



**CREATIVE TOURISM IN SMALLER COMMUNITIES:  
PLACE, CULTURE, AND LOCAL REPRESENTATION**  
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ISBN 978-1-77385-189-1

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# When Our Ship Comes In: The Cultural Impact of Cruise Tourism on Northern Canadian Communities

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## Introduction

In August 2016, the *Crystal Serenity*, a thousand-passenger luxury cruise ship, sailed through the Northwest Passage in Canada's North. Although smaller expedition cruise ships have been plying these waters for a number of years, the *Crystal Serenity* is the largest passenger ship to make the passage, raising the stakes for a region that is already trying to cope with the impacts of climate change due to rapidly melting sea ice. Its passage was widely covered in the Canadian and international media (Landriault 2019), and it has spurred governments at all levels to consider possible catastrophic occurrences—such as oil spills and other marine accidents—in the remote and sensitive Canadian Arctic. But beyond concerns such as the lack of infrastructure to cope with large vessels and the difficulties of monitoring and regulating marine traffic in such a remote area, there lie many less tangible issues that pose long-term challenges for governance and quality of life in Canada's northern regions. These include the potential social, economic, and environmental disruptions caused by huge incursions of tourists, as well as the cultural effects that mass tourism could have on small, remote Indigenous communities in the Canadian Arctic. While these impacts can be addressed to a certain extent by policy interventions, the complex history of the region and the unique world views of the peoples who inhabit it influence not only the short-term costs and

benefits of cruise tourism, but also the longer-term sustainability of Arctic cultures and ecosystems.

This chapter explores risks to environmental, economic, social, and cultural sustainability in these communities, as well as the complicated relationship between creative practices, cultural tourism, Indigenous/Inuit values and world views, and local planning practices in this part of Canada. It will also discuss some of the ethical and practical implications of Inuit–cruise passenger interactions, and explore the adaptive capacities of these communities to cope with larger and more frequent cruise tourism incursions.

## Culture, Creativity, Sustainability, and Tourism—A Complicated Relationship

The *Crystal Serenity's* passage highlights the complicated relationship between culture, creativity, sustainability, and tourism, both in general terms and in the specific context of the North—topics that have also been discussed by de la Barre and by Aquino and Burns in other chapters in this volume. Definitions of each of these elements are contested, and when they are combined, they create a definitional and analytical maze. What is “sustainable tourism”? What is “culture” and how does it fit within the contested field of “sustainable tourism”? What is “creative tourism”? And how does creative tourism fit within the unique environment of Canada’s North, where climate change threatens to erode the basis of the region’s culture and the creative practices embedded in this fragile place?

The concept of “sustainable tourism” contains a number of inherent contradictions and paradoxes. Sustainable tourism began as a form of “alternative tourism,” which was put forward as an alternative to conventional mass tourism in the 1980s (Weaver 2015). However, several contradictions have emerged within the concept and practice of alternative tourism. Many of the expectations for such local, small-scale, community-based tourism have failed to materialize. Often, this type of tourism is dominated by elites and fails to meet the economic needs of host communities because of its small scale. It also frequently relies upon the facilities and services of mass tourism systems, especially in the area of transportation. Indeed, it can become an appendage of mass tourism, rather than a true alternative (Weaver 2015, 13–14).

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2014) has defined sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities.” It suggests that besides making optimal use of environmental resources, sustainable tourism should also “respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities” and “ensure viable, long-term economic operations” (UNWTO 2014). However, as Butler (2015) has argued, definitions such as these contain within them a series of paradoxes. As with “alternative tourism,” a sustainable tourism site or destination may be too specialized to meet expectations for economic development or may be degraded or damaged by too many visitors. But the paradox most relevant to the topic of cruise tourism in Canada’s North is that “most tourism is, and will remain unsustainable because it involves travel” and that all forms of travel “beyond walking, sailing, cycling, or horse drawn forms involve the use of non-sustainable energy sources” (Butler 2015, 74). Mass cruising in Canada’s North relies on motorized vessels burning large amounts of fossil fuels that contribute not only to greenhouse gas emissions and melting sea ice, but also, potentially, to environmental damage from fuel leaks resulting from marine accidents.

