abound because "ideas of 'place' are intertwined with ideas of community, collective memory, group (and individual) identity, political organization and capital flows [and] These 'ideas' of 'place' have very real outcomes" (Easthope 2004, 128).

Easthope (2004) asserts that "place" is a particularly useful concept for housing researchers because it provides a basis for discussing "the relationships between the mind and the external world through the body" (Easthope 2004, 129–30). The dwelling place is also, arguably, linked to one's wellbeing (2004, 136). So that using the concept of a "sense of place" to examine the relationship people have with their dwelling places or

[205] This section is a summary of some of the main discussions around Doreen Massey's and David Harvey's ideas about place as expanded upon by Hazel Easthope about ten years after Massey's publication *Space, Place and Gender*.

"homeplaces" and their identity as a force in their lives (2004, 132) can, on the one hand, help understand feelings of belonging and comfort associated with a place, and on the other hand, help understand underlying assumptions we make about place based on what we think is "natural" or "common sense" but which is actually influenced by those that we privilege, which in turn empowers dominant ideas of "race and nation" (Penrose and Jackson 1993 in Easthope 2004, 131). In Harvey's (1996) words, he explains that place is made up of "sensuous and interpersonal social relations" *and* includes social relations made up of "domination and repression" (p.313-14). As an exploration for how the concept of *home* can become a new deeper malleable tool or framework to reset the housing discourse to respond to Inuit wellbeing, these hidden harmful elements in the *façade* of *home* are crucial to raise and guard against.

Home as exclusion and alienation

Home as a place is related to the built environment, especially in terms of the space *inside* and *outside* of the dwelling. While *home* is a part of being human (as argued by Tim Ingold), the very human act of building a home throughout human history has also contained within it the discernible intention of exclusion and separation (Kaika 2004). The home can be created to protect. But it also functions to separate, exclude, confine, or alienate. These features of *home* need to be explored in order to understand how *home* can be a positive force as well as a controlling force.

If the dwelling is meant to protect and control the inside elements to create a private interior space, then certain elements must remain external. This has been the main purpose of architecture (Kaika 2004, 272). The dwelling is in opposition not only to dirt but to nature:

> Dirt, fear and anxiety stemming from social and natural processes are supposed to have been 'exiled' from this isolated private space and confined instead (if not relegated) to the urban space or *to nature*. Thus, excluding socio-natural processes as 'the other' becomes a prerequisite for the construction of the familiar space of the home (Kaika 2004, 272 emphasis mine).

Moreover, as technological innovation develops, the structure accomplishes an ever higher level of control between the interior and the exterior environments. Divisions between private and public space on both social and physical levels becomes more entrenched.

Geographer Maria Kaika (2004) has investigated the spatial implications of the inside space of the modern home and the exclusion of natural processes by "assessing the material versus the ideologically constructed boundaries between 'the natural' and 'the domestic' space" (Kaika 2004, 266). She ties this dualism to the legacy of Enlightenment era of individual freedom which was expressed in part through the bourgeois house that became an isolated and a-political space.

These ideas about the origins of the concept of what home means in Western culture is important for understanding the context of housing and home today. Northern housing for Inuit was developed by southerners based on their own set of values and ideals about the freedom of the individual, the exclusion of natural processes, and divisions between natural and domestic spaces that developed a kind of so-called "bourgeois house" idea for newly sedentarized Inuit (although, without the "bourgeois" level of quality that southerners would expect for themselves). John Ruskin, a prominent 19th century social thinker who wrote about "the true nature of home," summarized the qualities that need to be *excluded* from the structure in order to turn a bourgeois house into a home:

> 1) Social processes and social relations (crime, socially excluded groups, homelessness, undesired others, etc.); but, also
> 2) Natural processes and natural elements (dust, cold or polluted air, rain, dirt, sewage, smog, etc.) (Kaika 2004, 266).

These exclusions of natural processes from the inside of the home have also been understood as a way of laying down rules for bigger socio-economic processes that control society by regulating the movement of people, land use, and places of production.[206] The home was seen as one of the spaces where modern living would occur alongside but separate from work and recreation. The making of *home* was a process of social and spatial exclusion accomplished through legislative and policy processes based on a "natural" division of people, activities, and things. I argue these ideas are still prominent assumptions we make about *home*, about where activities should take place, and about what is considered "common sense" especially in the context of a clash of cultures. Kaika advises to scrutinize the hidden (assumptions) in the familiar, which in this case are hidden socio-economic processes that accompany the socio-natural processes of *home*, all of which have become normalized expectations about modern living conditions.

But the home with its presumed ease of a domestic space has the potential to conceal the violence of enforced social processes, and even power relations. They are unseen because we relegated violence to the outside space, and the home is meant to protect us

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[206] Maria Kaika looked more closely at the exclusion of these natural processes, contributing to literature that has mainly focused on social-spatial processes. Kaika (2004) studied socio-natural processes through the theme of water. She described how spaces of water inside and outside the home have been defined in opposition to each other despite being co-dependent and gendered. In the home, spaces where water is found it is purified and sanitized, in taps, baths, dishwater, and water for cleaning. These are spaces where women's domestic work is demarcated. Outside waters, such as lakes and rivers, are juxtaposed as they are not potable. This impure or dirty water is found in the spaces where men work, farm, hunt, etc. However, Kaika observes that so-called "unclean" water actually *does* exist inside the home, such as sewage. But this "dirty" water in the home is concealed, found behind walls, under floors, inside cupboards. She demonstrated that the line between the outside and the inside spaces is actually imaginary. She says that "both social and natural processes have been hidden rather than ostracized altogether outside the modern home" (Kaika 2004, 275). Yet it is the *belief* of the separation that is essential to creating the concept of the pure inside home space, one that supports the Western Enlightened idea of a bourgeois house. These concepts had already been perceived by academics in 1933 with the introduction of networks of socio-natural processes (or infrastructure) such as water, sewage, electricity and gas, which came hand-in-hand with "the laying down of a set of rules for the flow of socio-economic processes," such as zoning, land use, movement of people and places of production, reproduction and recreation (Kaika 2004, 272).

from that. Economic and political power relations also appear to be external to the familiar interior space. And so the interior space of a house *performs* as a safe, desirable, apolitical space.

Hidden separations within the home can also engender a nuanced sense of alienation. Feelings of control (or lack thereof) over one's space has psycho-spatial effects and is felt at the emotional and psychological level. A psycho-spatial effect has been described by McCarthy (2018) through the concept of the "unheimlich." *Unheimlich* is a term that was examined by Sigmund Freud at the turn of the 20th century and then expanded upon with a spatial component by the architectural theorist Anthony Vidler in 1996. Essentially, *unheimlich* in German can mean "uncanny." Its opposite, *heimlich*, means "homely" or "homelike," but it contains two divergent inferences. In the literal sense, *heimlich* is "domestic, familiar and intimate," but on the other hand, it can also mean "almost its reverse, meaning hidden, secretive, clandestine" (McCarthy 2018, 962). *Heimlich* can be identical to its counterpart, *unheimlich*. The idea of *unheimlich* (something uncanny) in the domestic space (in a homely but maybe also clandestine space) has been expressed by various scholars as a sense of strangeness, of feeling uprooted, or "of something unhomely at the heart of hearth and home" (McCarthy 2018, 962).

Vidler (1992) used the term *unheimlich* to express unsettling aspects of modern architecture that raise "questions of social and individual estrangement, alienation, exile, and homelessness" (McCarthy 2018, 963). This expression of homelessness has resonances to Inuit descriptions of a sense of spiritual homeless, whereby they have been exiled from their lands to live in sedentary villages in houses. Spiritual homelessness can be felt despite having a house, and especially if homeless in the city. As Kaika (2004) says, "by being unaware of this 'violence', by being trapped in a constructed domestic familiarity, we

remain 'alienated' in the very space which is supposed to be the most familiar to us" (Kaika 2004, 278–79), which is supposed to protect us. Through an understanding of the binary yet merged concepts of *heimlich* and *unheimlich* we unravel the false safety of the domestic space. The domestic space can be a sense of estrangement. It challenges the assumption that an idealized sense of *home* is supposed to be created *inside* the house.

In fact, the home can become both "a refuge and a prison" (Kaika 2004, 279). With a sense of alienation or estrangement in the home, one's identity is barred from the domestic space in which one lives. This raises another question about the connection between identity and the unexamined home. The home as a prison has been articulated through the concept of "coercive housing."[207] Forced settlement has been referred to as "coercive housing" in the case of displaced Indigenous populations. A house in which one does not have a sense of control is a house in which one cannot express one's identity (Stea 2012, 46). The aspects of one's identity that could be positively expressed through *home* are negatively experienced in situations of forced settlement.

The colonial project of the "domestication" of Indigenous peoples across the globe is a common theme, and one where the domestic space is seen as a contested space (Raibmon 2012, 289). Political practices of exclusion are "performed in the name of keeping *social processes* under control." Similarly, "practices of social exclusion and political hegemony occur also in the name of keeping *natural processes* under control" (Kaika 2004, 279 emphasis hers). These are the ideological foundations of our westernized view of *home* as a bourgeois construct that permeates Euro-Canadian ideas and assumptions. "Domestic" as in "domestic life" is often expressed in almost idyllic terms of

[207] "Coersive housing" was used by David Stea (2012). He explained through a study of settlements in Mexico of displaced Indigenous people that the house stood as a form of forced acculturation where control over the home by the dweller was often perceived to be absent.

routine, security, privacy, and family. But the process of domestication can also be associated with feelings of separation, alienation, estrangement which is *experienced* and reinforced through the *structure* of the home that the body inhabits.

Spiritual homelessness

The process of forced settlement that creates a contested domestic space runs alongside forced dispossession from Indigenous lands. This state of being has been referred to as "spiritual homelessness."[208] This particular type of homelessness is a direct result of an act of dispossession, encompassing several levels of separation. It has been described in 2005 as a state arising from:

> (a) separation from traditional land, (b) separation from family and kinship networks, or (c) a crisis of personal identity wherein one's understanding or knowledge of how one relates to country, family and Aboriginal identity systems is confused or lost (P. Memmott et al. 2005, 16).

The separation from traditional lands must be understood "as a result of historical government policies" (Christensen 2016b, 84; 2017, 173). This is the most common type of homelessness experienced by Indigenous people, acknowledged as such in the Quebec context as well. It is a result of the culmination of centuries of colonialism and dispossession, creating a psychological state of loss, turmoil, alienation, and distress that is extremely common among Indigenous peoples[209] (A.-M. Turcotte, Lévesque, and Cloutier 2015, 16). Researchers in Quebec have brought forward the fact that in Australia, the existence of the state of spiritual homelessness has been formally acknowledged. It

[208] The term "spiritual homeless" that Christensen has referred to is a term developed by Australian researchers, Paul Memmott and Catherine Chambers (Christensen 2013; 2016b; 2017; Keys Young 1998; P. Memmott et al. 2005; D. P. Memmott and Chambers 2008). In 2005, Memmott and Chambers had expanded upon Keys Young's 1998 definition who had described Aboriginal homelessness as a direct result from post-contact acts of dispossession.

[209] Original French text: "ayant créé un nouveau type d'égarement extrêmement répandu chez les Autochtones."

recognizes that individuals are deprived of their connections to their traditional lands and are thus robbed of part of their identity (A.-M. Turcotte, Lévesque, and Cloutier 2015, 16). This contextualization of homelessness particular to Indigenous people in settler states such as Australia and Canada helps bring a deeper level of understanding between this evident connection between *home* and *land*, and between *housing* and *territory*, and ultimately between *home* and *wellbeing* of the individual and collectivity.

Home: Part of Inuit ontology

The idea of spiritual homelessness, especially among Inuit, is not only identifiable as a current state of being. To understand *home*lessness today is to see it through the historical lens of sedentarization and dispossession which I argue remains pertinent today, and requires acknowledgement. This perspective might allow us to identify ways in which Inuit ontology differs from Western ontology, which can be demonstrated through stories and on-the-ground examples from previous research and writings.

A recent film by the Inuk filmmaker, Zacharias Kunuk, "One Day in the Life of Noah Piugattuk" (2019) represents the moment when Qallunaat and Inuit ontologies clashed most consequentially. It exhibits the way Inuit were deliberately removed from their lands to advance the process of sedentarization. It evokes a nuanced and meticulous portrayal of what home meant for Inuit at the moment of aggressive forced sedentarization by the Canadian government. Explored through a difficult conversation with a government agent trying to convince the family head, Piugattuk, to bring his whole family into the village to settle, the film depicts the emotional, relational, material and spiritual elements of *home* on the land. The discussion is particularly challenging not only because of the inevitable language barriers, but because we see the gap grow between their deeply conflicting

worldviews, becoming more irreconcilable as the encounter becomes more contentious. In the film's dialogue, (a dialogue based on recollected memories of Elders about their experiences during that process)[210] the lead Inuk character repeatedly explains how the land in which they live is their home, and that the village is not (and will never become) their home.

The word "nuna" is the Inuktitut word for what the English-speaking world might call land. However, "nuna" contains within it a concept of home. In a recent research project using photography and film to explore contemporary Inuit relationships with the environment, youth from three Nunavik communities were asked: "What does *nuna* mean to your generation?" They replied spontaneously: "Land is home!" (Joliet, Herrmann, and Chanteloup 2017, 21). Despite tumultuous changes in the way land and place have been experienced through time, space, and technology, the answers remained the same; home could not be separated from the land, even for younger generations who may not have regular access to the land. Researchers Joliet, Chanteloup, and Hermann (2017) explained that the adjustment from long-term seasonal camps to shorter weekend trips or rides on the outskirts of the community on the ATV are substitutes for the former semi-nomadic lives their families used to inhabit on the land. These practices express new forms of mobility; it is "not a rupture but more of an adaptation to the present lifestyle of young Inuit, which allows the bond between the youth and their land to be maintained, and bears witness to their visceral, deep-rooted attachment to their 'home'" (Joliet, Herrmann, and Chanteloup 2017, 23). This concept of *home* has potential to open the housing discussion beyond the

[210] I attended a screening of the film at the Ottawa Art Gallery on February 13th, 2020. It included a Q&A with actors, an educator, a historian, and the assistant director of the film, Lucy Tulugarjuk. Lucy explained that the dialogue in the film came from conversations and memories that her mother had shared about the time when her family was forced to live in a nearby village. Her mother was present at this screening, watching the film for the first time. https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/indigenous-150-ottawa-one-day-in-the-life-of-noah-piugattuk-tickets-90649253357

confines of the housing unit. It forces us to consider what harm is being done when we limit the discussion about "housing" to the built structure in the village without bearing in mind that territory and access to the land are part of creating *home* for Inuit of all ages. For these Kuujjuarapik youth who named their film *Land is home*, home is something experienced out on the land and is "at the heart" of their identity (Joliet, Herrmann, and Chanteloup 2017, 23), which the researchers asserted is essential for healthy development (Chanteloup, Joliet, and Herrmann 2018, 367).

Some Inuit in Kangirsujuaq described having a complete sense of home,[211] "un chez-soi entier," in their cabins out on the land, built with their own hands and filled with familiar objects. A man from Kangirsujuaq explained the feeling as: "Ma cabane c'est chez-moi. Ma maison dans la communauté c'est aussi chez-moi, mais pas vraiment mon chez-moi comme ma cabane" (Brière 2014, 65). It suggests that the way one might feel either at home or not at home is connected to the process of creating, building, and the cultural significance of the space within the structure. It may include having a sense of control, decision-making, belonging, and social relations that occur in the place through that process. Most significantly, this seems to happen most often outside of the village. These contemporary expressions of *home* are not without a historical basis. Previous research about Inuit, conducted prior to government forced sedentarization, can bring some historical, cultural, and theoretical grounding to the discussion of the meaning of *home* for Inuit. An example is the work by Marcel Mauss from the turn of the 20th century.

[211] These ideas and quotes come from Andréanne Brière's 2014 Master's research with Nunavimmiut from Kangirsujuaq looking at Inuit appropriation of domestic spaces as cultural resistance to externally imposed and institutionalized spaces.

Marcel Mauss on Inuit dwellings and the land

Marcel Mauss was a prolific French sociologist and anthropologist of the early 20th century who wrote a text[212] in 1904-05 about the Inuit (Eskimos) called *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo: A Study in Social Morphology*.[213] While place-specific, locally-confirmed evidence and testimony is prime, there is also value in broader generalizations that are historically and geographically grounded. They can reveal culturally-significant and tenacious identities to show that these are not anomalies and quirks today—they cannot be dismissed as newly invented claims about the past. A foray into Mauss' theoretically-driven interpretations of Inuit society in the 19th century offers insight into their use of space, the meaning of place, and the social, familial, and political relations for Inuit that conveys a non-Western perspective to the idea of home and homemaking. Mauss did not "speak for" (nor "speak with," for that matter) Inuit, yet he amassed and analyzed documented observations and findings from explorers, ethnographers, naturalists, and geographers from Germany, Russia, Denmark, and Great Britain who had conducted research "on" Inuit in the Arctic up until 1904.[214] While it is indeed a "white man's perspective" on Inuit, Mauss brings to light the importance of understanding the material form of a human group to recognize the different modes of collective activity such as religious and spiritual practices, belief systems, values, family relations, morality, knowledge, and ultimately, a collective identity. Most pertinent is his warning not to make "the mistake of considering them

[212] Mauss wrote the text in collaboration with his student, Henri Beuchat.

[213] *Social morphology* is described as "the science whose investigations are intended not just to describe but also to elucidate the material substratum of societies. This includes the form that societies assume in their patterns of residence, the volume and density of their population, the way in which the population is distributed, as well as the entire range of objects that serve as a focus for collective life" (Mauss 2004, 19).

[214] This body of literature that Mauss and Beuchat analyzed included Franz Boas' work from Baffin Island in 1888 and E.W. Nelson from Alaska in 1899, among other now famous texts.

[societies] as if they were independent of their territorial base" (Mauss 2004, 21).[215] His depictions of Inuit society bring together the material, relational, emotional and spiritual elements of home that are still discernible today.