Culture is recognized as an important element of the sustainable tourism mix. As UNESCO has stated, “Cultural and natural heritage sites, intangible cultural heritage, performing arts and museums are among the many interests that engage tourists and thereby generate revenues, employment, investments, and social benefits” (UNESCO 2017). However, culture can mean different things to different people, and it is always necessary to state what definition of “culture” one is using when discussing how it fits within the idea and practice of sustainable tourism. Smith (2016) suggests that Raymond Williams’s notion of culture “being about a whole way of life as well as the arts and learning” is a useful place to start; she also argues that the definition of “culture” used in tourism marketing has expanded from a narrow focus on the arts and heritage to encompass such everyday activities as “shopping, football, events, and all forms of food and drink” (Smith 2016, 1). In places with large Indigenous populations, she adds that “few indigenous and tribal peoples of the world sit around discussing the meaning of culture. Instead, they live and breathe it” (2).

In light of concerns about sustainable tourism, it is worth reviewing the various understandings of culture in fragile environments. Based on their research on culture and sustainability, Duxbury and Jeannotte (2013) identified five separate ways in which culture is treated: (1) as capital; (2) as process and way of life; (3) as a vehicle for sustainable values; (4) as creative expression; and (5) as complex networks of interdependent social and economic systems. In the case of cruise tourism in Canada's North, all five categories of culture are relevant. Canada's North has a stock of both tangible and intangible cultural capital that it has inherited and wishes to preserve, and the way of life of its inhabitants is very much a "formalization of practices by individuals and/or communities as they adjust to, survive and prosper in special contexts" (Rana and Piracha 2007, 22). The philosophy, ethics, Traditional Knowledge, and values of Indigenous Peoples in Canada's North have helped sustain their communities in the past and continue to guide them in their way of life. Creative expression, in the form of the visual and performing arts, is part of the fabric of northern communities, as well as being a major source of revenue (Milne, Ward, and Wenzel 1995; Nordicity Group and Uqsiq Communications 2010; Big River Analytics 2017). Finally, the complex relationships and feedback loops between culture and socio-economic systems in the North have created systems of adaptive renewal that contribute to community resilience (Lemelin et al. 2012; Bennett and Lemelin 2015).

Creative tourism, as defined by UNESCO, is "travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture" (UNESCO 2006, 3, quoted in Richards 2011, 1237). Richards (2011) argues that the embeddedness of creative knowledge and skills is one of the main attractions of creative tourism, which packages cultural capital—both tangible and intangible—into an "experience" that is often a key part of the local symbolic economy (1228). Further, as tourism becomes a more important element of the local economy, it can begin to reshape the traditional culture by encouraging new creative dimensions and forms of expression (1236). Tourists in this context become change agents, as "consumers can influence the politics of the product and production process through . . . their consumption behaviour" (Verbeek and Mommaas 2008, 639).

A broad overview of the history, climate, geography, socio-economic, and political status of Canada's North will set the stage for how these elements come together in the specific context of cruise tourism.

## Background on Canada's North

Canada's three northern territories—Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and Yukon—together comprise almost 4 million square kilometres or approximately 40 per cent of Canada's total area. Politically, they are self-governing but have less autonomy than the Canadian provinces and rely heavily upon the federal government for infrastructure and services. The temperature in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, the territory that has experienced the most cruise tourism, averages -27 degrees Celsius in January and rises to between 2 and 8 degrees Celsius between June and September (Nunavut Tourism, n.d.a). However, since 1980, air temperatures over the Arctic Ocean have increased by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius due to climate change, and the length of the Arctic summer has increased by five to ten weeks throughout the Arctic (Hoag 2016).

The total population of the three territories in 2016 was only 113,604, with about 50 per cent of the inhabitants claiming Aboriginal ancestry (Statistics Canada, n.d.).<sup>1</sup> This population lives in small communities stretched across an expanse greater than the distance between Dublin and Moscow. The percentage of the population aged fourteen and under is almost twice as high in Nunavut as in the rest of Canada (Statistics Canada, n.d.; Southcott and Walker 2015, 28).