Mauss analyzed Inuit society more than half a century *before* forced sedentarization and government-led colonization was deployed. His descriptions and analyses were, and still remain, unique in their expression. Having surveyed research from all across the Arctic regions, he identified parallels in their seasonal semi-nomadic practices, relations, movements, and knowledge despite the geographical distance between the various Inuit groups. Though he recognized the diversity across what he refers to as not a single society, but "des sociétés Eskimos" (Mauss 2010, 391), he was able to make calculated comparisons and generalizations to address concepts such as domesticity, private and public spaces, and the way physical *and* ideological (or mental) realities can exist simultaneously in someone's life and worldview. I contend that these are all features that contribute to a broader conceptual development of *home*.

In one section, Mauss refers to the concept of "the settlement" ("l'établissement" in French) as the foundational unit in Inuit society. In the 19th century and prior, the settlement was not what we know today as "the village." It was a place where a distinct group of relations settled for periods of time during certain seasons. The true territorial unit is the settlement which is a territorial domain with boundaries (Mauss 2004, 27) established through *social relations* in which there were collections of houses, tents, and hunting grounds unevenly distributed across land and sea, and paths, passages, and

[215] At the same time, Mauss and Beuchat had warned about going too far in the direction of the land effect on societies, and had critiqued anthropogeographers for focusing too centrally on the land factor, and making assumptions that the land can produce effects "on its own without interacting with other factors" or that "the climate or a configuration of the land draws them together" without considering "their moral, legal and religious organization... [and] in relation to a social context in all its complex totality" (Mauss 2004, 21).

harbours in which to encounter each other. It could be said that the settlement was expressed through communications, interactions, and actions across an entire domain. In this depiction, the particular collection of dwellings were *not* the central feature defining the settlement.[216] The settlement is described, however, as *a domestic unit* (Mauss 2004, 66). In effect, Mauss believed that the social and material worlds are expressed through practices and techniques that can be described as contingent upon each other, including key access, actions, and interactions on the land necessary for existence and supporting moral and spiritual essentials for identity. He found that through the change in physical configuration over the seasons (i.e. when "place" changed, or as he calls it, the "material substratum" changed) the social life changed too. When the form of the group changed, "the mass, density, form and composition," the social life of the individual changed (Mauss 2004, 80). In other words, the land and Inuit society are forces acting upon one another.

The domestic unit Mauss referred to in winter was described in terms of the bonds that exist between the people in that settlement, such as a fraternal relationship between men (Mauss 2004, 66), and the way relations between men and women are configured (Mauss 2004, 68–70). The legal dimensions, such as how crimes are handled (Mauss 2004, 67), are also established at the settlement level, rather than just as a sum total of households' rules. Individuals are attributed with domestic roles that are specific to the domestic space of the collective entity of the settlement rather than family roles (Mauss 2004, 58). Most importantly, the dimensions of the domestic units change with the season, and with it, the moral, religious, and familial practices. This shows that even domestic life

[216] The *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (1996) in Volume 4, Chapter 6 on the North likewise acknowledged that still today, "the northern Aboriginal community is not just a collection of buildings" and that "it extends beyond dwelling places to include land for fishing, gathering, visiting, trapping and hunting, and memorable places where important events occurred." (RCAP 1996b, 275).

and rules are *not static*, but are deeply connected to the material substratum at any given point.

The function and meaning of a "public space" in this context is also fundamentally different from Western associations. Mauss attributed complex and contravening meaning to the ideas of "public" and of "interior." The *kashim*, which is essentially a type of long house in winter that had been a feature almost across the entire Arctic at one time or another, was the gathering place of the settlement in winter. It was a public place, "un lieu public," (Mauss 2010, 446)) in which religious rituals took place, and in which Mauss claimed the individuality of the family or house disappeared into the collective. And this occurred inside the *kashim*. It was an *interior public space* of the winter settlement (Mauss 2004, 58).

Conceptualizations of space had also been described in other equally distinctive terms among Inuit in the past (Mauss 2004, 51). There was a difference between winter and summer settlements that were both part of what Mauss called a collective mentality, "une mentalité collective," made up of both a geographical volume and a mental volume. He described it as follows: "le volume géographique, c'est l'étendue spatiale réellement occupé par la société considérée; le volume mentale, c'est l'aire géographique qu'elle parvient à embrasser par la pensée"[217] (Mauss 2010, 437). This is a unique type of geographical knowledge of the Inuit. It provides a way of differentiating and identifying precise ways that land is valued by Inuit (to the extent that a foreign language can grasp these Inuit concepts). Mauss explained that "even those who have not made these trips, have a traditional knowledge of extremely distant areas... with which Eskimo [sic] women

[217] I prefer referring to Mauss original text in French when described the geographical volume. The English translated text is: "the geographical volume is the space actually occupied by a particular society; its mental volume is the geographical area that the society succeeds in encompassing in its thought" (Mauss 2004, 51).

are also eminently endowed" (Mauss 2004, 51). He complements the collective with the individual nature of geographical knowledge saying that each person had vast knowledge that was "extraordinarily distended" (Mauss 2004, 52). These descriptions of Inuit society feature knowledge of a territory or a place that is physical and also mental, and is based on a set of social relations that change throughout the seasons. It is not fixed. The mental volume of geographical knowledge is connected to social relations and defines "a society that thrusts well beyond this area families or isolated individuals" (Mauss 2004, 52).

Likewise, the settlement was described as a place of tangents and tentacles of activity and movement, including a collection of unevenly distributed dwellings, trails, connections to other settlements, hunting grounds, and shorelines, brings layers of meaning into the idea of the place and the settlement which expanded to include a relationship to territory. It is a place connected to social and mental spaces that one could say are simultaneously relational, physical, and spiritual. The connected spaces are always present in the mind even when not expressed through movement or activities during other seasons, years, or conditions. This allows us to consider the place of *home* for Inuit today as deeply interwoven with territory as well as always present as a relational and spiritual reality. Mauss described the settlement as something that has a time-space-place relationship which directly counters the connotation of place as stasis, or as a place, a home, that is *settled* or *restricted*.

Land for the Inuit constitutes a complex social context (Mauss 2004, 22). Mauss' still relevant contribution[218] allows us to understand that technologies mediate between social

[218] Mauss' work is a central piece in the debate about methods of analysis for human-land relations (Bravo 2006, 35). Northern researchers from various fields such as archeology, sociology, and anthropology have insisted on returning to Mauss' historical text on the Inuit because his work is still considered relevant to anthropological and sociological debates today (Saladin D'Anglure 2006; Fournier and Marcel 2004; Dawson

life (moral, religious, legal) and what he calls the biophysical world. In other words, the physical environmental realities of the seasons do not *cause* changes in the people's beliefs and technologies as has been commonly attributed to Inuit.[219] Where a social determinist might believe that the winter dwelling is an adaptive response to a changing physical or climate condition, Mauss perceives the snow house as material architecture that *embodies* the fundamental social unity and essence of Inuit societies and reveals a "heightened social consciousness" that is "embodied in the design of technologies like the winter houses" (Bravo 2006, 43). In that case, we can see that the biophysical (the land) and the types and the location of dwellings are *contingent upon each other*. As Bravo explains, these are "a complex set of necessary conditions for Inuit social life" (Bravo 2006, 43). And these are based on a particular and unique type of knowledge.

Bringing this understanding of place, *home*, into Inuit housing policy can provide a solid foundation with which to broaden the possibilities of Inuit housing to include basic, immediate and relative needs required to create *home* in Inuit Nunangat. For example, understanding that different traditional dwellings for Inuit were not "adaptations to the climate" helps reveal why it not just any modern adaptation to the climate that should equally suffice. Understanding that various types of dwellings were a fundamental part of the social unity and essence of Inuit life compels us to consider the extent of the rupture that forced sedentarization had on Inuit life. It provides an avenue to think about the potential of housing today, and how it could be designed and organized in a way to

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2006). Arctic historian and public policy researcher, Michael Bravo, also recently argued for a return to Mauss' theory and descriptions of Inuit society for a better understanding of the interconnectedness of housing, the conditions necessary for Inuit social life, and the essence of Inuit societies (Bravo 2006).

[219] Mauss' interpretation of Inuit sense of place and space was a critique of Steensby and Ratzel who were determinists arguing that societies grow or contract through adaptation to changing resources and space. Bravo believes Mauss was critiquing the theory of technology as a cultural adaptive mechanism (Bravo 2006, 44–45). It allows technology to be brought into the social world, rather than merely seeing techniques as "evidences of individual skill, design, and inventiveness" (Bravo 2006, 45).

encompass Inuit ways of organizing the physical, social, cultural and political forms of society. In that sense, it is also not a *housing first* approach, per se. It is a land, social relations, and the creation of place and home *first* approach that is needed, and then is expressed through dwellings.

Most research with Inuit since this early 20th century analysis has continued to prove that the land is central to Inuit identity, practices, knowledge, and wellbeing. Research regarding the relationship between Inuit and the land have been expressed in terms of health and mental health, cultural healing approaches, hunting rights and practices, Inuit knowledge or IQ (Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit), or social and political relations within municipal and village life. Moreover, research from Nunavik also introduces the way land and territory is related directly or indirectly to housing and home.

Social relations and connection to land in Nunavik

Research in Nunavik has shown that the concept of the Inuit "household"[220] is an idea of a dwelling that exists *through* social and familial relations. It is also directly connected to the land. A household was called *illuqatigiit*,[221] or "sharers of the house." It consists of a nuclear family, extended family, and even dependent nonrelatives staying together longer through the seasonal changes and movements (Graburn 1969, 56-7). A larger group was called *katimajut*, "a coming together," that would constitute a camp or village made up of up to a dozen households in winter or spring hunting camps. A male subsection of this larger group might travel to various places for game, staying together

[220] Nelson Graburn's research in the Nunavik context echoed elements of Mauss' findings. Graburn lived among the Inuit in the northern parts of the Ungava Peninsula in 1959-60 and 1963-64, over 60 years after Mauss work was published. It was a time when Inuit housing was first appearing on the landscape through government programs and new policies.

[221] Based on my rudimentary Inuktitut understanding after only three years of study, I see the base morphemes with in *illuqatigiit* as: *illu* – house/home/dwelling maison/habitation, and the verb-noun *gatigi-it* – together ensemble.

throughout much of the year. In the larger winter village, "people who lived at the same camp, temporarily or permanently, were called *silaqatigiit*, 'neighbours,' or *nunakatigiit*, 'together on the same land'" (Graburn 1969, 58). The Inuktitut words refer to the relations between households, showing that the "same land" is *the* central concept between the people and how and where they lived. Even people who did not live together but who might meet from time to time were *nunaqatigiit*, "sharers of the land" (Graburn 1969, 58). Likewise, a smaller household locating their tent farther away from the larger village was called *nunalituak*, "there is nothing but land."[222] Inuit family dynamics in Nunavik constituted households, bands, and village patterns. This historical knowledge illuminates the flexible and evocative associations between families, households, dwellings, and the territory, as well as movement across the land and seasonal changes in household relations.[223]

Domestic spaces in the village

One cannot relate these historical ideas of *home* among Inuit without looking at the effects that sedentarization has on these relations. The built environment has had profound

[222] Most interestingly, the Inuktitut term *nunalituak*, "nothing but land," is not a concept of land without *people living on it*. It is a prime example of the contrast between Inuit worldview and that of new Europeans who saw the vast territories on this continent as *terra nullius* "nobody's land."

[223] Many anthropologists and sociologists have recounted complementary findings (Dorais 1997; Graburn 1969; Mauss 2004 (1904); Saladin d'Anglure 2013 (1964)). But not all historical texts and ethnologists equally understood these finer points. Lucien Turner provided a description of Inuit dwellings in his 1894 text, *Ethnology of the Ungava District*. He was a trained field naturalist who gave highly detailed descriptions of the physical world he observed, but did not include any information about the people, their behaviours, relations, or knowledge (Turner 2001). As such, he did not recognize family dynamics within the dwellings nor in the intricate and complex way that they are connected to the territories. This type of omission is characteristic of explorers and naturalists from the turn of the century who often perceived material culture as a simple and necessary adaptation to the local environment, thereby omitting the social, economic and political values associated with the technology and knowledge of the people studied. Northern researchers in later years trained in human geography, anthropology, and sociology brought other dimensions to their work. However, it is not uncommon to see these failings repeated, such as when northern housing researchers confine their analyses to a mere comparison between the floor plans of the contemporary Inuit house and the traditional Inuit dwelling to attempt to provide a foundation for cultural relevance in design to allow for space to conduct "cultural" practices.

effects on Inuit identity. Major changes in behaviour and practices have been reported by Inuit women since living in social housing,[224] including the loss of the traditional custom of visiting neighbours. This practice was described as an essential social act in Inuit society directly related to the Inuit value of sharing and maintaining community relations. But a dwelling without daily visits is deprived of these important social relations; it becomes a place without its life force ("sa force vitale") (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 396). An Inuit woman interviewed explained that Inuit identity was changing as their habits became more *Qallunait* (i.e. "White") (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 395). Inuit feel constrained within the configuration of the Western domestic space, exemplified by the new houses where visiting no longer occurs.[225] In fact, "the domestic space is not thought of as the simple bearer of cultural values, but as a *real actor* which, once materialized, is endowed with its own strength" (my translation from Beatrice Collignon 2001, 399).[226] As a central means of cultural transmission, the dwelling is part of "a cultural context in which the relationship of people to each other, but also of people to other elements of the environment, is essential

[224] This aspect of changes to Inuit social life associated with the dwelling was shown in the work by Beatrice Collignon, a geographer who had worked with the Inuinnait in the Western Arctic since the mid-1980s. She explored the effects of sedentarization by analyzing the changes in terminology and uses of domestic space from the igloo to the social housing unit. She conducted interviews with women who had lived through the process of sedentarization as mothers, having been born on the land themselves, raised their older children on the land, and then subsequently raised their youngest or their grand children in the social housing context (Beatrice Collignon 2001). Their interpretations of the changes in their lives are the basis of Collignon's (2001) theories about domestic space uses and changing relations.

[225] Note that both Collignon (2001, 396) and Brière and Laugrand (2017, 40) recognized that the practice of visiting each other, *pulaaraqpuq*, has not entirely stopped among Inuit. Southerners visiting the North will likely find that it is still a prevalent practice associated with unique behaviours. Nevertheless, most Inuit would probably agree that the practice has declined and changed significantly since living in the new houses. This has happened in a way that has had a tremendous effect on Inuit social relations. Nevertheless, Brière and Laugrand (2017) actually believe that the practice of visiting remains active and serves the ongoing purpose of maintaining this social institution (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 43).

[226] Original French: "l'espace domestique est pensé non pas comme le simple porteur de valeurs culturelles, mais comme un véritable acteur qui, une fois matérialisé, est doté d'une force propre" (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 399).

to life."[227] However, the Western house is described as a *threat* to Inuit culture. It continues to destabilize Inuit identity because it is not designed to be a relational space. The new building is itself a (negative) force.

The effects between the new built environment and the people also had an effect on the gradual shift from what was a collective society (Dawson 2006, 130), to the development of individualism. In an interview with an Inuit woman from Mittimatalik, she lamented the new house which lends itself towards a comportment of "everyone for themselves" ("c'est chacun pour soi") (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 37). Another Inuit woman related the loss experienced by children who reside in the new houses: "They told me that when the children are in the house, they forget about the land. It is the land and the water that give us life. We are supposed to stay close to the land where we live, where the Inuit survived"[228] (quote from an Inuit woman in Brière and Laugrand 2017, 37). With the dwelling framed in this way, we can see Mauss' social morphology reinforced. There is a form of power and identity within the dwelling on a social level. The type of dwelling is founded on principles that are intricate and relational. They are not based on a deterministic response to the climate and environment. These comments above expressing feelings of loss and change are in direct relation to the introduction of Western housing for Inuit. This experience of loss resonates with the notion of "spiritual homelessness" described as a separation from traditional land, from kinship networks, and a crisis of identity where how one relates to country, family and identity is confused or lost (P. Memmott et al. 2005; Christensen 2013). At the same time, it is important to remember

[227] Original French: "un contexte culturel dans lequel la mise en relation des hommes entre eux, mais aussi des hommes avec les autres éléments de l'environnement, est essentielle à la vie"(Beatrice Collignon 2001, 398).

[228] Original French: "Ils m'ont dit que lorsque les enfants sont dans la maison, ils oublient la terre. Or, ce sont la terre et l'eau qui nous donnent la vie. Nous sommes supposés rester proches de la terre où nous vivons, où les Inuits ont survécu " (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 37).

there is also an adaptability between Inuit values and the new spaces they have chosen to accept (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 399).

Another angle of the concept of *home* for Nunavimmiut is revealed through the High Arctic Relocation project of the 1950s.[229] Inukjuamiut relocated to the High Arctic expressed feelings of being "homesick," *anarrasiktuq* (Marcus 1995, 117), and a desire to be "in our land," *nunattinni* (Marcus 1995, 104). One could say that the relocation engendered feelings of isolation and strangeness in the new landscape as a result of "a loss of hunting knowledge and a loss of cultural and intellectual security" (Marcus 1995, 108). They were no longer in the place of their familiar mental spatial boundaries (Marcus 1995, 108). Being separated from their land meant more than the loss of *immediate* needs such as familiar hunting grounds. It also wholly failed to fulfill *relative* needs through the dislocation of their cultural and intellectual identity. The assumptions made by the government administrators about relocation of Nunavik families is an example of a perilous misunderstanding of *home*, one that was perpetrated either by will, or by ignorance.

Returning to Massey's theory of place and space, one can see that place, and thereby *home*, has been expressed by Inuit as constituted by social relations. It also includes a relationship to the land. However, the technologies that mediated between the society and the land have been replaced and controlled. The new so-called "home" structure remains bereft of its meaning and *life force* (although, as we will see in the next section, Inuit have taken it upon themselves to address this problem directly). The Western house (and the system of housing and decision-making that accompanies it) has become a "constraining" place (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 400). With these indicators of what home has meant for

[229] A longer discussion about this event has been included in the history chapter of this dissertation.

Inuit and the potential of *home* for Inuit housing today, one can ask: what is the status and effect of the current housing system in Nunavik?

Turning to different ways of understanding the disconnect and assumptions between house and home, one might ask: Is it a form of "coercive housing" in Nunavik (Stea 2012)? Is the lack of control over decisions regarding the dwelling's design, location, and construction an interruption in the expression of Inuit identity? Can the six key identifiers of homelessness that Somerville has described explain the disconnect between Inuit dweller and home in Nunavik (Somerville 1992)? For example, can the disconnect be described as a sense of "rootlessness," whereby one's ontological understanding and sense of identity is neither embodied in the land nor in the materiality of the place nor in the domestic space of these current dwellings? And thus, one's sense of self and reference to others is also lost and disoriented? Is the disorientation in the domestic space a sense of the "unheimlich" or uncanny, as Vidler described (McCarthy 2018)? Can these disconnects, ruptures, and sense of alienation exist in today's Inuit housing unit even if, as Collignon posited, Inuit have accepted social housing as a choice (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 399)? Either way, the Western dwelling is a place that is ineffable: "c'est vraiment difficile de decrire ces maisons" (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 398). The northern housing unit and the housing system in Nunavik today do not embody the features of home expressed over decades and centuries that still have a resounding importance in Inuit society today. Moreover, terminology in Inuktitut describing traditional dwellings are not applicable to the Western dwelling. New terms have not taken form, suggesting a lack of engagement with the new housing spaces. There is little involvement and control over the conceptualization, ownership, and decisions about the houses in which Inuit live. This has multiple impacts at multiple levels on identity, culture, and social relations. Western housing and outsider

control of housing has acted and continues to act as a disruption in Inuit society. But through the concept of home, there are historically and culturally grounded arguments that can be made about value of the home for Inuit. It is a concept that carries the potential to facilitate understanding about what is important for Inuit regarding housing, what is of value, and what is needed to reduce its adverse impacts.

Inuit agency in creating home

Inuit tend to take matters into their own hands. As previous chapters have described, Inuit advocacy and agency are active at the political level with regards to demanding government action on housing. Inuit agency has many expressions, some that fulfill the need to create a sense of *home*. One is through the growing trend in the Arctic of building cabins or shacks outside of the village.[230] This practice repositions the dwelling back out on the land—where *home* is. Inuit have been designated as "important producers of hybrid space" because of the way they use local and imported technologies in conjunction with IQ and Inuit life principles to build self-designed porches, sleds, outbuildings, and remote cabins (Havelka 2018, viii). This addresses contemporary Inuit hunting needs and aspirations which also provides a guide for a more "appropriate and sustainable Arctic built-environment" (2018, viii). This trend is also the creation of *home* and identity on the land as part of contemporary Inuit society.

Inuit have largely accepted the contemporary Western-style village houses in which they live. Collignon's research in the Western Arctic attested to this acceptance:

[230] The practice of building these cabins has been the subject of a few recent research initiatives in Inuit Nunangat, including recent doctoral research by architect, Susane Havelka. Brière and Laugrand also published an article in 2017 comparing the houses in community and the cabins out on the land. Their research was conducted in Kangiqsujuaq (Nunavik) and several communities in Nunavut between 1996 and 2014 (Havelka 2018; Brière and Laugrand 2017).

> la maison contemporaine, avec ses avantages et ses inconvénients, est acceptée telle quelle : on ne s'ent plaint pas, on ne spécule pas sur ce qu'elle pourrait être, pas plus qu'on ne rêve de retourner vivre dans les iglous, auxquels on ne la compare guère (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 394).

Acceptance of the current living conditions is *not*, however, to be seen as a lack of power or agency. In fact, Inuit youth and elders are willing to be critical of their housing (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 37). When Inuit women were asked about how they would want to change the organization of their interior space, for example if they could participate in the elaboration of a floor plan, they responded with surprise because "si un Inuk veut quelque chose il le fait ou le construit lui-même il ne demande pas un autre de le faire pour lui" (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 395).[231] This acquiescence of Western-style housing could be an outcome of not having been consulted on the conceptualization of the houses from the outset. Rental housing by non-Inuit is not seen within the realm of Inuit responsibility and will therefore not be openly challenged (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 395; Brière and Laugrand 2017, 37). But if something needs to be done, Inuit will do it themselves. The trend of building sleds, cabins, and outbuildings is an expression of this agency and worldview.

The continued practice of creating "places" on the land has been referred to as "new forms of nomadism" (Brière and Laugrand 2017). The value of which is related to identity, history, ancestors, and a healing process at the individual and societal level.[232] In some locations in Nunavut the density of cabins built by Inuit even resemble emerging communities (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 44). The dualism of village housing and hunting

[231] Translated into English with DeepL.com: "if an Inuk wants something, he makes or builds it himself, he doesn't ask someone else to do it for him"
[232] Across Inuit Nunangat there are programs where Elders bring troubled youth out on the tundra to "resocialize" them (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 44).

and foraging camps shows the agency involved in creating *home*. More importantly, it is a reminder that values and knowledge exist alongside transformation.

Yet this emerging practice of building cabins outside the village is not without critics from within Inuit society. An intergenerational dissonance has been exposed. Some Elders have expressed disapprobation of the practice due to an implication of ownership and property. Some were concerned that the cabins represented the desire to own a little parcel of the territory which conflicts with a traditional idea of land and territory—as something that cannot be possessed. Therefore the cabins were not seen by all Elders as a continuation of the nomadic relationship with the land, but rather as a rupture with those values (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 45).[233]

On the other hand, in other cases, cabins were seen as an opportunity for Elders and youth to continue their practices and transfer knowledge and skills on the land through a newly created space of domesticity (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 46). It is an iterative process: the dynamic interdependent process of new creations of *home* and one's identity (Beatrice Collignon 2001). The materiality of the world, the environment, and one's identity play out in our modern world:

> Les habitants, par leurs pratiques, leurs valeurs et leurs aspirations, et le logement par sa matérialité, participent en effet ensemble la création de ce micro-territoire est la maison appropriée. À l'échelle de leur vaste territoire de banquise, mer et toundra comme celle, très réduite, de leurs habitations, les Inuit ne construisent pas le monde dans lequel ils vivent indépendamment des forces de contrainte et de résistance qui les entourent, sur la base de leurs seules représentations idéelles. Bien plutôt, ils négocient en permanence avec ces autres formes de vie pour créer des lieux dont

[233] Brière and Laugrand discuss the meaning of "nangminiq" which is more about something "belonging" to the person because it is something that one cherishes, rather than other concepts like "piqaq" which is more about possessing or having something, and which cannot be applied to the land. They discover in their research that most Inuit do not refer to their houses in the village as "nangminiq" because perhaps they do not cherish them (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 46–47). And yet, they are more likely to see their cherished cabins on the land as "nangminiq" which shocks the Elders because the land cannot be possessed by humans.

> l'esprit est en accord avec les fondements de leur identité (Beatrice Collignon 2001, 402).[234]

In other words, the materiality of the house and the environment either supports or hinders the transfer of *values* which is not a process independent of the surrounding forces and resistance, but one which is negotiated to create new meanings immersed in the spirit of Inuit identity. This perspective suggests that the trend of building cabins on the land is simply a contemporary response to the options available to them to create a sense of *home*.

In this context, a new picture has emerged: the village community is seen as the backdrop to the act of living. The village is where one lives to go to school, to have access to the pharmacy and store, but it is not the place where one lives the social relations that Inuit cherish on the land. The image described here is that the village (and possibly also the "village house") has become a *place from which one flees* at any opportunity because the "village est perçu comme un espace nocif, et la toundra un lieu de regeneration"[235] (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 44). The practice of building on the land is evidence that Inuit culture, modes of healing, living, and being are expressed *through* the dwelling, as it always has been, as Marcel Mauss had also described. The dwelling is associated with going out on the land, and also with a certain level of control and autonomy. It is not merely an opportunistic activity performed when convenient, but rather, it is actively sought, created, "built," maintained, and ultimately necessary. These are key expressions of *home* by Inuit,

[234] English translation by DeepL.com: "The people, through their practices, their values and their aspirations, and the dwelling through its materiality, participate together in the creation of this micro-territory is the appropriated house. On the scale of their vast territory of ice packs, sea and tundra, as well as the very small scale of their homes, the Inuit do not construct the world in which they live independently of the forces of constraint and resistance that surround them, on the basis of their ideal representations alone. Rather, they constantly negotiate with these other forms of life to create places whose spirit is in accord with the foundations of their identity."

[235] English translation by DeepL.com: "because the village is perceived as a harmful space, and the tundra as a place of regeneration."

that articulate the values inherent in the idea of *home* for Inuit, and for which I argue a space must be made in the housing discussion.

But there is also an outward acceptance of the modern village house that is paired with an active defiance of Western uses of space inside the house. This defiance plus the growing trend of building cabins outside of the community are not a-political acts. They are antagonisms to the stated commitments that are part of the Inuit-state relationship expressed through the JBNQA which is meant to fulfill the "provision of housing, electricity, water, sanitation and related municipal services" into a "unified system" (Section 29.0.40 of the JBNQA). It is a clear indication that the top-down control of Inuit housing in the villages is unsatisfactory, and at the very least, not fulfilling critical needs. But these acts of defiance and agency are not sufficient solutions either.

In one sense, the dwellings out on the land actually represent an inequality in Inuit society. Not everyone has the same opportunity to build a cabin on the land. It was noted in 2017 that the cabins were mainly built by "elite" or wealthier Inuit families, who sometimes even had *more* than one lodge at their disposal on the land (Brière and Laugrand 2017, 44). This fact raises a flag regarding village housing and *home*: solutions *must* be equitable.

Secondly, the observation brings another issue to light. If, in fact, mainly wealthier family are the ones building cabins on the land, one could posit that they are likely also the families with the nicer, better maintained residences *in* the village.[236] If this is true, it would indicate that *regardless* of the size or quality of their village residence, Inuit still want or

[236] In other words, class and income do not seem to affect the *need* for a relationship to the land to reach home, but class and income will affect *access* to the land.

need to have a place on the land to fulfill certain needs—a place they have created to call *home* or "chez-soi."

Home: Connecting to Inuit wellbeing

This chapter has addressed the historical context of the idea of *home* for Inuit, the way *home* can be identified as part of an Inuit ontology, and the way some forms of Inuit agency have been driven by the essential need for *home*. Yet it is still necessary to see how this multi-layered idea of *home* for Inuit can help us make the crucial connection between housing and wellbeing, which is what policy goals claim they intend. The key aspects of Inuit wellbeing found in the literature can be paralleled to the four aspects in the concept of *home*: material, relational, emotional, and spiritual qualities. Though there is some utility in trying to parse them out to provide more direct connections to the wellbeing literature on housing.

Home links to the emotional and psychological aspects of life

Data from 2004 Nunavik health survey provides insight and substance for imagining what a sense of *home*[237] means for *Nunavimmiut* especially in terms of how *home* can fulfill emotional and psychological aspects of a person's life.[238] Inuit respondents were asked about their life satisfaction, levels of social support, and community wellness such as feelings of togetherness.[239] They expressed the need for belonging, family and community

[237] It is important to note that the scholars I refer to were *not* interpreting the data with this particular lens of *home*. Therefore this is not a critique of their research, but rather an exploration of the *possibilities* in their survey results. For example, in the 2004 Nunavik health survey, respondents were not asked specific questions about their housing conditions or how they felt about their housing circumstances, though some responses revealed how they felt about their lives.

[238] I acknowledge that needs are constantly changing. Therefore needs identified at the beginning of the new millennium may be different in 2023. However, elements of the concept of *home* being revealed back then contribute to our body of knowledge and conceptual development today.

[239] It was not made clear how the concept of "community wellness" was defined or received by respondents in this report. It is not clear that Inuit consider their villages/settlements as "communities" or whether their self-

bonds, and the emotional need to be on the land (Rochette and Blanchet 2007, 106). Adults were also asked about suicidal ideation and attempts (Rochette and Blanchet 2007, 143–45). Their self-rated answers revealed that for an individual feeling suicidal, one of the top three supports for men and women alike, was "going out on the land."[240] These aspects of life satisfaction are relevant to the idea of *home* in terms of the relational (social supports and belonging), emotional (life satisfaction), and spiritual (connection to the land and healing). These are aspects that can make a person feel either "at home" or in the absence of these needs being fulfilled, they can make a person feel a level of loss and spiritual homelessness despite being "housed."

Home links to the physical and spiritual aspects of life

In another study about housing and wellbeing for Inuit, the physical aspects of *home* came in forms of crowding levels, poverty and income levels, and housing quality. The spiritual aspects of *home* were about finding sources of healing. The Kinngait study in Nunavut was the first to explore more direct connections between problems with housing (overcrowding) and access to the land (Tester 2006b, 40). The 2006 study showed the way housing and access to land are both vital parts of wellbeing. The connection between the two presented a kind of "problem-solution" dynamic: when there were problems in the house, Inuit would go out on the land (Tester 2006b, 40). Conditions in the house

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defined "community wellness" would revolve around a more nuclear concept such as family and friends-centered concept. This matters only in so much that it, among many other concepts in research, indicates the euro-centricity of terminology, potentially driven by misplaced assumptions that further Western impositions about how to define and self-assess the inner workings of Inuit society and relations. With this example alone, one can see how difficult it would be to parse out these cultural inadequacies in research, to establish acceptable terminology, approaches, and language, and to also consider the difference in how questionnaires and interviews are understood depending on whether respondents worked with a translator that may have provided a more culturally-relevant interpretation of the English questions, thereby affecting how they answered the questions.

[240] Note: Respondents had been asked if they felt distressed, but not about *what* contributed to their distress, these issues have been correlated to housing in other analyses.

associated with overcrowding would trigger discord, violence, stress, and/or anxiety. The strategy for Inuit respondents to recover and find peace to heal "one's mental or spiritual health" (Tester 2006b, 39) was by "getting out of town and onto the land" (Tester 2006b, 40). However, this solution was (and remains) out of reach for many, often due to a lack of access to equipment or guidance. But the responses indicated that individual experiences of dangerous or unsafe housing conditions were alleviated to a certain extent by having access to the land.[241] I suggest that the need for access to the land, to *home*, could be reformulated and explored as part of a "housing need." For the provision of a house does not make a straight line to alleviating a sense of spiritual homelessness and creating wellbeing. And this could be expressed through the concept of *home*.

This study also suggested that inadequate housing quality actually accentuated the sense of separation from the land. Widespread poverty often precludes access to equipment to go out on the land, plus mental health problems are compounded by the stress of not being able to get out on the land (Tester 2006b, ii, 39–40). In other words, stress and frustration increased due to the poor physical condition of the house itself which increased the *need* to get out on the land. The study explained how overcrowding contributed to "anger, depression and domestic violence" but also that the "material circumstances of housing – size, condition, location, having water delivered and sewage pumped out, the presence and condition of appliances – have implications for the *mental well-being* of residents" (Tester 2006b, ii emphasis mine). Accessing the land means "access for any purpose: hunting and trapping, recreation, fishing, visiting a seasonal camp; venturing out for a day, a week or longer, for sport, recreation and/or reasons related to

[241] This study did not explore the potential returns, such as how time spent on the land might affect the mood, wellbeing, or safety within the home afterwards, though this would be an equally important question to pursue.

one's *mental or spiritual health*" (Tester 2006b, 39 emphasis mine). Moreover, the lack of access to healing was interpreted as a feeling of being "'trapped' in their communities" (Tester 2006b, 61).

Other physical aspects of *home* were further connected to wellbeing in the Kinngait survey responses. For those that indicated that they needed a new house, their top two reasons did *not*, curiously, relate to the number of people in their house (i.e. overcrowding). Rather, the main concerns were focused on the *physical conditions* of the building. Their answers, in descending order pointed to the materiality of the house: 1) need a better design—62%, 2) house is too old—62.7% , and 3) overcrowded—54%. These top three responses were followed by frustrations with other physical deficiencies related to the house, such as the location being too wet, the house not being safe for children, and the house not being adapted to a person with disabilities (Tester 2006b, 47–48). Over sixty-four percent of all the respondents said they needed a new house, for most of the reasons listed above. The material aspect of *home* was not being met.

Important to note is that the Inuit participants did *not* believe adequate housing would be the "cure-all" for their problems. The research in Kinngait explored the way these conditions were truly *felt* by Inuit living the reality of inadequate housing on a daily basis. They saw their own social and mental health struggles as problems that were directly related to their deplorable housing situation. Despite this link, they "had no illusions that solving the housing problem would completely resolve the personal and social problems" (Tester 2006b, 62). Yet housing was seen as foundational for wellbeing. The Inuit of Kinngait declared that deficient housing programs were evidence that the governments had *failed* "to promote equal opportunities for the well-being of Inuit as Canadian citizens" (Tester 2006b, 67).

Home links to collective community wellbeing with political implications

In another study, the problem of inadequate housing and stress had been examined at the *community* level. A 2016 mental health study made headway into understanding connections between housing conditions (specifically crowding), cultural identity, and traditional activities on the land. By moving the focus away from the individual, connections were seen to have community-wide, collective effects. It lead to a better understanding of *community wellbeing*. The analysis examined the contrast between on the one hand, cultural identity formed and expressed in large part on the land through traditional activities such as hunting and food processing (Gray, Richer, and Harper 2016, 254 and 256) and on the other hand, the overcrowded households which were a stressor for both individual[242] and community mental health. It examined community-level crowding to better understand the relationship between crowding as a stressor on the community as a whole (Gray, Richer, and Harper 2016, 256), and the community's "collective relationship with the land and traditional knowledge" (2016, 254). While this study was not able to confirm a direct link between community-level crowding and mental wellness, their findings demonstrated that "living in an overcrowded household [and] living in a community with inadequate housing" were stressors. However, the study could not disentangle the effects of individual household crowding and community-level crowding because it was recognized that individual households can function as either a mediating or a confounding factor on community-level crowding (2016, 256). Nevertheless, this study raised the bar for how we understand the effect of inadequate housing. Overcrowding contributes to stress while practicing traditional activities on the land supports positive

[242] This corresponds to other studies such as Riva et al. (2014) showing that overcrowded households in Nunavik cause physiological indicators of stress in the individual (Riva et al. 2014).

cultural identity and the transmission of cultural values and knowledge. These, in turn, stimulated "opportunities for collective discussion and planning" (2016, 256) as a form of political agency. This opens up many possibilities for an Inuit concept of *home* that makes links between housing conditions, relationship to the land, the need for autonomy, and collective feelings of wellbeing.