Prior to contact with Europeans, the social economy of the North was based on hunting and gathering and was heavily dependent on environmental conditions, which dictated the movements of animal species such as bears, caribou, and whales, as well as the relative abundance or scarcity of the animal harvest. As Southcott and Walker note, "the fur trade introduced a new system of relations to the region that can best be called pre-industrial colonialism" (2015, 22). This system, along with the whaling industry, which began to develop in the eastern Arctic in the eighteenth century, did not eradicate the traditional economy but transformed it from a purely subsistence basis to one that "combined subsistence with a dependence on servicing the economic needs of primarily European populations" (24).

These relations continued under the subsequent system of industrial colonialism, based on mining and petroleum, which started with the Klondike gold rush in the Yukon in the late nineteenth century and the discovery of large oil and gas deposits in the Mackenzie Delta region of the Northwest Territories in the 1960s (Southcott and Walker 2015, 24–5). In both cases, these industries relied upon workers imported from the South and excluded Indigenous Peoples, who continued to rely upon their traditional subsistence economy. In the 1950s, the federal government began to move Inuit populations into permanent settlements (sometimes by coercive means) to facilitate the delivery of health, educational, and social services. In the new settlements, the colonial pattern continued in the form of externally controlled administration (Haalboom and Natcher 2013, 363) and importation of workers from the South to deliver services (Southcott and Walker 2015, 26). Along with high unemployment rates among the Aboriginal population of the northern territories, other legacies of colonialism in the North include high suicide rates and relatively lower levels of educational achievement (Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency 2016; Conference Board of Canada 2014; Hicks 2015).

The current economy in Canada's North is "mixed," with the subsistence activities of the original hunting-and-gathering societies coexisting with private-sector resource extraction and the activities of governments—health, education, policing, and social services (Southcott and Walker 2015). A significant social economy, based on co-operatives or other collectively owned and operated organizations, has arisen in the North as a reflection of the region's traditional values of sharing and communal activity (Southcott and Walker 2015; MacPherson 2015). A 2008 census counted almost twelve hundred social economy organizations in the three territories, with the highest numbers operating in the areas of tourism, sport and recreation, social services, and arts and culture (Southcott and Walker 2015, 35, 43). Over ten thousand people are employed by social economy organizations, representing about 20 per cent of all employment in the region (45). Co-operatives in the North play a major role in producing and selling artworks, particularly Inuit prints and sculptures, and in sponsoring and supporting cultural events, such as music, dance, drumming performances, and the Arctic Winter Games. They are often viewed as the best vehicle for maintaining local control

over such cultural activities and “joining the two activities of money and culture” (MacPherson 2015, 153–4). In 2011, the tourism industry contributed \$147 million to the economies of the three territories (HLT Advisory, Tourism Industry Association of Canada, and Visa Canada 2012), with cruise tourism introducing a new source of revenue.

## Evolution of Cruise Tourism in Canada’s North

Historically, because of its remoteness and cold climate, Canada’s North was not a major centre of maritime activity, and the Canadian government’s policies tended to focus mainly on the issue of Canada’s sovereignty over the lands and waters that make up the Arctic Archipelago. However, despite the inhospitable climate, the high Arctic has for centuries attracted explorers and adventurers searching for the fabled Northwest Passage, a sea route that would shorten the distance between Europe and Asia by as much as ten thousand kilometres as compared to conventional routes through the Panama or Suez Canals (Guy and Lasserre 2016, 1). The most famous of these explorers—Sir John Franklin—led a doomed expedition into the Passage in 1845, where he and his entire crew of 129 men perished. It was only in 2014 and 2016 that the wrecks of his two ships—the *HMS Erebus* and the *HMS Terror*—were discovered in the waters off King William Island (Neatby and Mercer 2016).

The Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen was the first to navigate the entire length of the approximately 7,000-kilometre-long Passage in the *Gjoa* in 1903–5, but no other ship was able to repeat this feat until 1940–2, when a Royal Canadian Mounted Police schooner, the *St. Roch*, made the trip (Headland 2020, 3). Between those two voyages and the 1970s, there were only nine transits of the Northwest Passage, mostly by icebreakers and research vessels (11). Due to the rapid decrease in ice cover as a result of climate change,<sup>2</sup> the number of transits increased sharply from about four per year in the 1980s to about twenty to thirty between 2009 and 2013 (Government of the Northwest Territories 2015). Since 2006, the southern route<sup>3</sup> of the Northwest Passage has been free of sea ice for most of the summer. By August 2016, both the northern and southern routes were almost completely ice free, and Arctic sea ice coverage was the fourth-smallest ever recorded by satellites (Di Liberto 2016). In 2019, sea ice coverage in the eastern Arctic was below 5 per cent by September, the

lowest on record, leading to a record high of 147 ships visiting Canadian Arctic waters between May and October, a 70 per cent increase since 2009 (Friedman 2020).