Inuit have explained through these studies that they experience a sense of loss and helplessness when they are powerless to heal their mental and spiritual health or when they cannot create culturally-appropriate responses to the difficulties experienced in inadequate housing. This sense of powerlessness is the result of a system that was created by outsiders and is still controlled by outsiders. The restricted Western concept of housing in the North has created a stark separation between life in the dwellings and life on the land. The combination of the *need* to get away from the house, and the *inability* to get away from the house could be described as an experience of "spiritual homelessness." That is because mental and spiritual health and wellbeing is found outside of the house, on the land, as Tester's study showed (Tester 2006b, 40). Whereas, the dwelling, the land, and all the associated physical, relational, emotional, spiritual aspects are part of a complex interrelated culturally-grounded idea. An idea that I propose can be brought into the housing discussion today through the concept of *home* in order to bring housing solutions closer to these necessary aspects of Inuit wellbeing.

Home links to contemporary needs inside the home

Intergenerational living also presents diverse spatial needs among the various family members. New uses of space are necessary for younger generations and the design of the Western house does indeed respond to some of these new spatial needs (Lauster and

Tester 2010). Younger Inuit who were raised with the expectation of performing certain public roles for schools and teachers (such as having homework to do in the house), or had different expectations that they had learned through social media, have developed new privacy needs in order to perform these new social roles and identities (Lauster and Tester 2010).

Unsurprisingly, the Western house design *itself* can actually been seen as the harbinger of the problem of overcrowding because housing had been introduced alongside government imposed cultural disciplining, requiring new uses of space. So while the design might fulfill some of these needs, the materiality of new dwelling could not be extracted from the idea of domination or control by external forces. And with these new spatial needs inside the house, "cultural domination and material inequality worked together to produce the sensation of crowding" (Lauster and Tester 2010, 529), having a negative effect on wellbeing, and a sense of *home* that is imposed and externally controlled.

Home links to the psychosocial aspects of life and the political

Other research on housing and wellbeing brought up issues that I classify as issues in the realm of the political. The psychosocial concept of "mastery" is a particularly important mental health measure in the consideration for Indigenous housing policy, especially given the context of colonial relations (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 27). Riva's et al.'s concept of "mastery" in the housing context is linked to "feelings of autonomy, control, security, privacy and status" (Riva, Fletcher, et al. 2020, 27). Though self-determination was not specifically mentioned in this study, it points towards it, and resonates with many of the features of *home* which requires a certain levels of autonomy and control.

In the only investigation with Inuit that has looked overtly into a "sense of home"

among Inuit, Perreault et al. (2020) (part of Riva's research team) assessed the effect of living in overcrowded conditions on one's "sense of home" (Perreault et al. 2020). The research spoke to the significance of our colonial history on Inuit sense of home in the housing context. Through an analysis of data collected through pre- and post-rehousing surveys, Perreault et. al. tackled the more elusive question of whether a sense of home provides ontological security.[243] Derived from Anthony Giddens' work, ontological security was defined as "a constant social and material environment that provides a safe place for identity development and self-actualization, where people can live out their daily routines and gain a sense of control, of mastery" (Perreault et al. 2020, 357). The sense of home in this study came from Lauster and Tester (2014) who said that homelessness was:

> being and feeling without a home – where 'home' is defined as a profound experience of connectedness and security. 'Feeling at home' includes elements such as belonging to a community, nurturing an intimate knowledge of one's homeland, enjoying sufficient privacy and feeling secure (having a secure space to store one's possession, freedom from danger, sense of stability over time) (Perreault et al. 2020, 357).

The research team assessed whether Inuit felt "at home" before and after being placed in a new house through the use of eight constructs formed out psychosocial factors (PSE) that have been associated with a sense of home. From the outset, the constructs (statements derived from previous studies) were verified through qualitative interviews with Inuit in Nunavik about their housing experience. Then the statements were *reformulated* for an Inuit context (Perreault et al. 2020, 361). By working in "collaboration with Inuit organizations responsible for housing, public health and for preserving Inuit values and

[243] Perreault based their concept of ontological security on theoretically grounded research conducted in non-Inuit contexts in other parts of the world (Perreault et al. 2020, 357; Kearns et al. 2000). For example, they relied on Clark and Kearns' (2012) research on the psychosocial benefits of home in Scotland, and adapted it for the Inuit context through their Inuit partnership survey research.

practices" (Perreault et al. 2020, 359) the analysis allowed for a more culturally-specific conceptualization of housing. They explained that the psychosocial factors in the sense of home fit into these following categories: space, identity, control, privacy, satisfaction, relationships, location, and safety and residential stability (Perreault et al. 2020, 361).[244]

This kind of study brings more clarity to the qualitative, integrated, and multidimensional nature of *home* which manifests itself across many layers of Inuit life, far beyond mere "health versus disease" implications. The constructs of *home* that had originally been used to assess psychosocial benefits of home for tenants in Scotland (Kearns et al. 2000)[245] could be made relevant and significant for Inuit, bringing new ways to understand the complexity of the effects of rapid cultural change in Inuit society. This research showed that there is potential for finding new meanings in Western housing for Inuit today, in both positive and negative terms. While inadequate housing is related to many health and mental health problems, new housing (even if it is Western-style housing) can bring improvements to health and mental health. The researchers associated the newly cultivated ontological security with having potential lifelong health impacts (Perreault et al. 2020, 358). I propose further, that the ontological security provided by a sense of *home* that is described as a sense of autonomy and control supports key foundations needed for self-determination.

The political aspect of *home* also came to the forefront in a 2011 qualitative, participatory, collaborative research project with Sallumiut (people from Salluit) (Ruffin and Alaku 2011). During discussions about the need to relocate the community, it became

[244] More specifically, the twenty-one factors were divided as follows: space (4 items), identity (3 items), control (3 items), privacy (2 items), satisfaction (2 items), relationships (2 items), location (3 items), and safety and residential stability (2 items) (Perreault et al. 2020, 361).
[245] Kearns et al. 2000's respondents in Scotland experienced psychosocial benefits of home in slightly different ways, through feelings of privacy, retreat, safety, autonomy, and control at home.

evident that Inuit have to be involved in town planning, for example, in identifying the location for new builds based on their own knowledge of the region. With the inclusion of Inuit in decision-making, not only were sociocultural and economic considerations of *home* discussed (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 170), but key *material* aspects of home including meticulous attention to the technical aspects of construction and locating the new houses in a way to withstand the melting permafrost (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 168). Bringing forward relational and spiritual aspects of *home*, some community members suggested locating their community in frequently visited nearby territories because they contained historical family bonds, a sense of territorial belonging, and value in terms of good hunting and fishing grounds (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 163), placing value on their territorial knowledge, history, stories, cultural practices, and relations:

> "il n'est pas simplement question d'aménagements physiques à l'échelle du milieu bâti, mais également de dimensions sociales et culturelles. [...] Les territorialités questionnées permettent de souligner les éléments d'aménagement qui donnent du sens aux quotidiennetés et qui facilitent les expériences quotidiennes tout en valorisant les pratiques culturelles."[246]

Inuit participants also connected these dimensions to decision-making and their political implications:

> "Ces territorialités qui reflètent les perspectives locales sont renseignées au moyen d'informations qualitatives sur les réalités vécues au sein des espaces résidentiels à travers des récits de vie, des experiences et des opinions exprimés par les Sallumiut. Ces données permettent la lecture des besoins et aspirations en matière d'habitation et d'aménagement du village, ce qui permet de renseigner autant la population locale que les décideurs impliqués" (Ruffin and Alaku 2011, 163).[247]

[246] Translated into English by DeepL.com: "it's not just a question of physical features on the scale of the built environment, but also of social and cultural dimensions. [...] The territorialities in question make it possible to identify the planning components that give meaning to daily life and enhance cultural practices while improving day-to-day experiences."

[247] Translated into English by DeepL.com: "These territorialities, which capture local perspectives, are informed by a qualitative account of the realities endured in residential spaces, through the life stories, experiences and opinions expressed by the Sallumiut. These insights enable us to understand the needs and

Reasearch on northern housing in Nunavik and other Quebec Indigenous communities has expanded significantly into new domains spanning the whole gamut of design questions, health issues, and power relations. In a 2017 special edition of *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec* entitled "Habitation: imaginaires et réalités autochtones" scholars, mostly in Quebec, amassed new research on Inuit housing in Quebec that embraced the growing awareness of the needs and knowledge of Inuit (Brière and Laugrand 2017; Charest 2017; Desbiens 2017; Hervé and Laneuville 2017; G. Vachon et al. 2017; Vaillancourt 2017). From the research goal of imagining, living, and creating dwellings, having a sense of control was often central to the needs of Inuit participating researchers. The word "control" here is an expression of political needs. This can be about control over the space inside and around the house, which in turn sustains acts of political freedom and cultural expression. Or control can be about participating in the decision-making processes of town planning, design, and housing programs which sustains the political voice of Inuit and power over their own community's future. In all cases, *home* requires awareness of the material, emotional, relational, spiritual, *and* political aspects of housing and wellbeing.

Home links to a concept of home for policy-making

The house provides a part of what is needed for overall wellbeing, but only *home* sets the foundation for wellbeing. Wellbeing through housing can only be met if it contains, in some way or other, the elements of the home construct in all its physical, relational, spiritual, emotional, and political aspects—in the forms that Inuit must identify for

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aspirations of the local population and the decision-makers involved, in terms of housing and village development."

themselves today. With the development of this concept, we can have a tool to help identify when housing is not being sufficiently addressed—when, for example, *home* is implied but in actual fact, it is about a material commodity. This might be the case in policies and programs that promote "homeownership," or social housing programs. Both provide much needed shelter, but perhaps neither option offers the potential to create the sense of *home*. We can start to unpack and identify the other emotional, spiritual, relational, and political facets of *home* and wellbeing that are not being addressed through those policies and programs, and consider why that is and what can be done differently.

Therefore, in developing the idea of *home* as a way of envisioning new solutions, either as a source for reflection, as an analytical tool, a discussion guide, or housing policy framework, I had proposed in my introduction that I would provide a frame (rather than a definition) of features that have come to the forefront through the research, knowledge, and expressions by Inuit about what *home* entails. The literature has brought to attention the following considerations about the idea of *home*. Positive, supportive, and key attributes of *home* have been expressed as follows:

- Home is a *need* (that can be met through social policy)
- Home is a *right* (as in: treaty, constitutional, human, Indigenous)
- The different parts of home can be categorized into immediate needs and relative needs, or primary and secondary aspects
- Home is place, and place is a set of relations
- Land supports social and political relations
- Home is not independent of its territorial base
- There is a connection between home and land ("home is land")
- Home is uniquely human (it's about our humanity)
- Home does not (have to) happen *in* the house
- Having a house does not mean one has a home

- Home is individual *and* collective
- Home provides for individual agency
- Home can be about collective wellbeing
- Home can be part of a collective mentality
- Home can be measured at the community level
- Home can be expressed as homemaking
- Home is a set of practices and ideologies
- Home can be practiced and thought about in material, spiritual, relational, and emotional ways
- Home consists of practices like sharing, relations, and visiting
- Home is both acceptance and agency
- Home is often a relationship between the built environment and socio-natural processes
- Home is a connection between the mind and the external world experienced through the body
- Home is an embodiment of one's identity
- Home can be described as consisting of shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, roots, abode, and paradise
- Connotations for home can include materiality, warmth, love, control, source of identity, place, and ideality
- Home can provide security in physical, physiological, emotional, territorial, ontological, spatial, and spiritual ways
- One does not need to experience home to know what it is
- Aspects of home can be measured in terms of satisfaction in life, happiness, mental health (practiced on the land)
- Home as a profound expression of connectedness and security
- Home means one can enjoy sufficient privacy, feelings of security, and a sense of stability over time
- Home requires community involvement and a sense of territorial belonging
- Home as social and emotional reality, a place where belonging (to a space and to a group) merges into a sense of security
- And finally, home is political.

At the same time, a concept of *home* also needs to be alert to the potential harmful *assumptions* one might make, especially when hidden aspects remain obscured. This is a summary of aspects that would likely be counter-productive to an Inuit sense of home:

- Home can be a division between natural and domestic spaces
- Home as a separation from traditional lands
- Home through the built environment can be divisive (separating indoor and outdoor spaces)
- Home can be positioned in opposition to nature
- Home as dislocation
- Home as an idea from the Enlightenment era that focuses on the individual rather than the collective
- Home can conceal the violence of enforced social processes
- Home can conceal power imbalances
- Home can conceal physical violence in forms of domestic violence
- Home can *perform* as a safe and desirable space, even when it is not
- Home can be felt as something uncanny, foreign, unknown, through the feelings of the *unheimlich* and *heimlich*
- Home can be a controlling force
- Home as an ongoing process of sedentarization
- Home as alienation and separation
- Home as exclusion
- Housing experienced as coercive housing or forced settlement (making potentially positive aspects of home become a negative force)
- Home can be experienced as a refuge or a prison
- Home can be gendered and a place of conflict
- The house as an intergenerational divide and dissonance
- Home as a colonial expression
- Home assumed to be an a-politicized space

Home can be conceptualized as a vision for wellbeing, and as a warning for what is counterproductive to wellbeing. Adequate housing, after the United Nations definition, is the minimum standard. "Adequate housing" is not culturally specific (though it prescribes

cultural adequacy as a criteria). One might assume that what is materially "good enough" for me must be materially "good enough" for you. Whereas, inherent in the idea of *home* is that every human understands an *idea* of home but experiences it and conceives of it differently. For most, the material parts do not complete the idea of home. Recognizing this, we can relate to each other in an ethical way *with* our differences. We can accept that everyone has the same *need* for home. From there, we accept that my "home-sweet-home" is likely different from your "home-sweet-home" but we recognize this mutual need and right in each other. It is a form of mutual recognition of each other as humans.

With this set of features from the broad literature reviewed, I propose that it is necessary to add a political element to the four essential qualities in concept of home referred to in Christensen's research (Christensen 2016b). The table below brings together the interrelated themes or qualities in the concept of home, and shows that there is a political dimension to each aspect, mainly due the political relationship that Inuit are entwined in with the state. For the purpose of policy-making, lobbying, negotiating, contributing, and debating, a concept of home that is meant to reach each individual at a personal level, to reach their humanity and caring qualities, will never be removed from the inevitable political complexities of the power relationship between Inuit and the state.

Table 3. Depiction of qualities for a concept of *Home*

Qualities of home	Descriptions of these interrelated qualities: *Home is place*	Political aspects of home
Material	Place is made up of a physical, geographic reality and social processes. The domicile is a physical entity, not just an ideological concept. Design of dwelling is material and conceptual. Resources are required to build homes. Funds need to be made available. Land is needed.	• Different quality of living conditions for different populations is political. • Culturally relevant design • Resources (funds and construction supplies) and land need to be available • Reaching material/physical realities of home involves lobbying, negotiation, signing agreements, engaging in the labour force, benefitting from market forces, etc.
	It is material through the deterioration of quality of the dwelling, through poor construction, or through poor quality living conditions such as overcrowding.	
Relational	Place is a set of social relations that have a connection to material and social processes. Consists of social relations related to kinship, family, neighbours, community, practices which are part of Inuit identity.	• Political economic power is intertwined in the social process of place construction • Agency in housing involves engaging in the relationship with the state (eg. government bodies, bureaucrats, policy-makers, etc.)
	It can include social relations of domination, repression, and concealed violence.Relations can be separated, excluded, or confined.	
Emotional	Place is emotional through a sense of belonging and comfort, forming identity, cultural safety, sense of control and agency, and feelings of happiness and satisfaction.	• Housing requires Inuit agency in Western cultural and political settings, challenging Inuit identities, ontologies, knowledge, and rights • Emotions of loss, etc. caused by government dispossession • Requires a process of decolonization
	It can conjure feelings of longing, loss, alienation, exclusion, as a controlling force, a sense of the *unheimlich* or estrangement through the material structure of the home or through forced settlement	
Spiritual	Home is a relationship to place, land, and territory, part of Inuit identity. It is spiritual, an emotional need to be on the land, a connection to territory, community, family, history, survival, cultural practices.	• Aspects of the relationship to land and territory conflict with the state's ideas of sovereignty, control, rights to resources, and neoliberal ideologies • Politicized through current and historical processes of sedentarization and acts of territorial dispossession
	It can be experienced as spiritual homelessness, a separation from traditional lands, family, kinship, and as a personal identity crisis. As a sense of loss, turmoil, distress, longing due to dispossession.	
Political	Home is political.	See above
	Home can be depicted as a-political.	

A dialogue to establish what *home* means for Inuit and how it can be incorporated in the housing system *must* be based on mutual recognition, mutual respect, trust, equity, friendship, collaboration, and respect for Indigenous identity and culture—all the commendable values inscribed in the new Inuit-state relationship. And I contend that with *home*, a form of reconciliation can be propelled through housing. This approach to reconciliation would allow for differences to exist not to be reconciled or compromised. In fact, there would be no need to contemplate what form reconciliation should take, because reconciliation is inherent in the idea of *home*—as long as it encompasses and recognizes all material, relational, emotional, spiritual, *and* political elements.

It is likely predictable, however, that the political aspects of *home* associated with autonomy, control, and self-determination—especially when connected to the land and territory—would be perceived by the state as a challenge to its sovereignty. Even when entering into a process based on an ostensibly shared set of values and established ethics of engagement, if the things upon which we place value are in opposition to each other, or there is fear of a loss of power, the state will perceive concessions as a slippery slope. Questions of power and authority inevitably come into play.

Making space for a new political discussion through agonistic pluralism

How we might "play these games of power differently" is an essential question to address in a phronetic research approach. Political theorist Chantal Mouffe (2013) offers a path forward, called agonistic politics, that could be applied to this (currently undesirable) situation. It is a proposal based on the view that our current neoliberal politics, if left unchallenged, are a threat to our democratic institutions (Mouffe 2000, 6). And it is within these so-called democratic institutions that housing for Inuit is debated, decided, and

funded. Mouffe proposes a democracy, and democratic processes, dependent on *ethical knowledge*, reflecting the Aristotelian concept of phronesis (Mouffe 2020, 14). This would shift the neoliberal approach to housing that is something reduced to merely a poverty issue, to an Inuit-defined issue that would incorporate self-determination and Inuit wellbeing, all through the concept of home. I offer a scenario where a new political philosophy paradigm would allow the idea of home to be included in the political discourse, and for other perspectives, ideas, and identities to exist.

Mouffe's (2013) perspective suggests that one must accept a measure of incommensurability in order to avoid the apathy and political disillusionment that can come from too much focus on a perfect consensus. I suggest that in an agonistic debate about what *home* means to different political communities, the identity of diverse players and their values would need to be respected even when they do not align; identities would be safeguarded. The agonistic condition in politics is a form of "confrontation," even to the point of seeing other groups as "adversaries," but it is one that exists within agreed upon democratic and discursive procedures (Mouffe 2013, 9). And most importantly, when differences are expressed in such an "agonistic struggle," there might actually be a "debate about possible alternatives" (Mouffe 2013, 7). I believe this is key for advancing a new way to think about housing through home. Dissent over core ethico-political principles can in fact be vital to a robust liberal democracy. In this case, the ethico-political principals are the alternative interpretations of *home* by Inuit that may be dramatically incompatible with settler-state conceptions of home. The very *expectation* of consensus limits the potential to generate new divergent ideas. It threatens to silence new configurations about how housing connects to Inuit social and cultural wellbeing. The irreducible recognition of the human need (and right) to home as defined by a community of people can mollify extreme

forms of power and domination found implicitly embedded in the state housing policymaking.

The appeal of Mouffe's position, based on a radical plural democracy, is that it cultivates a pluralism of ideas, something I believe is absolutely necessary in order for something like the concept of home to inform policy-making. Mouffe has proposed a way of conceiving of democracy that embraces real cultural and political pluralism. In her theory of agonistics, she proposes a model of democracy that does not rely on the usual rationalist, individualistic, and universalist frameworks upheld in leading approaches to democratic political theory (Mouffe 2020, 7). Hers is centered on collective identities and affects of the players. She says that it is important to keep in mind two properties inherent in political society: the very "formation of political identities" and the "impossibility of a society from which antagonism can be eliminated" (Mouffe 2013, 5).[248]

I argue that the Inuit housing crisis would benefit from an honest recognition and respect for new ideas, *even if* these new ideas might lead to some discord and disagreement. Different ideas of housing and home come from divergent sets of values and viewpoints (often referred to as cultural differences). With the idea of *home* as a pivot point in the housing discourse, a multiplicity of ideas of *home* could be expressed with passion, as part of the democratic discourse—one that does not fear discord or "the political." It puts politics aside in order to think politically—one of Mouffe's contributions to theory is to separate "politics" from "the political." Moreover, Aristotle believed that *phronesis* must include a political praxis (Flyvbjerg 2001, 55). The bringing together of

[248] Chantal Mouffe's position about the inevitability of antagonism echoes aspects of Foucault and Flyvbjerg's views that postulate the permanency of certain forms of dominant relations (with the idea that the power imbalance might be brought to a minimum but never eradicated completely because power is what relations are constitutive of). Mouffe also accepts Foucault's tenet that power is always connected to some kind of regime of truth and validity (Mouffe 2013, 15) (see my Chapter 2 for my discussion on Foucault and Flyvbjerg).

actions and ideas is part of a project of reconciliation, an inherently political project. In this case, reconciliation between Inuit and the state requires new praxis in the political discourse of Inuit housing, meaning new concepts and theories are integrated into new ways of *doing* and deciding. Reconciliation does not have to be a merging of ideas nor the absorbing of one into the other. In a praxis of radical democracy, the goal should not be to "reconcile" (i.e. settle or join) differences through deliberation, because the very differences and beliefs themselves are fundamental to one's collective identity. Neither does this threaten democracy—as this is the fear of accepting too much difference and pluralism in democracy. Radical plural democracy is to use democratic principles to recognize and *value* the differences—something arguably akin to mutual respect. One of the reasons Mouffe refutes the idea of consensus is because at some point consensus leads to a place of surrender, compromise, and conciliation; at some point cooperation becomes capitulation. More importantly, as soon as consensus is even *considered* as a possibility, it is "an illusion [that] carries implicitly the desire for a reconciled society where pluralism would have been superseded" (Mouffe 2000, 32).

The reason it is important to have respectful political antagonism in the Inuit-state relationship in Canada and Quebec—the place where the housing needs and rights of Inuit are discussed, debated, and decided—is because the outcomes are wholly dependent on how robustly the democratic principles of the political relationship can be enacted. "Mutual recognition" as a value means recognition of *differences* and *identity.* Respect means *mutual* respect. Reconciliation is about finding a way forward. These are some of the values that have been agreed upon by Inuit and the state together. The path must be mutual, equitable, respectful. With the idea of radical plural democracy, that path would also respect differences while *allowing the political to exist*—a political that includes conflicting

ideas—and therefore would allow for the political elements of *home* to be expressed, acknowledged, and to exist. And this, without the fear that our democratic institutions will be dissolved just because a discussion is somewhat difficult, conflictual, or entrenching difference. It is allowing a space for radical ideas that will not be jettisoned through consensus. And although it is vital to acknowledge that Inuit political practices often work within a framework guided by the value of consensus, there are important features of "us" and "them" (an inherent dichotomy in the Inuit-Crown relationship) that Mouffe's theory helps recognize and uphold in order to respect the different collective identities that cannot necessarily be be absorbed in one consensus. Nevertheless, I recognize that this may be more radical a theory than an Inuit ontology might comfortably relate to.

Inuit identity and culture is known to be resilient and adapatable, but it is not valued because it can be *compromised*; it is cherished because it is part of a collective identity, connected to land and territory, defined by unique social relations, and because it has been proven to be steadfast (if always evolving). Mouffe believes that "every identity is relational and that the affirmation of a difference is a precondition for the existence of any identity" . When we talk about Inuit agency in terms of the political, it implies a certain level of conflict, or at a minimum, a voice at the table—an *identity* at the table—that will be different from other identities at the table.

Although "conflict" is a term that does not likely sit comfortably within Inuit ontology and social relations, Inuit have nevertheless found it necessary to insist on their right for a voice at the decision-making tables about housing. They have had to take up positions that are often in opposition to the government's proposals, beliefs, and policies. This has created what I would call a certain level of conflict that perhaps other scholars might not label that way. I believe this kind of conflict is necessary and that it can only become part of

the radical democracy that Mouffe advocates because it would by definition not impose objectives of reconciliation that would silence the development of ideas and alternative ways forward.

Therefore, the "conflict" that I am talking about is about a pluralism of identities, which includes a "pluralism of values" (Mouffe 2020, 8), and conflicting ontologies that bring forth different ideas and epistemologies that may upset the usual direction policy discussions take. It is clear that policy discussions need to take a new direction, because if all Inuit points of view, beliefs, needs, and rights were currently being met by the existing political discourses, then their need for a "voice" would not be so urgent or necessary. It is the very fact that Inuit needs are *not* being met that their place at the table—with their identities, values, and "conflicting" ideas intact—that it is imperative to find a new paradigm—that is, if we truly intend to endorse the values of mutual respect, mutual recognition, and mutual benefit. As Mouffe explains: "A healthy democratic process calls for a vibrant clash of political positions and an open conflict of interests. If such is missing, it can too easily be replaced by a confrontation between non-negotiable moral values and essentialist identities" (Mouffe 2020, 6). Mouffe offers a way to work with the inevitable conflict as a position taken against rationalism and essentialism (Mouffe 2013, 5–6)). Instead of avoiding struggle, we would learn to see the benefit of the conflict. Coming up against contrasting identities defined by "us" and "them" and letting ideas co-exist actually displays a level of respect for the *right* of everyone to hold those positions at the table. However, as it seems inevitable in all forms of political theory, there are some assumptions that are being made here. One is that all players in this form of pluralism must have an essential belief in the goal of maintaining democratic principles and governance. As Mouffe says, the confrontation "is played out under conditions regulated by a set of democratic

procedures accepted by the adversaries [players]" (Mouffe 2013, 9). And as critics have pointed out, democratic pluralism, as a counter to neoliberalism, actually requires a minimum agreement on two fundamental values: the freedom of speech and the freedom of assembly (pillars of liberalism) in which political opposition is made possible (Kempf 2020).

In terms of the interpretation of societal values that have come to the fore in the analysis of housing policies and the Inuit-state relationship as displayed in the "soft promises," there are different types of values that have been revealed. The type of values that have been promised in the Accords, Principles, and Commissions, those of honour, integrity, respect, good faith, and mutual respect, can still guide the *behaviour* of the players involved in an agonistic encounter, even while asserting their identity, even when coming into conflict over ideas and, even if, what Mouffe calls, "new articulations and new institutions" become part of the process of mobilizing passions and positions (Mouffe 2013, 9).

Mouffe's radical plural democracy does, in fact, come with certain prescriptions, including some shared values and a respect for what one might call institutional norms. In her agonistic theory, she believes that the "adversary" (her term for the "other" with whom one is in a confrontation of ideas and identities) is actually an opponent "with whom one shares a common allegiance to the democratic principles of 'liberty and equality for all', while disagreeing about their interpretation" (Mouffe 2013, 7). This is fitting, since the democratic assemblies between Inuit and the state have been founded on shared values. The Inuit-Crown Partnership in 2005 established the shared values of honour, integrity, respect, good faith, and mutual respect. With that, there also has to be the presumption that there may be different interpretations of those values by the plurality of players

involved (i.e. Inuit, Canada, Quebec, private stakeholders, etc.). The Principles of Inuit-Crown Co-Development also established the mutual agreement by Inuit and federal partners to respect "internal governance models and operational structures, including Inuit governance and Canada's existing legal and constitutional framework" (Canada 2022a, 5). The Principles also concede that "governance models and structures will continue to evolve, including as a result of the recognition and assertion of Inuit self-determination" (5). Mouffe believes that the "confrontation" between "adversaries" must be "regulated by a set of democratic procedures accepted by the adversaries" (Mouffe 2013, 9). Fortunately, this has already been established by Inuit and by state players through the signed Principles and Accords as well as through the many organizations and forums in which Inuit housing is debated and decided.

However, there are other values expressed by the state that are not as easily conjoined with Inuit expressions and demands. There are the aspects of life *upon which one places value*, as revealed in the policy analysis, where the values between Inuit and the state have diverged. This is the place where agonistic democracy, a pluralism of ideas and identities, need to be permitted to come together, to hash out each side's needs, rights, demands, views, ontologies, in a way that may very likely create conflict. However, based on established shared values including respect, and based on the agreed upon democratic structures, the identity of each actor would not be at risk of being compromised.

This type of confrontation is needed for a "vibrant democracy" because it avoids descending into arguments based on "non-negotiable moral values" (Mouffe 2013, 7). When the Canadian state begins with a series of premises drawn from its ideological demarcation of what constitutes a legitimate relationship with the land—as possession, as

market asset, and a pathway to economic development—it forecloses on any other conception of *home*.

Part IV Summary: The idea of *home* to bridge values

Almost fifty years ago, housing researchers in Nunavik had advocated for the formation of a "house concept" (Zrudlo 1976, 12). It was meant to combine the socio-cultural and technical aspects of house design while accommodating for the climatic and cultural functions of the interior, exterior, and transitional spaces (i.e. porches and entrances) to meet Inuit needs. I am advocating for a "home concept" to bring into the housing policy discussions that would be Inuit-specific incorporating the material, relational, emotional, spiritual and political aspects of home in order to reach Inuit and community wellbeing through housing.

Although *home* needs to be regionally or culturally precise, it resonates at the level of our humanity, as an essential part of what it means to be human. The research on *home* has identified it as instrumental to establishing the groundwork for wellbeing, autonomy, and self-determination for Inuit. Moreover, *home* does not have to have been experienced materially in order to know what it is. The knowledge of home and territory can exist and evolve at the ideological level through collective knowledge based on history, stories, culture, memory, and practices.

However, it also cannot be satisfied *without* the material reality. In other words, it cannot remain at the level of ideology to be fulfilled by just having memories or stories or an "idea" of home. We need to be able to answer the question: do you have a home or not? (Somerville 1992, 529). Through personal agency and political agency, Inuit have been advancing their case towards creating home, whether out on the land, in domestic

spaces, and through their relationships, in community, legal, and political arenas. Each of these acts are political acts. It is political because it is taking space and making space in places that have otherwise been denied—in this case due to processes of colonialism, paternalism, and dispossession. Despite this Inuit agency, power relations between Inuit and the state remain largely unbalanced, palpable in the housing discourse and process.

Our political practices need to allow the space for discussion and debate to exist in ways that broadens the conversation for new solutions and relationships to develop. The suggestion of the concept of *home* as the point of connection is because it can reach to the deeper levels of our shared humanity, bringing an ethical knowledge to the table with intonations towards social justcie. While individuals with different histories, values, and identities discuss and negotiate agreements and solutions for the housing crisis, with mutual respect shown for their differences, the idea of *home* would encompass the diversity that would allow for those differences to exist.

Conclusion to *A House to Call a Home*

> ***When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contributions in the design, construction, or management of their housing, both this process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being. When people have no control over nor responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, on the other hand, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfillment and a burden on the economy.***

Excerpt from *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process*, Turner & Fichter 1972

The phronetic research approach has provided important new insights into the persistence of the Nunavik housing crisis. Specifically, it has revealed a missing link between housing and wellbeing; it has revealed a discontinuity between the intentions of new Inuit-state partnerships and the housing policies that are designed to address Inuit housing; it has brought new meaning to the way legal and constitutional responsibilities of the state are being implemented and contested; it has shed new light on how different ontologies of life itself are being expressed between housing decision-makers and Inuit who actually live in the houses; it has exposed the power dimensions at work in the complexity of the structures that encompass the housing process; and, ultimately, *phronesis* has enabled us to parse out the difference between values that are shared and those that are not, by showing the different kinds of values that can actually be characterized into different categories. These issues and problems that have been analyzed are associated with particular assumptions that are part of seeing the world from an economic lens and neoliberal policy-making. These assumptions have *not* been subject to debate because they are by definition "assumed," yet they are precisely the things that have created the

persistent disconnect between housing policies and other promises made by the state—all of which affect the political nature of the Inuit-state relationship..

Phronesis presents a different way of seeing today's impasses in the Inuit-state relationship because it offers an epistemological reformulation of housing by raising it as an ethical issue, a justice issue, and one of power, rather than a problem of technical knowledge. The imbalance in the relationship between the Canadian state(s) and the Inuit people is one of dominance. Some of that is instrumental power, but much of it in turn—perhaps the more important part—is due to ideological assumptions about accepted norms and values; Western-imposed ways of doing things are frequently understood in terms of an underlying belief in the inevitability of assimilation, elimination, and dispossession. In practice, these surface as ontological impasses, often presented in academic analyses as competing (but hierarchical) types of knowledge: namely, "scientific" knowledge vs. "Indigenous" knowledge. While this much seems self-evident, it does not always explain how assimilation, dispossession, or denial of other ontologies actually occurs in the granularity of policy; it usually surfaces as finger pointing, defensiveness, and even a sense of hopelessness that does little to reveal a solution.

I have presented an argument based on my trust and hope that the pledge articulated—to *actually* improve things—is an authentic path being sought by the state and its agents. That said, I also maintain that this path remains fraught with its own historical messiness, its ongoing colonial effects that exist in systemic problems appearing as racism, institutional rigidity, political marginalization, lack of trust, and unfulfilled promises, namely involving competing claims of sovereignty. Yet if people truly believe in the state's "good intentions," which includes the specified aim to provide for the wellbeing of Inuit, then there should be no resistance to introducing an ethical judgment to distinguish "good" or

"bad" approaches to the said "good" intentions. This is where *phronesis* comes in. "Good" is not determined by the efficiency of the technology, the rigour of the science, or by the signing of funding agreements. Through this research approach, "good" is based on a foundational sense of ethics and care that accepts a way of "seeing" our biases, our underlying assumptions, and how we "normalize" expectations and solutions. This way, we can see that these are the very things getting in the way of creating wellbeing.

It is for this reason that the answer to my main research question about why the Nunavik housing system fails so persistently to provide a foundation for Inuit wellbeing, can be summed up as an *ethical shortcoming*. This is evident in the ways policies are disconnected from purported intentions and values expressed in both the countless soft promises (i.e. Inuit-Crown Partnership Accords, Co-development Principles, international covenants, etc.) and from the legal implications of the governments' treaty responsibilities, notably in the JBNQA. Moreover, the fact that the policies are disconnected from the *very goals stated in many of the housing policies themselves* (to create wellbeing) is a foundational ethical shortcoming. This conclusion is not based on some romanticized philosophical idea about what "ethical behaviour" should entail—I am merely comparing what the state has *said* it will do with what it *actually* does. The uncoupling of these two things *is* its ethical failure. Now, is this simply about insincerity? Dishonesty? A flat-out refusal to do better? Governments certainly lie all the time, and in ways that do not always have to do with colonial identities. But if the underlying assumptions about "what is right" for *all* people (or in this case, for a *particular* population) stem from an ethical closure, and if it can be unpacked, I argue that it points to new ways of seeing how and why decades of housing policies have failed on their own terms.

The first ethical shortcoming has been an oversimplification of the important interdependence between Inuit wellbeing and adequate housing, despite considerable evidence about the profound and complex correlation between the two. One of the ways this has been done is by leaving the meaning of "wellbeing" largely undefined and vague. This has allowed repeated claims to be made about how government actions will improve Inuit wellbeing on arguably weak or ideologically narrow foundations. For the most part, wellbeing is tied only to supporting "economic" metrics; or, when it is reduced to the elimination of illness, it disregards the multifarious aspects of the housing process that contribute to Inuit welfare. During housing negotiations, the focus is mainly on the number of housing units that the funds will support. But the physical reality of the building itself, the simple product that fulfills the need to have a "roof over one's head," is an insufficient understanding of what "the foundation of housing for wellbeing" means. A housing unit is not a home. A housing unit without choice, voice, control, or cultural relevance, is a place that perpetuates dispossession, alienation, and separation because the relational, spiritual, and emotional aspects of *home* are ignored. The side-stepping of those real issues and of the qualities of home is what makes policy-making political.

To make that connection between housing and wellbeing requires a much more nuanced, political, ontological finesse that governments have not been willing to honestly address through policies to date. The government has begun to recognize the importance "fate control"—the idea of guiding one's own destiny (Canada 2019a, 15)—as central to wellbeing. But this has not yet been introduced into the context of housing. Moreover, fate control rarely aligns with fundamental ideas of autonomy and political agency.