The touristic appeal of these remote and treacherous waters was proven in 1984, when the *Lindblad Explorer* became the first cruise ship to traverse the Passage. This venture was followed by many others, and by 2015, cruise ships and cruise ship icebreakers constituted 16 per cent of the marine traffic through the Passage (Government of the Northwest Territories 2015). Between 2005 and 2014, 26 cruise ships or touristic icebreakers transited the Northwest Passage, and a total of 149 cruise ships visited the Canadian Arctic (although not all traversed the Northwest Passage), accounting for approximately 6 per cent of the total marine traffic in the Arctic in those years (Guy and Lasserre 2016, 11).

As table 5.1 indicates, as the ice has melted, the volume of cruise tourism has steadily increased. In 2016, 11 cruise ships registered with the Nunavut Department of Economic Development and Transportation, some stopping more than once in several communities. For example, in Pond Inlet, a community at the eastern approach to the Northwest Passage, 6 cruise ships visited once between August 8 and September 4, and 3 visited twice (Government of Nunavut 2016).<sup>4</sup> In the summer of 2018, 12 cruise ships carrying between 132 and 530 passengers registered with the Government of Nunavut, stating their intention to make 63 visits to 13 communities (DEDT 2019), although about half of these visits were cancelled due to adverse ice and weather conditions (Tranter 2019). In 2019, the Canadian Coast Guard reported that 27 vessels made full transits of the Northwest Passage (Canadian Coast Guard 2019).

While the volume is increasing, the number of cruise passengers visiting Canada's North is still far below that of other northern regions. In 2015, Alaska welcomed over a million cruise passengers, Svalbard in Norway around 35,000, and Greenland about 20,000. This compares to the roughly 4,700 cruise passengers who landed in Nunavut in 2016 (DEDT 2016). In many areas—marine support infrastructure, regulations, and tourism promotion—Canada is playing catch-up (Dawson et al. 2016a). However, interest in shipping through the Northwest Passage has steadily grown, and Canada's historical claim to sovereignty over the Passage is being challenged by the United States, Russia, and China, which see the route's

Table 5.1. Nunavut Cruise Tourism Statistics

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of operators	6	4	6	6	7	8	8
Total vessels	7	5	6	8	8	11	11
Total voyages	13	9	13	21	15	23	25
Total community visits*	32	25	31	45	39	52	59
Total passengers**	1,398	1,353	2,153	3,289	1,905	3,364	4,758

Source: Government of Nunavut (quoted in Sevunts 2017)

\* Community visits are based on provided itineraries and do not account for cancellations

\*\* Passenger numbers assume maximum capacity of cruise vessels

commercial possibilities, regardless of the environmental and logistical challenges of sending ships through the area (McCoy 2016; Struzik 2016). This is creating more pressure to address the issues surrounding marine shipping, including cruises.

### Cruise Tourism: Weighing the Tangible and Intangible Risks and Benefits

There are many reasons why cruise ship tourists might be interested in visiting Canada’s North, but one major motivation is the notion of “last chance tourism,” which has been defined as “tourists explicitly seek[ing] vanishing landscapes or seascapes, and/or disappearing natural and/or social heritage” (Lemelin et al. 2010, 478). This motivation has also been referred to as “extinction tourism” (Migdal 2016; McKie 2016) or “last frontier tourism” (Johnston et al. 2012). Whatever the terminology used, because of climate change, the Canadian Arctic’s environmental, social, economic, and cultural ecosystems are under increasing stress, making the area prime ground for the “last chance” traveller (Stewart et al. 2007; Dawson et al. 2011). The tangible impacts of cruise tourism fall mainly within the environmental and economic spheres of northern communities, while the intangible ones are seen most readily in the social and

cultural spheres. While the risk analysis presented below is separated into four categories, these categories are interlinked, rather than discrete, and tangible and intangible impacts often intersect categorical boundaries. As Dawson, Maher, and Slocombe (2007) have argued, a systems approach to tourism management in the Arctic is essential to understanding the interconnected impacts on biophysical and human systems.