The second ethical shortcoming is the prominence of seeing solutions principally with an economic lens. The Inuit-state relationship has a history of actions that try to allay

the state's fear of assuming a permanent economic "burden" (a.k.a. responsibility). When the government sees its constitutional and treaty responsibility as a "problem" to be resolved, it infers that a *duty* can be eradicated. Yet the very nature of a constitution and of a treaty between nations is the permanency of the commitment to the tenets of the agreement, especially in the case of a "living document." Today, the federal government's long term goal is to reduce the burden of the cost of northern social housing, a target driven by economic motivations. In fact, it is concerning that Canada's plan is to shrink its contributions to Inuit housing in the Territories to zero by 2037 (Bell 2017a).

While the state (at both levels) has repeatedly tried to diminish the fiscal burden of Inuit communities, it also wants to do so without diminishing the control it maintains over the region. Which is why the solutions have always come as major economic transformations by introducing a (capitalist) culture and bringing free-market ideals (and values) to the North. All political relationships derive from that premise. Rather than formulating housing solutions in political forms that would ensure that more local decision-making—including economic decision-making—is in the hand of Inuit, the organizing logic is to create a self-sustaining market society. Related to this view has even been the assumption that certain JBNQA government responsibilities towards Inuit could be fulfilled by adopting economic and social policies that rely on the best intentions and commitments of external and foreign investors to produce outcomes that will (apparently, or hopefully) benefit Inuit wellbeing. All policy assumptions, and the disconnect between them and the rhetoric of good intentions, is evidence of the problem. If the state begins with two axiomatic assumptions—that final sovereignty lies within the federal-provincial nexus, and that social outcomes are derived from market logics—there is no room to negotiate about Inuit wellbeing on other terms.

In its historical context, the state's "good" intentions have been underwritten by a long history of its responsibility towards Inuit, identified in multiple legal, judicial, and institutional settings. Judicially, *Re: Eskimo* in 1939 determined Canada's responsibility to protect the "*interest and well being*" of Inuit (Borrows and Rotman 1998, 442 emphasis mine). The 1982 *Constitution Act* reconfirmed that Canada has the responsibility to promote equal opportunities for the wellbeing of *all* Canadians (Section 36(1) of the *Constitution Act*, 1982). The Minister of the Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs is given mandates to support Indigenous wellbeing, such as to "modernize [Canada's] institutional structures and governance so that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples can build capacity that supports implementation of their vision of self-determination" (Trudeau 2017, 2). And in Quebec, the onus has been on the province to act on its "responsibility" ever since Rupert's Land was transferred in 1912, and even more so since signingthe JBNQA. The ethical responsibility has always been to live up to the commitments made; but I argue that the commitments themselves are still defined by conventionally narrow assumptions of life and security.

The state's perceptions and actions towards Inuit since the beginning of contact have been dominated by national (settler) economic interests, as found in the earliest trade relationships, the "laissez-faire" approach offered only limited welfare, tightly monitored "handouts" controlled with the disc number system, followed by "policies of dispersal" such as the High Arctic Relocation of families from Nunavik, and finally an unrelenting push towards the new economic culture of waged labour in the communities that was likewise meant to avoid the "major welfare burden" of Inuit (Bonesteel and Anderson 2008, 12). These were all arrangements driven by overlapping interests in staking out

national sovereignty in the North, establishing Canada's claim to raw materials, and reducing any obligations towards the people whose home it was.

Even with this imposed southern model of community-building based on capitalist economic ideals, Canada nevertheless recognized in 1965—in the early years of Inuit sedentarization—that sustained economic development in northern Inuit communities *was dependent* on finding a solution to housing (Duhaime 1985, 44). Repeated official reports exhibited the state's neglect on this front, from the Indian and Northern Health Services 1960 report called *Eskimo Mortality and Housing* linking the increase in infant deaths to inadequate shelter (Canada 1960), to a 1972 report *Eskimo Housing as Planned Culture Change* produced by a Northern Science Research Group for the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development that concluded that there were a series of "apparent inconsistencies in government actions and objectives" (Thomas and Thompson 1972), to the 1982 Tait Report revealing Quebec's inattention to its JBNQA responsibilities, to the 1996 RCAP that exposed Canada's widespread failure to uphold its obligation towards Indigenous peoples across a wide range of sectors. The Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples showed in 2017 that the history of inadequate housing policies has been *the* major contributor to the housing crisis (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017, 22). Even *within* the logic of conventional economic development goals, one might have expected the housing policies to have found better responses. And yet what this phronetic research analysis has confirmed once again is that policies continue to be inadequate—just as the housing is inadequate—and in very particular ways.

At the heart of this, housing has been defined as a "need" to be dealt with through social policy development (although it is often addressed as an economic policy too).

Housing seen as a "need" is subject to the vagaries of markets and state budgets, and subject to a hierarchy of poverty that attends to the "most in need" first, and often only to the most desperate. When housing is not seen as a "right," then even the most earnest promises to address the imbalance of power between Inuit and the state, such as those made in the *Inuit-Crown Partnership Accord* and the *Inuit-Crown Co-development Principle*, will not attend to housing. Inuit-Crown promises have tried to commit to finding mechanisms to support Inuit rights and participation in decision-making affecting their rights (Canada 2022a, 2-3), yet housing, instead, because it is seen as a need, will always be defined by the state-as-benefactor.

This analysis of Nunavik housing has thus exposed a subtle mechanism of power in the Inuit-state relationship, identifying ideational and policy techniques and procedures used in the determination of truth. What I have called "soft promises" is the practice of making joint commitments and signing seemingly mutual accords always with the public intent of finding a new way forward in the Inuit-state relationship. The core assumption in these new modes of engagement that include goals of partnership and reconciliation has been based on the idea that if Inuit and the settler state can agree on a set of "shared values upon which to engage with one another," (for example, those expressed in the *Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples* and the *Inuit-Crown Co-development Principles* (Canada 2018d; 2022a)) then "we" will also find congruence in "the things upon which we all place value." Yet clearly the values expressed in government policies are often not the same as those that Inuit have indicated are central to their concerns. Their voluminous critiques of policy and relentless appeals to government bodies by Inuit stand as testimony that even when both parties agree to conduct themselves with honesty and honour, they still place value on very different things.

This differentiation has brought forth a new way of thinking about values. My investigation of the partnerships, principles, and policies that constitute this relationship, has revealed that there are actually different *kinds* of values being articulated. My analysis has found that the values expressed throughout decades of promises need to be parsed out much more plainly in order to understand *why* interpretations differ. For example, why it is that despite the promise to act with "honour," "justice" has not been served; or why despite working with "integrity," there is still no "trust" or "friendship" at the end of the day.

There are three main categories of values I have inferred from the state's soft promises. The first are the joint "codes of engagement," that is, the values that express how to behave toward each other when navigating the contested space of the relationship and the history of the relationship. In principle, all sides have committed themselves to act with honour, integrity, respect, in good faith, and with mutual respect. Second, there are the values that signify a desired outcome and with that, values that indicate the normative means by which to reach that outcome. These include: justice, fairness, recognition, trust, collaboration, partnership, equity, friendship, sharing, transparency, active engagement, consensus building, inclusiveness, dialogue, mutual benefit, and responsibility. And finally, third, there are those values that arguably form the basis of Canadian society as a whole. Many of these often go unmentioned, but are vaguely recognized—if weakly articulated—by most citizens as the foundation of our country: liberal democracy, rule of law, economic independence, sovereignty, all underpinned by a series of fundamental rights and freedoms as stated in our Constitution. The soft promises likewise genuflect before those keywords that are held to be part of our national identity. These are things upon which our society places value, but are now extended to the problem of navigating a shared jurisdiction. Within this category, however, an additional set of "things upon which we place value" can

be added to Canada's values as a result of the Crown's soft promises (i.e. International covenants and declarations, Accords, Principles, etc.), which include commitments to the following: equality, non-discrimination, distinctions-based solutions, respect for human rights, Indigenous rights, Inuit rights, self-determination, Indigenous self-government, mutual respect of treaties, full and fair implementation of land claims, and wellbeing.

Through this genealogy of values, we better understand why it is problematic to *assume* that even if we agree upon a set of values with which to engage with one another, it will necessarily lead to reconciliation, or consensus, let alone self-determination. Indeed, it is precisely the "good intentions" in the soft promises that will mislead us into believing real change is just around the corner. Part of this is a standard operating procedure of governments—a gap between rhetoric and execution, although one exacerbated by the specific cognitive distance between settler state and Inuit life. As Inuit leader Mary Simon has said, "the term co-development of policies with Canada was looked upon with suspicion [by Inuit]. My overall impression was that there was a longstanding disconnect between the aspirational intentions and commitments of Ministers, and the paternalistic, at times obstructionist, approach by the bureaucracy to the implementation of these ideas" (Simon 2017, 21). Yet these accords—the public appearance of consensus—succeed most when they give the impression of erasing any conflict of ideas and values. Nothing would be more pleasing to the state than to believe that an outward pluralism of identities and differing ontological views of the world, will in no way threaten the unity of the political order.

The multiple places where Inuit have been included in the housing discussions with state and private actors have, in principle, provided the space for Inuit to have a voice. Yet this includes an assumption that this "consultation" fulfills the duty to "include" Inuit.

Despite the asymmetry between state and supplicant, what is needed is a position at the table that has, in practice and principle, the capacity to change the power dynamic between Inuit and the state. It seems self-evident that the core of this is to be involved in actual decision-making, but it is more: this very issue is part of what it means to build a *home*, namely to have control over one's own choices, one's community, and to have agency in all steps of the housing process. It is integral to what the UN Right to Adequate Housing requires: "participation in housing-related *decision-making* at the national and community levels" (United Nations 2009, 3 emphasis mine). It has been singled-out as a universal principle of non-discrimination in all policy development, because discrimination is considered to be "at the root of structural inequalities within societies" (United Nations 2009, 10).

In fact, it is only through the very agency of Inuit themselves—of placing themselves in front of the policy-makers to say: stop, wait, listen—that any incremental inclusion of Inuit at the consultative housing policy tables has been achieved at all, from their use of the JBNQA dispute resolution mechanism in 1998 to insist that the government act on its JBNQA responsibilities, or having Elders present their arguments in person to l'Assemblé nationale. Without the relentless advocacy work of Inuit leaders for over sixty years, forcing the state to recognize their treaty rights, their Inuit rights, their housing rights, there would have been no change. And yet, change has happened. Principal changes have been through the presence of Inuit voices around the tables (if still often outnumbered or underrepresented). Though, how much *listening* has resulted is less easily assessed. Inuit presence and involvement in consultation, lobbying, and negotiating housing may not have significantly changed the dialogue yet. However, it is fair to say that Inuit agency—their

demands, voice, and political involvement—have had a central role in advancing the Inuit-state partnerships and the state's soft promises.

I argue that there are only two ways of explaining the ethical shortcoming described here. While both explanations could be motivated by the same ideology that has always animated discrimination or paternalism or settler colonialism, they offer different explanatory motivations. The first can be described as instinctual "reluctance"; the second is a lack *verstehen* or understanding. Both of these can be operating at the same time (often reinforcing each other). But to remain optimistic, I argue that they are also things that can be overcome.

Reluctance is the ultimate ethical shortcoming. In this context, it has two parts: the reluctance to fulfill responsibilities or duties; and the reluctance to "upset" norms of political dialogue to avoid the risk of doing things differently. Social scientists have long recognized the problems of groupthink and path dependence in institutions. States tend to internalize and imprint processes that avoid challenging norms, even more so when engaged with people seen as outside these norms. In Inuit-state relations, the evidence seems clear that the state's first instinct is to obstruct change.

The problem of understanding (or: misunderstanding) comes around to our ontological differences. The problem can be summed up in anthropologist Francis Lévesque's[249] reminder about how coming to a mutual agreement regarding claims is fraught with the different interpretations and different way of "being" in history by the actors involved. The players almost literally do not, or cannot, *hear* each other: "[ils]

[249] Francis Levesque is an anthropologist whose early research focused on the Inuit dog slaughter, where different versions of history resulted in a government denial of past events and the harms inflicted on Inuit families, communities, and culture due to its policy (F. Lévesque 2008; 2021).

participent à un dialogue de sourd"[250] (F. Lévesque 2008, 109). This barrier comes up especially when key relevant historical context is denied or repudiated from the discussion. Arguably, the historical context of the process of sedentarization, the role of the state, and the repeated policy failures are *not* made part of the policy-making process. However, I argue that by centering on *home* (instead of housing) in a policy-making process, the historical, contextual, political, emotional, material realities would be integrated into the dialogue and the process, especially *because* of the way it appeals to our deeper sense of humanity. *Home* is something that is historically and geographically grounded, culturally relevant, material, relational, emotional, spiritual, and political—the *idea* is relatable while the specifics are unique to each culture, and even to each person.

It is in this very sense that I argue that by centering on the concept of *home*, it can open up new avenues for stakeholders to relate to each other, whether you are a bureaucrat, a construction worker, a leader, an Elder, a policymaker, a youth, a politician, or anyone involved at any level of conceiving of, planning, designing, funding, building, repairing, managing, or living in housing—whether social or private. The state's tendency has been to de-politicize housing, to see it as one of many routine things that states do for their citizens. Just as geographer Massey explained, nation-states scrambling for their sovereignty will try to give *places* an expedient identity that is both "authentic" and "unproblematic." Whether the "place" is the territory or the house, there is an interest in keeping it out of political debate, which for housing means keeping it in the realm of social policy and a social service, separate from the political matters of the Inuit-state relationship. However, as Indigenous public policy expert from Australia, Elizabeth Strakosh has said: "the realm of policy [...]constitutes a central site where foundational political relationships

[250] English translation by DeepL.com: "[they] participate in a dialogue of the deaf."

are asserted and contested" (Strakosch 2018, 2). So, not only is policy-making political, housing is political too. It is informed by the way the Inuit-state relationship has been established. And the idea of *home* brings the essential political aspects of housing to the forefront. And the political is inevitably a place of power dynamics.

The power imbalance between Inuit and the state will predicatably never fully vanish, but that is no reason to avoid debate, the expression of passions, and the nurturing of diverse—even contradictory—identities present in the political realm. Discord and conflict are part of democracy—or at least of a healthy democracy. In an agonistic politics, a pluralism of ideas can exist without the need to expect consensus or even conciliation by one side. This is particularly necessary for an issue so closely related the significance of *land* that is an inherent part of the idea of *home* for Inuit. Land has always been one of the most contentious of topics, with the fight for territorial control the main reason for most wars worldwide. In other words, proposing that there is an indelible link between land and home—a home with territorial significance (as has been shown in the idea of *home* for Inuit in the literature and through their words)—presses directly against the nation-state's continuous affirmation of its sovereign right over territory. Canada (like other modern federal states) was built with shared sovereignty in mind. But here it takes place in the context of common (largely liberal) commitments to political values that enable such sharing to happen—Québec nationalism notwithstanding—within an intelligible but narrow ideological frame. For Inuit, the connection between land and *home* is not transferable or universal; it is specific and deeply connected to social well-being.

It is my sense that with an agonistic approach to the contention, it is possible for pluralities to exist within the same polity. It allows for antagonisms of ideas and identities to exist without deteriorating our democracy. Therefore *home*, with its material, relational,

emotional, spiritual, *and* political elements can be expressed, sought, and created for Inuit, whilst upholding the nation's democratic principles. *Home* for Inuit can remain quite distinct; it can even exist in opposition to conceptions of *home* for non-Inuit.

It is important to recognize one more encouraging reality: The fact that Canada and Inuit are have already positioned their relationhip on a path towards working in partnership and collaboration, means that the table has already been set. The principles describing the new political relationship are in place. We have a set of shared values and modes of engagement based on a belief that the current democratic values and our confederation can accommodate. It is time to work on the next steps in order to build trust, mutual respect, and justice in practice.

I conclude with a final submission regarding the potential of *phronesis*. Aristotle's triad of knowledge includes scientific knowledge, technical knowledge, *and* ethical knowledge. I propose that it is not just *feasible*, but *necessary* in a pluralist system of governance, to consider accepting *phronesis* (as a practical wisdom and practical consciousness knowledge) *into* the housing discourse itself. I contend that it applies particularly to the dialogue about *home* proposed here. I have used phronesis as a way of critically analyzing the normative content of state (both federal and provincial) housing policies in Nunavik. This has allowed me to better understand the incommensurability of state policies with the social and political realities of conflicting norms. Policy decision-making on housing in Indigenous and Inuit territory has been hampered not only by conflicting sovereignties, but by the fact that policy is largely dominated by technical knowledge (*techne*) and an attendant belief that such knowledge has the appearance of universality (*episteme*). As such, *phronesis*, which is always context-dependent, is an equally necessary antidote to the ongoing assumption that economic rationality is regulatory: what

the state knows to be economic feasible is contextualized only by costs and resources, and not by values and context.

The lesson, above all, is that it is important to keep the door open to the things that "we do not know" (Ommer, Coward, and Parrish 2008, 35). It can dissolve some of the power in knowledge that holds tight to certainty—a false sense of certainty—that I argue is contained by the assumptions we unquestioningly make, even the "good" that we assume comes of solutions, as if they were not laden with (western) values of their own. Reflecting and debating through practical wisdom on what might be "wrong," or how our ideas about housing might be "embedded in social institutions, structures, and cultures," we may finally see the ways in which the discussion of housing has been limited by the "perceptions, misperceptions, limitations of understanding, biases, and ideologies of a specific society" (Ommer, Coward, and Parrish 2008, 21). With the concept of *home*, we are going to be more attuned to accessing *phronesis* because *home* is by definition context-dependent. And it will be more driven by an ethics of care specifically because *home* is a thing that is part of what makes us human; it may in fact be one of the few things that can be seen as "universal" in our humanity, though unique in the different ways in which housing is about wellbeing.

This is another way of thinking about the way knowledge and power are coupled. In the context of Inuit-state relations, where often the power/knowledge tension has been analyzed as a dichotomy between "western or scientific knowledge" on the one hand, and "Indigenous knowledge," (Bocking 2011) or "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit" (Karetak and Tester 2017), on the other, *phronesis* offers a different way of thinking about power by looking squarely at the coordination of norms in situations of power. This is not to search for consensus per se, but for a heightened ethical awareness of non-coercive communication. It

suggests how culturally-specific solutions to "housing" in Indigenous-state relations generally involve issues far removed from merely the building of houses. This proposal suggests that *everyone* at the table access and find a place for *phronesis*, ethical knowledge, to nurture the content of the housing-home dialogue.