## Environmental

The most serious risk from cruise tourism stems from climate change in the Arctic, which has contributed to the rapid melting of sea ice. In assessing the environmental risks to shipping in the North, the insurance company Allianz highlighted the lack of reliable marine maps for about 90 per cent of the Arctic, the lack of rescue and oil clean-up capacity in the area if something should go wrong,<sup>5</sup> and the lack of training in northern navigation for many crews (Allianz n.d.). An example of these risks occurred in August 2010 when a small cruise ship, the *MV Clipper Adventurer*, carrying about two hundred passengers, ran aground near Kugluktuk, Nunavut. While there was no loss of life or oil as a result of this incident, it took more than two days for the nearest Canadian Coast Guard vessel to arrive at the scene to provide assistance (Leblanc 2016).

All types of Arctic shipping pose threats to the region's wildlife. These threats include ship strikes of marine mammals, the introduction of alien species, disruption of migratory patterns of marine mammals, toxin and noise pollution of habitat, and acceleration of ice melts from ships' carbon emissions (Arctic Council 2009; Hoag 2016; Stewart et al. 2013). Sea ice loss is also affecting the population health and geographic distribution of wildlife in the North and changing hunting, fishing, and gathering practices. Traditional travel routes have been disrupted; some areas have become inaccessible; and pressure has been put on the mixed economy of the Arctic (Dawson, Maher, and Slocombe 2007). The Traditional Knowledge of Elders is also becoming less reliable as weather patterns change. Heritage sites that had been preserved by the Arctic permafrost are becoming more vulnerable as the permafrost thaws and exposes archaeological sites and artifacts to rot and decay (Nunavut Climate Change Centre n.d.). All of these elements pose ethical dilemmas for those involved in the promotion and operation of cruise tourism in the North. To what extent can the

impact of cruise tourism on an already stressed environment be justified by the economic opportunities that this activity can potentially provide to communities in the North?

## Economic

Culture plays a significant role in the northern economy. In 2006, artists in the three northern territories comprised 1.02 per cent of the labour force, as compared to the national average of 0.77 per cent. In the community of Cape Dorset in Nunavut, artists made up over 9 per cent of the labour force (Hill Strategies 2010). There are an estimated 13,650 Inuit visual artists in Canada, and in 2015 they earned about \$33 million from their art and generated an estimated additional \$12.6 million in spin-off economic activity (Big River Analytics 2017).<sup>6</sup> Almost one-third of Indigenous people in the Arctic earn income from selling artworks, and some 18 per cent of Arctic residents manufacture crafts for sale (Petrov 2014, 168).

Before the *Crystal Serenity* made its historic voyage through the Northwest Passage, residents of Ulukhaktok, Cambridge Bay, and Pond Inlet, where the ship was scheduled to stop, were optimistic about cruise passenger spending on local arts and crafts (Brown 2016; Kyle 2016; Hopper 2016). However, the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association estimates that the average cruise ship passenger spent only \$75 on artworks (Hopper 2016), and the overall economic benefits to communities tended to be less than anticipated.

Cruise ship passengers spend an average of \$692 in the territory, as compared to about \$2,500 spent by land-based tourists, who must also pay for food and lodging (Sorensen 2016). The Nunavut government's tourism and cultural industries director has remarked that "the communities didn't feel like they were part of the economic development. They felt the tourists on the cruise ships just came, took some pictures, and left" (Murray 2016).

One of the greatest barriers to sales is the prohibition against tourists from the United States and Europe bringing home artifacts made from traditional materials such as sealskin and narwhal ivory. Importing seal-skins into the United States has been illegal since 1972, and the European Union has banned sealskin products since 2009, although in 2015 the Government of Nunavut negotiated an exemption to the ban for products

harvested by Indigenous Peoples (Zerehi 2016). Since 85 per cent of the tourists aboard the *Crystal Serenity* were Americans, artists lost thousands of dollars in sales. In this case, the economic outcome can be linked to what Nunavut's senior advisor on tourism and legislation has described as southern tourists' discomfort with "seeing a bloody beach full of seal carcasses" (Murray 2016).

## Social

Cruise tourism has many other impacts on small Arctic communities beyond the economy. Most communities in the North have between three hundred and three thousand residents, and frequent short visits by large numbers of cruise passengers can be extremely disruptive to daily life. As one local tour operator said, "there's a lot of employment opportunities in the community when the cruise ships come in," but "for us here, because we have such minimal resources, we need at least a day between each ship" (Kassam 2016). The chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Council remarked that "far too many people will be descending suddenly into the communities and bringing far too much garbage with them" (McKie 2016). Some communities have had to hire security staff to prevent theft, and others have found that cruise tourists going online at community access centres can deplete a month's worth of bandwidth in a single day (George 2016). In one case, a ship bought all the milk and fresh produce in the communities, leaving nothing for locals until the next provisions flight from the South (Bramham 2016). People in some communities were also concerned about the possibility of ship passengers bringing illness into the community and about the potential for criminal activities such as drug and alcohol smuggling (Dawson, Johnston, and Stewart 2012d).

Decision-makers and regulators in Nunavut also worry about the lack of collaboration among communities to develop a diversity of tourism products and activities, the lack of guidelines for tour operators on how to conduct socially and culturally friendly visits, and the lack of capacity in many small communities to handle the increasing volume of cruise tourism (Johnston et al. 2012).

Residents of Arctic communities do not, however, view the social impacts of cruise tourism in a completely negative light. Interviews in several northern communities conducted by Dawson, Johnston, and

Stewart revealed that residents also welcomed the opportunity to share Inuit culture and traditions, meet new people, make friends, and reinforce a sense of pride in their communities (2012a, 2012b, 2012c). Some communities, such as Ulukhaktok, developed extensive cultural programs for the *Crystal Serenity's* passengers, which included arts-and-crafts demonstrations, guided tours, and local foods. As one Arctic-style dancer in the community stated, "It's very exciting to show how we live here. . . . That is so good" (Anselmi 2016).

## Cultural

Definitions of "culture" and "cultural tourism" used by tourism promoters can have varied meanings. In an environment such as the Canadian North, specific issues related to Indigenous cultural tourism must be added to this mix. Indigenous cultural tourism often involves visits to remote and fragile locations where environmental issues "impact greatly on the lifestyles and traditions of indigenous peoples" and their relationships with the land (Smith 2016, 129). Even in cultural domains that have been commoditized, such as the production and sale of arts and crafts, risks can accompany the benefits. In the Canadian Arctic, all these elements of culture are at play.

As the Nunavut tourism agency points out on its website, in English, "culture" has over 160 meanings, but in Inuktitut (the Inuit language) there is no such word. The closest term is *illiquisig*, which means "the way it is done." It encompasses all aspects of life, and it is worth quoting Nunavut Tourism's explanation in full to gain an appreciation of what this means:

Inuit culture includes their language, traditions, beliefs, music, art, handicrafts, foods, clothing, implements, technologies, and story. The kayak, the ulu knife, the igloo, and the inuksuk are distinctive examples. Dog sleds are still popular in Nunavut, but snowmobiles are more common. The rifle has replaced the bow and arrow, but to the Inuit way of seeing things, this is still "traditional" because it's logical and practical. From the cultural perspective of a hunting and fishing people, using GPS to find one's way back home is as basic as replacing stone arrowheads with high-calibre rifle ammunition.

Likewise, in music, the traditional sounds of throat-singing are sometimes now mixed to hip hop beats. Storytelling, which is a traditional performance art form, nowadays also includes the innovative work of Inuit filmmakers. The Inuit culture that people will experience when visiting Nunavut today is both vibrant and dynamic. It is an ancient, living culture (Nunavut Tourism n.d.b).

Although northerners have been remarkably open to change and innovation, as Smith observes, “it is an inevitable fact of tourism that cultural changes occur primarily to the indigenous society’s traditions, customs and values rather than to those of the tourist” (2016, 237), and this concern also applies to tourists’ often “selective” interest in Indigenous artistic expression (142). Threats to authenticity were voiced as far back as the 1990s. A survey of the residents of Cape Dorset, where Inuit carvings and prints for the commercial art market have been produced since the 1950s, found that “27% of respondents referred to . . . loss of artifacts from the community, negative cultural impacts such as the debasing of local art, and the potential for the community to lose control over the industry’s development” (Milne, Ward, and Wenzel 1995, 30).