Scholars Clegg and Pitsis (2012) have described how this knowledge can be used in practice in dialogues that are beset with unequal power relations: We all have a kind of routine, tacit knowledge that is part of *everyday life*. This everyday "practical conscious knowledge" needs to be *facilitated* into a form of "discursive consciousness knowledge" which is possible because "discursive consciousness comprises knowledge that we can put into words" and once this is done, this discursive consciousness has the potential to expose and undermine power relations (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 71). This view is based on the reasoning (by Marx and Engels) that:

> for most people, lacking the critical education to see through the fancy words of political economy that held them captive, they could nonetheless grasp enough of them to know that their everyday life contradicted these words and, once they are provided with an alternative way of interpreting their reality, these intuitions become the departure for social critique (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 71).[251]

If, in fact power can only be seen in its effects, as Foucault had posited (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 73–74), then conceivably the detrimental effects of inadequate housing *felt* and *deeply understood* through the everyday lives of Nunavimmiut is indeed *the* tacit knowledge, the practical consciousness, the ethical understanding of what is "good," that

[251] In the exploration of *phronesis* by Clegg and Pitsis (2012), they imagine the ways in which people become suddenly aware or conscious of the knowledge they already have inside of themselves. The authors envision the following scenario: "The moment of insight is that moment when what they *already know* in terms of their lived experience and their practical consciousness of it, that what is articulated discursively for them as an adequate and true account of this experience, is, in fact, false. It doesn't ring true. When this occurs people are facilitated in critically confronting their everyday social practices as part of a system of relations of domination, which are reproduced, with their complicity, through everyday interaction" (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 71). This awareness needs to find a way to be articulated, to challenge the power and domination.

Inuit draw on and then express in their agency against the power imbalances of their political relationships. Their critiques of the state are based on "what they *already know*" through their lived experience (Clegg and Pitsis 2012, 71).

Moreover, we *all* have a lived experience of *home* which, upon accessing that common humanity within ourselves, can help us realize that it is a concept unique to each person even if it is embedded in a culture at the same time. We popularly associate it with security, comfort, and sanctuary, a private space symbolic of our affective ties. And this, by its very nature, has political dimensions that most of us rarely notice. Yet, for the Inuit of Nunavik, especially since sedentarization, the concept of *home* has always been deeply political, precisely *because* it has been denied. It is the issue around which the power relationship with the settler state has principally hinged. *Home*, then, as a "new way of seeing" the housing discourse by everyone at the table, has the capacity to put practical wisdom into better words. It ought to help bridge conflicting ideologies and ontologies, maybe bring the current power relationship into better balance because we would see more of the humanity in everyone at the table.

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Appendix A: List of documents consulted

1. Documents and reports produced by INUIT BODIES:

- Makivik Corporation, Annual Reports (from 1990 to 2021)
- Kativik Regional Government, Annual Reports (from 2005 to 2019)
- Nunavik Newletters (from 2000 to 2011)
- Inuit Women: The Housing Crisis and Violence, Pauktuutit 1995
- The Housing Crisis in Canada's Inuit Communities: Final Report, ITC 1996
- Research and Consultation Project Concerning Inuit Housing Across Canada: Final Report, ITC 2001
- Building Inuit Nunaat: The Inuit Action Plan, ITK and ICC 2006
- Qanuippitaa? How are we?: Mental Health, Social Support and Community Wellness, NRBHSS 2007
- An Integrated Arctic Strategy, ITK 2008
- Plan Nunavik, Makivik 2010
- Parnasimautik Consultation Report, Makivik 2014
- Parnasimautik Community Consultations, Makivik 2014
- Social Determinants of Inuit Health in Canada, ITK 2014
- Brief respecting social housing in Nunavik submitted to House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance concerning pre-budget consultations, Makivik 2014
- Barriers to Sustainable Housing Delivery in Inuit Nunangat, ITK 2016
- National Housing Strategy Submission, ITK 2016
- Bâtir des foyers et des communautés durables au Nunavik: Consultations prébudgetaires, Makivik 2016
- A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model, Mary Simon, Minister's Special Representative 2017
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey, NRBHSS 2017
- Putting Health into Housing "Where We Live Matters," NRBHSS 2017
- Inuit Perspectives on a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy, ITK 2018
- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Position Paper: Development and Implementation of the Arctic Policy Framework, ITK 2018
- Arctic and Northern Policy Framework: Inuit Nunangat, ITK 2019
- Kativik Regional Master Plan, KRG 2020

- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Sociocultural Determinants of Health and Wellness, NRBHSS 2020
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Housing and Drinking Water, NRBHSS 2020
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Mental Health and Wellness, NRBHSS 2020
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Interpersonal Violence and Community Safety, NRBHSS 2021
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Definition of an Inuit Cultural Model and Social Determinants of Health for Nunavik; Community Component, NRBHSS 2021
- Qanuilirpitaa? 2017 Nunavik Inuit Health Survey: Sociodemographic Characteristics, NRBHSS 2021

2. Documents and reports produced by QUEBEC agencies and departments:

- Société d'habitation du Québec, Rapports annuels (from 1975 to 2022)
- Société d'habitation du Québec, Plan stratégiques (2001-2004, 2002-2007, 2008-2011, 2011-2016, 2017-2021, 2021-2026)
- L'action gouvernementale en habitation: Orientations et plan d'action, SHQ 1997
- Partenariat, développement, actions: Affaires autochtones, orientations du gouvernement du Québec, SAA 1998
- Le logement au Nunavik: document d'information, SHQ 2001
- Les politiques de l'habitation en perspective: actes du colloque tenu le 7 decembre 2001 a l'INRS-Urbanisation, culture et societe, SHQ 2002
- Plan Nord: Building Northern Québec Together. The Project of a Generation, Quebec 2011
- Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2010-2013, Quebec 2009
- Plan Nord: Building Northern Québec Together. The Project of a Generation, Quebec 2011
- Aging and Living Together - At Home, in One's Community, in Québec, Quebec 2012
- Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination Towards Aboriginal People: Consultation Paper, SAA 2013
- Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2010-2013: Bilan, Quebec 2014
- Ensemble pour éviter la rue et en sortir: Politique nationale de lutte à l'itinérance, Quebec 2014

- Mobilisés et engagés pour prévenir et réduire l'itinérance: Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2015-2020, Quebec 2014
- Politique nationale sur l'habitation: Rapport synthèse des rencontres préparatoires 2014
- The Plan Nord Toward 2035: Action Plan 2015-2020, Quebec 2015
- The Plan Nord Toward 2035: 2015-2020 Action Plan. Reference Framework. Quebec 2015
- Do More, Do Better - Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit, Quebec, SAA 2017
- Habiter notre Nord: Plan d'Action Nordique 2020-2023
- Vers une nouvelle approche d'intervention en habitation: Bilan de la consultation publique mené entre juin et décembre 2016, SHQ 2017
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- Programme favorisant l'accession à la propriété et la rénovation résidentielle dans la région Kativik, SHQ 2018
- Living Together - Acting Together: Government brief submitted to the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec, Quebec 2018
- Plan d'action pour assurer l'occupation et la vitalité des territoires 2020-2022, SHQ 2021
- Living in the North: Northern Action Plan, Quebec 2020-2023
- Bilan des consultations en aménagement du territoire: Vers une politique nationales d'architecture et d'aménagement du territoire, Ministère des affaires municipals et de l'habitation 2022

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- An Arctic Housing Study, Northern Affairs and National Resources 1958
- New Ideas about Houses, Education Branch, DIAND 1968
- Living in the New Houses, Education Branch, DIAND 1970
- Development Strategy for Guideline Documents for Northern Residential Construction CMHC 1985

- Development of a Guide to the Planning, Design, and Construction of Housing in the North, CMHC 1986
- An evaluation of the measurement of housing need in Northern and remote communities, CMHC 1999
- Aboriginal Roundtable to Kelowna Accord: Aboriginal Policy Negotiations, 2004-2005, Library of Parliament 2006
- Northern Housing for Northern Lifestyles, CMHC 2008
- Let's Talk Housing. What We Heard: Shaping Canada's National Housing Strategy, Conference Board of Canada 2016
- Northern Housing for Northern Lifestyles, CMHC 2008
- Canada's Northern Strategy: Our North, Our Heritage, Our Future, Canada 2009
- The Northern Sustainable House: An Innovative Design Process, CMHC 2009
- Canada's National Housing Strategy: A Place to Call Home, Canada 2018
- Northern Housing Policy Recommendations, Polar Knowledge 2019
- Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, Canada 2019
- Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy: An Update, Canada 2019
- Cost of Delivering Housing in Canada - Northern Archetypes, CMHC 2019
- Near-net zero buildings in the north final report: Arctic Canada Passive House Feasibility Study. Revised, CMHC 2020
- Defining and Enumerating Homelessness in Canada, Library of Parliament 2020
- Northern Housing Report, CMHC 2021
- The Effects of the Housing Shortage on Indigenous Peoples in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs 2022

4. <u>INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS</u>

- James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement, Annual Reports (from 1986 to 2010)
- James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement 1975
- Entente de transfert entre le gouvernement du Canada et le gouvernement du Québec concernant le transfert de la propriété et des responsabilité pour le logement au Quebec 1981
- Agreement Respecting the Implementation of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement Between Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada and Makivik Corporation 1990

- Entente particulière concernant l'enveloppe de financement pour le développement des communautés inuites 1999-2003
- Inuit Partnership Accord: Partnership Accord between the Inuit of Canada and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada on May 31st, 2005
- Agreement-in-Principal Concerning the Amalgamation of Certain Public Institutions and Creation of the Nunavik Regional Government, 2007
- Partnership Agreement on Economic and Community Development in Nunavik - Sanarrutik Agreement, 2008
- Amérindiens et Inuits: portrait des nations autochtones du Québec, Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones 2009
- L'entente intervenue entre la Société d'habitation du Québec et l'office municipal d'habitation Kativik concernant la réalisation de logements à loyer modique au Nunavik 2011
- Entente concernant la mise en oeuvre de La Convention de la Baie James et du Nord Québécois en matière de logement au Nunavik 2010-2014
- Entente concernant la mise en oeuvre de La Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois en matière de logement au Nunavik 2015-2016
- Entente concernant la mise en oeuvre de La Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord Québécois en matière de logement au Nunavik 2017-2018 à 2021-2022
- Inuit Nunangat Declaration on Inuit-Crown Partnership 2017
- Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples 2018
- Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement 2018-2028
- Canada-Quebec Agreement regarding Reaching Home 2019–2024 (Entente Canada-Québec concernant Vers un chez-soi 2019-2024)
- Inuit-Crown Co-development Principles, 2022

5. <u>OTHER REPORTS, commissioned by or external to government</u>

- Eskimo Mortality and Housing, 1960
- Eskimo Housing as Planned Cultural Change, 1972
- Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Final Report. Volume 3 - Gathering Strength, 1996
- Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Final Report. Volume 4 - Perspectives and Realities, 1996

- National Final Report: Cross-Site At Home/Chez Soi Project, Mental Health Commission of Canada 2014
- Canada's Residential Schools: The Inuit and Northern Experience: The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume 2 2016
- We Can Do Better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat, Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples 2017
- National Urban, Rural & Northern Indigenous Housing & Homelessness: A Case for Support and Conceptual Model, Infocus Management Consulting, prepared for the National Housing Council 2021

Appendix B: Two tables of organizations and committees with a role in the housing sector in Nunavik

Section a) Les Instances - Organizations involved in housing in Nunavik:

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau (KMHB) REGIONAL LEVEL	Since 1999 Head office in Kuujjuaq New name in 2023: Nunavik Housing Bureau (NHB) In 2021, according to the organization's website, the housing stock consisted of 3,626 units.	7 council members: • 2 of which are elected positions from among Inuit tenants in social housing. • 5 are appointed: 3 appointed by KRG and 2 appointed by Quebec's MAMOT	Purpose: to transfer the administrative duties of Kativik's social housing from the provincial to the local and regional levels. Mission: To provide comfortable, safe and affordable home adapted to Inuit needs and culture. Through its programs and services, it contributes to the development of vibrant, sustainable and safe communities (KMHB 2022b)	• Responsible for all of the social housing units in Nunavik • Manages many of the responsibilities and tasks associated with social housing at the village level through their respective Housing Committees.	• The KMHB processes all housing applications across Nunavik and assigns housing units in collaboration with the Northern Villages' Housing Committees' recommendations. • It manages leases and payment agreements for all fourteen villages and it oversees renovation work on the housing stock, handles complaints, and collects rents.
Housing	Part of KMHB	5 Housing Committee		• Functions as the local arm of the KMHB in	Housing committees hold monthly meetings.

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
Committees VILLAGE LEVEL	Employees: • Housing Manager: front line client services role • Housing Clerk: most NVs have a manager and a clerk, but not all. (eg. In September 2022, Tasiujaq had a housing manager but no clerk (KMHB 2022a) • Maintenance employees and contractors to take care of repairs and maintenance of the units	members: • 3 housing committee members are elected every 3 years from among social housing tenants, and 2 more members may be identified by the NV from among its council members, or these two positions may also be elected from among the tenants (KMHB 2022c). • Housing Committees positions are frequently filled by women.		order to implement housing projects and maintain the housing stock. • Repairs and maintains social housing units • Assesses and prioritizes the applications for social housing submitted by residents • Informs tenants about rebates, regulations, and events • Acts as intermediary between tenants and renovation contractors • Relocates tenants during renovations, • Communicates new programs • Makes housing allocation recommendations to KMHB based on criteria and a points system determined by	

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
				KMHB	
Northern Villages (NVs) VILLAGE LEVEL	14 Northern Villages across Nunavik	• Elected officials: mayor, deputy mayor, secretary-treasurer, and several councilors. • Employees: a municipal manager, by-law officer, head mechanic and other positions		• Responsible for ensuring that the housing pads are built in their community for the number of new units allocated to their NV for the following construction year (KRG 2011, 75). • NVs run the infrastructure of the village such as the pumping station and water distribution, upon which all existing and new housing depends and must be integrated into the system.	
Kativik Regional Government KRG REGIONAL LEVEL	Created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. An non-ethnic public administrative	One representative from each of the 14 municipalities sits on the Council of the KRG as either an Executive Committee	KRG "has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare	KRG does not have a defined housing mandate. However, KRG lobbies, negotiates, and signs official agreements on behalf of Nunavik on almost all housing matters since housing is	• KRG maintains lobbying efforts for the housing needs of Nunavimmiut and reporting to other levels of government about the serious concerns regarding the housing situation

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
	organization	Member or as a Councilor	services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development" (KRG 2022).	delivered through its programs and services.	in Nunavik. • In 2009, despite 575 units being built in the previous ten years, Chairpoerson Maggie Emudluk, said that the new units would not come close to meeting the housing demand. And overcrowding was "casting a darker and darker shadow over the long-term physical and mental well-being of Nunavimmiut" (KRG 2009, 7).
Nunavik Elders Committee REGIONAL LEVEL	Formed in 2008 with the full support from KRG, who assisted in finding provincial funding for its activities		An advocacy group that addresses a host of issues that concern the Elders of Nunavik and "provides valuable stimulus" on getting the housing needs of Elders attended to (KRG 2008, 117).	• To carry out ongoing lobbying efforts with stakeholders on the issue of Elder-specific house design and construction.	• Participated in conferences and high level meetings including presenting at Quebec's National Assembly. • In 2008, the Elders Committee put pressure on the Quebec government to have more intergenerational

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
					housing in Nunavik, resulting in the Makivik Construction Division building the first intergenerational housing unit in Kuujjuarapik in 2009, and the second one in 2010 in Salluit (KRG 2009, 122). • Thereafter, a certain number of intergenerational units have been included in subsequent construction cycles of each year.
Landholding Corporation LHCs VILLAGE LEVEL	• LHCs were formed in the 1970s • Every NV has a Landholding Corporation (LHC), as established in the JBNQA. • Each LHC is a corporation, each with their	The LHC represents the JBNQA beneficiaries of each village.	• LHC has the responsibility to conduct its administrative duties "while promoting the cultural, environmental and social wellbeing of their JBNQA Inuit members" (NLHCA 2010, 2). • It has administration responsibilities over Category I lands. • the LHCs were "established	• The role of the LHCs overlaps with the responsibilities of the municipal council (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 93) • Receives applications for any and all activities that affect the land they manage, part of their administrative	The LHCs have suffered from underfunding since they were first formed, making it difficult to fulfill the powers with which they were legally endowed through the JBNQA

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	own name, such as Saputik LHC of Kangirsuk, Qaqqalik LHC of Salluit, Pituvik LHC of Inukjuak, etc. • LHCs areethnic bodies responsible for administering the lands, thus possessing economic, social and cultural importance for the Inuit.		to 'hold' or 'own' the Category I lands in the communities. Through these bodies, Inuit of each settlement should be able to *jointly own* their Category I lands" (2014, 8: Economic Development Part II:30 emphasis mine)	function. • There are application forms for blasting, quarrying, building fences, as well as for the construction of a privately owned residences on Category I lands under the Home Ownership Program and for new development projects over Category I lands. • Responsible for giving "authorization for temporary sub-leasing of a northern house to a third party" before it is passed onto the KMHB for approval (NLHCA 2020). • All construction decisions and several more minor housing decisions flow through the landholding corporations of each	

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				NV. These LHC application forms are only one of several steps required to gain permission to build.	
Nunavik Landholding Corporation Association NLHCA REGIONAL LEVEL	Formed on May 17, 2002 to represent all the LHCs as a non-profit organization (Makivik 2002, 73; NLHCA, n.d.).	LHC members from the NVs	The NLHCA plays a leading role in the administration, promotion, and protection of the use and occupation of Category I and Category II lands in accordance with the *Act respecting the land Regime in the James Bay and New Quebec Territories* (Q.R.S., ch. R-13.1) for activities including hunting, fishing, and trapping activities, mining activities, and environmental, social and economic development projects and activities (NLHCA 2022).		
Land-use committees VILLAGE LEVEL		The local committee is composed of six representatives, three from the NV council and three from the LHC.	Purpose: To simplify communication and planning between the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) and the Nunavik Landholding Corporations Association (NLHCA).	• Makes recommendations on municipal development projects, which local authorities may chose to follow or not (Breton and Cloutier 2017, 90).	
Makivik	Formed in 1978	Board of	Makivik is mandated	• Negotiator	• Over the years,

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Corporation
 	
REGIONAL LEVEL
	to represent all beneficiaries of the JBNQA	Directors	• to own and operate "large profitable business enterprises,"
			• to generate jobs,
			• to support "social economic development, improved housing conditions, [and the] protection of the Inuit language and culture and the natural environment" (https://www.makivik.org).
			
			The Makivik's organization's objectives are:
			• To receive, administer, use and invest the part, intended for the Inuit, of the compensation provided for in the JBNQA and the revenues therefrom, as well as all its other funds, in accordance with the Act respecting the Makivik Corporation;
			• To relieve poverty and to promote the welfare and the advancement of education of the Inuit;
			• To develop and improve the Inuit communities and to improve their means of
				representing Nunavimmiut beneficiaries to ensure there are bilateral and tri-lateral housing agreements
				• Political and administrative roles, include:
				  • Lobbying
				  • Negotiating
				  • Ensuring the construction of houses
				• Supports other Inuit organizations such as KRG, NRBHSS, KSB
				• Works closely with KRG on long-term solutions for housing
					Makivik's Economic Development Department has researched and improved construction methods, used more local labour, as a strategy to make up for the housing shortage, the SHQ cutbacks, and rent increases (Makivik 1998, 73).
					• In 1997 when other dossiers such as employment and economic development were transferred to KRG, Makivik remained the lead Nunavik organization tasked with ensuring social housing is provided for Inuit beneficiaries as a top priority.
					• Makivik puts the pressure on governments to commit ensure they

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
			action; • To exercise the functions vested in it by other acts or the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement; • To foster, promote, protect and assist in preserving the Inuit way of life, values and traditions (Makivik 2020, 169).		commit to renewing funding agreements for housing, which has sometimes taken months and years to negotiate.
Makivik's Construction Division REGIONAL LEVEL	Formed in 1998. Residential construction since 2000.	30% of its workforce consists of Inuit workers, though not all in construction positions. In 2020, an all-Inuit apprentice carpentry team was building a duplex "from start to finish," (Makivik 2020, 130).	Makivik's Construction Division objectives: • to ensure proper construction is undertaken while maximizing employment opportunities for the Inuit of Nunavik; • to provide training when necessary in collaboration with the Kativik Manpower and Training Department • to promote the local Nunavik economy to the greatest extent possible (Makivik 2001, 38).	• Builds social housing for Nunavik communities funded by SHQ and through various housing agreements. • Ensures that building supplies are shipped to select communities in advance of the next construction season, even when funds have not yet been confirmed, Makivik can keep the ball rolling while negotiations with government continue, to ensure a minimum of new units are built	Social housing units built by the Makivik Construction Division are transferred to KMHB for a nominal value. They become part of the housing stock managed by KMHB.

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
				each year (and be reimbursed through new funding agreements later).	
Kautaq Construction Inc. BUSINESS	Launched in 2012 a subsidiary of Makivik Corporation		Purpose: General contractor on civil and commercial construction (Makivik 2015, 60).	• Builds the construction pads needed for the new social housing units built by Makivik Construction Division, a job that is often completed in the autumn prior to the new construction season. • Supports Makivik Construction Division with "miscellaneous civil work" related to the social houses (Makivik 2014a, 67). • Supports the private housing industry in Nunavik with new house designs for Nunavikmmiut to build privately.	• Kautaq worked with engineers and architects and promoted 4 new house designs with 3- to 5-bedroom options for Nunavimmiut to chose from provided they apply to the SHQ Private Home Ownership Program (Makivik 2013c, 59). • To support its expansion, Kautaq has a camp in Kuujjuaq offering accommodations for construction workers. Kautaq's involvement in a wide range of development projects offers many opportunities for Inuit training development (Makivik 2020, 80).

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Société d'habitation du Québec
SHQ
 	
PROVINCIAL LEVEL
	Formed in 1967
	
	Started having a role in housing in Nunavik after 1981 when SHQ acquired the Nunavik's 800 social housing units from Canada
			Mission:
			To meet the housing needs of Quebec citizens through an integrated and sustainable approach. To do this, the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) supports Quebec citizens through : a supply of low-cost and affordable housing; a range of programs supporting residential construction, renovation and adaptation, and home ownership [and;] information and support services related to housing. (from SHQ website)
			
			The mandated responsibilities are to :
			• to advise the Minister on the needs, priorities and objectives of all housing sectors in Quebec;
			• to stimulate the development and concerted action of public and private housing initiatives;
			• to make low-cost or low-income housing available to the citizens of Quebec
				• Designs and implements housing programs and services that are guided by government policies and multi-year strategic plans, such as:
				  • HLM programs
				  • Construction of private housing
				  • Rent subsidy programs
				  • Subsidy programs for home owners
				• Functions as a knowledge resource supports and participates in many working groups, research projects, and pilot projects
				• Supports research on issues of sustainable building methods, adaptations to the climate, and house designs that meet the specific lifestyle needs of the residents	

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
			• to promote the development and implementation of programs for the construction, acquisition, development, restoration and administration of dwellings; • to facilitate access to real estate ownership for the citizens of Quebec; • to promote housing improvement; • to allow or improve accessibility to an establishment for handicapped persons (Québec 2021c, 8).	(Québec 2021c, 48).	
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing PROVINCIAL LEVEL			Mission: Soutenir, dans l'intérêt des citoyens, l'administration municipale, l'habitation ainsi que l'aménagement, le développement et l'occupation durables du territoire. Values consist of: • Collaboration : le personnel s'unit pour offrir l'écoute et l'appui du Ministère à tous ses partenaires et aux citoyens.	• Works with SHQ on all housing matters • Oversees the KMHB	Has held consultations in Nunavik (and Eeyou Istchee) with regards to new land-use management policy

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
			• Innovation : le Ministère encourage son personnel et ses partenaires à faire preuve de flexibilité organisationnelle et à rechercher des solutions créatives, audacieuses et adaptées aux réalités locales. • Professionnalisme : le Ministère offre ses services en mobilisant toute sa capacité, avec intégrité, respect et rigueur, au bénéfice de l'intérêt public. (Québec 2021b, 1).		
Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes PROVINCIAL LEVEL	Signatory on the *Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement* (Canada and Québec 2020)			Since many of the agreements and transfers related to Inuit issues and housing in the North involves establishing new economic relations between the federal and Quebec government, negotiations can require the cooperation from the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes.	

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones SAA PROVINCIAL LEVEL	Created in 1978 under the name Secrétariat des activités gouvernementales en milieu amérindien et inuit (SAGMAI). SAA replaced SAGMAI in 1987 Falls under the authority of the Ministre responsable des affaires autochtones		• A new and larger mandate since 1987 gives it the authority to negotiate with Indigenous people for Quebec and to ensure that agreements are implemented (Québec 2009, 52). • "The Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones is entrusted with the prime responsibility of maintaining ties between Indigenous peoples and the Gouvernement du Québec. It works with the First Nations and Inuit to facilitate their access to the various government programs and, in some cases, to adapt government activities to their needs." (from SAA website)	• Implements Quebec's policy for Indigenous people residing in the province.	For example: *Do More, Do Better 2017-2022* is a "Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit" produced by the SAA (Québec 2017a).
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corportation CMHC FEDERAL LEVEL	Federal Crown corporation since 1944 Minister responsible is the federal Minister of Housing and		Mandate states: "CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, while making vibrant, healthy communities and cities a reality across the country. CMHC	• Advises government on policy-making • Commissions research and studies to improve housing in Canada • Signatory on the *Canada-Quebec Housing Agreement*	• In 2016, CMHC launched a four-month long national consultation process about housing called "Let's Talk Housing" (Canada 2016). • CMHC was the lead on the resulting ten-

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
	Diversity and Inclusion.		works to enhance Canada's housing finance options, assist Canadians who cannot afford housing in the private market, improve building standards and housing construction, and provide policymakers with the information and analysis they need to sustain a vibrant housing market in Canada" (from CMHC website)	*(2018-2028)*	year *National Housing Strategy* which includes Northern housing as a priority. • CMHC has a Federal-Provincial-Territorial Housing Partnership Framework that has been endorsed by all provinces and territories (except Quebec). • CMHC has created bilateral agreements with all territories and provinces for funding to flow (including Quebec) (CMHC 2021, 5).
The House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs			Mandated to study a wide range of issues affecting Indigenous people in Canada, including to study the effects of the housing shortage on Indigenous People across Canada.	• Studies and makes required amendments to proposed legislation that relates to Indigenous people. • Conducts research, collects testimony, and makes recommendations to	A Report presented to House of Commons: "The Effects of the Housing Shortage on Indigenous Peoples in Canada." Witnesses included: President of ITK, representatives from Iqaluit, Igloolik,

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
FEDERAL LEVEL				the federal government.	and Nunavut Housing Corporation, but no representatives from Nunavik organizations (Garneau 2022).
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami ITK	Previously called Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC), called ITK since 2001	ITK governing Board: President elected for 3 years. VP, Chair and CEO, Four directors (voting members) represent the four regional Inuit land claims organizations National organization representing Inuit in all four Inuit regions of Canada.	ITK represents the national interests of Inuit in Canada, making presentations to legislative bodies and policy-makers and ensuring the protection of Inuit rights (Makivik 2002, 96–97)	Lobbies for better housing for Inuit	Multiple reports, position papers, Inuit policy, and submissions to governments related to housing in Inuit Nunangat, including the 2019 *Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy.*
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	Incorporated in 1984	National organization representing Inuit women in Canada	Mission is to be "advocating for the social, cultural, political, and economic betterment of Inuit women, their families, and communities" (Pauktuutit 2022a).	• Has been addressing the northern housing crisis for decades • Contributes to research about specific housing needs of Inuit women • Provides	1995 Report: "Inuit Women: The Housing Crisis and Violence" (Pauktuutit 1995). 2022 Report "Ottawa Inuit Women's Housing and Shelter

Name of body	Details	Members	Mandate, Objectives, Purpose, or Vision	Role in Nunavik related to housing	Meetings, Outcomes, or Influence
				recommendations implicating the housing sector • Creates survey tools for communities to assess their local shelter and affordable housing needs (CMHC 2022).	Needs Assessment" (Pauktuutit 2022b)

Section b) Les Regroupements – Committees and working groups associated with housing in Nunavik

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
JBNQA Implementation Forum	JBNQIA was signed between Canada and the Inuit of Quebec on September 12 1990. Signed by Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Makivik Corporation (Also called the JBNQA Forum) Meetings to be held 4x/year, in different Nunavik communities Special meetings may be called for urgent matters	Canada and Makivik It did not originally include Quebec, but their participation in the Forum was anticipated. In the year 2000, Quebec sent representatives to all three meetings of the JBNQA Forum, a move that was "warmly welcomed," seen as a sign that Quebec had a renewed interest in Nunavik (Makivik 2001, 20 and 23).	Created to review progress on implementing JBNQA, for a place to discuss issues across the parties, and to coordinate action on all issues related to the JBNQA (JBNQIA Section 5.2).	Provided the structure in which to create the Implementation Forum and the Dispute Resolution Mechanism Led to the formation of the James Bay Implementation Negotiations Office (JBIO) to monitor the implementation of the JBNQIA (though no working groups on housing were created through this mechanism) JBNQA Forum created the setting to get Canada to come to the table after years of refusing to despite pressure from Inuit to address the lack of commitment to the tenets of the JBNQA.
Technical Table of the JBNQA Implementation Forum	Formed in 2011 Not sure if it is still active.	Representatives from Makivik and Canada Has been led in the past by Makivik's Vice-President of Economic Development		Helps resolve issues at the technical level contributing to the smooth operation of the Forum, and thereby avoiding political interventions (Makivik 2011, 104).
Dispute Resolution	Signed in 1990	Makivik and Canada	Created in order to resolve	In 1998, Makivik used the DRM

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
Mechanism (DRM)	between Makivik and Canada (represented by DIAND)		disputes related to the interpretation, administration or implementation of the JBNQA and the JBNQIA (Annex H 2.1 JBNQIA).	mechanism to launch a formal complaint against Canada because they had refused to continue supporting social housing in Nunavik (Makivik 1999, 53 and 57). This action by Makivik was deemed necessary since all of their other initiatives at the political level had failed to bring results (Makivik 1999, 57).
The Technical Committee	Technical committee is focused on housing	Representatives from KMHB, KRG, and Makivik		Hire a consulting firm to design a new 2-bedroom duplex, in 2000, to extend construction season and Inuit employment. Makivik Board and KRG Council approved new design (Makivik 2001, 41).
Quebec-Nunavik working group	Formed in 2010 after leaders of Makivik and KRG called on the National Assembly in Quebec to pay attention to the Nunavik housing crisis.	Representatives from KRG, Makivik, and Quebec	Purpose: to study solutions to catch-up on the housing shortage in the context of the new Plan Nord such as creating additional social housing and homeownership programs for 2011	
Table Québec-Nunavik	Formed in 2011 as a permanent forum. Viewed as a necessary body by Inuit organizations.	SAA (Quebec), Makivik, KRG, KSB and NRBHSS	Purpose: to set priorities, orientations and actions to strengthen political and administrative relations, and to implement the JBNQA, Parnasimautik, and the Plan Nord (KRG	Brought optimism to KRG Chairperson that this group could strengthen political, economic, social and administrative relations between Inuit and Quebec in order to make progress on many files (KRG 2012, 14).

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
			2011, 16).	
Assembly of Partners (Société du Plan Nord)	Formed as part of the Quebec *Act respecting the Société du Plan Nord* as a special advisory body to the Société du Plan Nord with regards to northern development (Québec 2020, 9).	• Members represent the regions and local communities • 27 appointed members in 2022 • 2 of the members represented the concerns of Nunavik (reps of KRG and Makivik) • Other members included: Hydro-Quebec, Quebec Mineral Exploration Association, Council of the Quebec Forest Industry, CPAWS, reps from other Indigenous nations, and two University of Laval appointees (Québec 2023a).	Purpose: To provide support and advice to the Société du Plan Nord	
The Société du Plan Nord		The Board of Directors of the Société du Plan Nord does not have any Inuit representatives from the Kativik region nor any other Indigenous directors (Québec 2023b).	Mission: to contribute, in collaboration with the representatives of the regions and the aboriginal nations concerned as well as the private sector, to the integrated and coherent development of the area	

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
			covered by the Northern Plan, in keeping with the principle of sustainable development and in accordance with the Government's policy directions relating to the Northern Plan (Québec 2015a, 1).	
Kativik Region Housing Committee		Representatives from KMHB, KRG, Makivik, SHQ (Quebec), and INAC (Canada)		Has succeeded in settling a 2- year long stalemate in the negotiations to renew the 5-year JBNQA Housing Agreeement in 2015 (KRG 2015, 108).
Tripartite Housing Working Group		Representatives from KMHB, KRG, Makivik, Canada and Quebec.	Mandate: to put forward recommendations for short-, mid-, and long-term housing solutions.	A Phase 1 report on short-term housing solutions was published in January 2016 for implementation in the 2016 federal budget (Makivik 2015, 77).
Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee (ICPC)				The priority for the ICPC in 2018 was social infrastructure and housing. The 2019 *Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy* was an outcome of this committee.
National Housing Council	*Canada's National Housing Strategy* was launched in 2018, and resulted in the the *National Housing*	Includes a Federal Housing Advocate to be appointed in 2021. Meetings should include	Purpose: to build on the knowledge gathered during the 2016 national housing strategy consultations, and to design	The Council and the Advocate have the role of advising the government on housing policy planning and contributing to assessing the progress of the Strategy through the

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
	Strategy Act which resulted in the National Housing Council being appointed in 2020	representatives from federal, provincial, territorial, municipal levels, and from the housing sector, the research community, and from "people with lived experience of housing need" (Canada 2018a, 9). Interestingly, Indigenous peoples are NOT specifically listed as representatives to be included.	further knowledge gathering processes that should "increasingly democratize the development of housing policy in Canada" (Canada 2018a, 31).	annual reporting required (Canada 2018a, 31).
National Assembly Québec				Where Quebec politicians are made aware of the issues facing Nunavimmiut due to presentations by representatives of Makivik, KRG, Elders groups, and other Inuit leaders.
Katimajiit Conference	The Katimajiit conference held in Kuujjuaq in 2007 was a "historic meeting" for Nunavik (Makivik 2007, 13).	Participants included largest number of Quebec ministers alongside representatives from all of the Inuit organizations, and some federal ministers.	Purpose: To promote the economic and social wellbeing of Nunavik,	Multiple new funding commitments by Quebec arose out of this conference, including: A new one-time *Katimajiit Housing Agreement* for Nunavik to build an additional housing units. Inuit leaders promoted the term "Inuit Nunangat" to insist that Nunavik should be recognized an *Arctic jurisdiction* and not excluded

Committee or group	Details	Members or partners	Purpose, mandate, or vision	Outcomes and influence
				from other Northern and Arctic federal programs and policies.
Université Laval, Institut nordique du Québec	A committee called: Groupe de travail sur les energies nouvelles et renouvelables	SHQ shares its knowledge on northern housing with this committee		
Université Laval Faculty of Science and Engineering	A multidisciplinary committee called: Réduction des émissions de GES liées à la production et à l'utilisation de l'énergie au Nunavik : monitoring, modélisation et analyse multi-dimensionnelle pour une transition vers des solutions durables	Researchers from humanities and engineering	Purpose: To study energy performance of buildings by using SHQ performance data from its house prototype built in Quaqtaq in 2016 (Québec 2021c, 48)	Has built a house prototype in Quaqtaq in 2016 (Québec 2021c, 48).
Université Laval School of Architecture	Research partnership called: Habiter le Nord Québecois	Partners include organizations and government partners, including KMHB, KRG, the NV of Inukjuak, and SHQ.	Purpose: To research culturally appropriate and sustainable habitat development in Innu and Inuit regions of Quebec	• Puts forward new housing designs, concepts • Works closely with various Nunavik communities hosting design "charettes" with community members to identify northern housing design needs • Hosted the Northern Housing Forum in 2014