More recent surveys have found similar unease with the cultural impacts of cruise tourism, although this was often counterbalanced by residents’ desire to showcase their culture and share it with visitors. Some residents identified cultural risks, such as a sense of intrusion by cruise visitors, with limited understanding of subsistence lifestyles, inappropriate photography of local people and property, and disturbance of historically or culturally significant sites (Stewart, Dawson, and Johnston 2015). However, other residents believed that cruise tourism helped to keep traditional drum dancing and singing alive and encouraged Inuit “to express our cultural knowledge and show how our ancestors used to play” (413).

The creative aspects of such tourism are often viewed as opportunities to pass along knowledge to the younger generation and to work together to share local history with visitors. For some residents, “this collaborative approach to showcasing their community to visitors was regarded as one of the key benefits of cruise ship visitors,” contributing to pride in the culture (Stewart, Dawson, and Johnston 2015, 413). In some cases, cruise tourism

has also encouraged performers to expand their repertoire. In Pond Inlet, a community that sees multiple cruise ships each summer, one resident indicated that performers were now working “to make the show a little more exciting—they used to sing ‘ayayah’ [songs from the ancestors] but it seemed a little boring for the people, so . . . they made up a little play as well” (413).

Overall, cultural programming in the Arctic strives to be real and not captive to what Smith terms “the romanticised” or the “exotic” (2016, 140). While cruise tourism builds interest in the heritage and traditions of the northern Indigenous Peoples, a delicate balance is needed to ensure that this interest does not overwhelm communities and that it contributes to, rather than erodes, sustainability. As Pelly argues:

The cultural experience offered to visitors must be a genuine reflection of the community’s life, with Inuit participants doing what they really do and visitors invited to share in that experience. What this means is simply that cultural programs must be developed for the community’s sake, not just for the tourists. . . . The visitor who is invited to share in the experience, even as a detached observer, is witnessing a living part of the community’s cultural reality. If the cultural programs are real, are alive, then the “cultural tourism” will be sustainable. (2013, iii)

## Indigenous World Views and Planning Frameworks: Assessing the Adaptive Capacities of Northern Communities

Sustainability is a governance challenge that must take into account not only the world views of northern residents, but also the legal and administrative frameworks that have been overlaid on them by federal, territorial, and local governments. Because of the nature of the Canadian federation, issues such as climate change, marine shipping and safety, and tourism development do not fall within neat jurisdictional categories, but are, rather, subject to varying degrees of multi-level governance (Higginbotham 2013; Rodon 2015). Jurisdictionally, the Government of Canada has the primary

responsibility for marine policies but the Government of Nunavut is responsible for land-use planning, which seeks “to find a broadly acceptable compromise between protecting Nunavut’s pristine land and water, and allowing tourism, mining, and other types of development” (Kujawinski 2017).

As a result, small communities in the North cannot respond autonomously to the pressures of cruise tourism. Not only are they required to work with various arms of the federal government, such as the Canadian Coast Guard, Transport Canada, and Environment Canada, but also the territorial departments of environment, economic development, and transportation, as well as industry associations like the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), and various international bodies, such as the International Maritime Organization. Meshing the priorities of all these institutional players with the needs and requirements of residents in northern communities is therefore a complicated, but necessary, process.

Assessing the response of northern communities to the risks and opportunities of cruise tourism requires an understanding of the way in which Indigenous world views are integrated into the planning and regulatory frameworks of the region. Jeannotte (2017) has argued that holistic world views, such as that of the medicine wheel, are central to Indigenous Peoples’ relationship to the land, as well as to their identities and well-being, but have only recently been incorporated into local sustainability planning in a limited way. Matunga (2013) notes that place-based planning in many Indigenous settings has been misappropriated by colonial powers, but that common themes of Indigenous decision-making include a determination to strive for consensus, use core values and Traditional Knowledge to guide the decision-making process, incorporate the wisdom of Elders, and conduct planning processes and meetings according to cultural protocols.

Recognizing the need to incorporate Indigenous world views into its public administration, the Government of Nunavut has directed that the Inuit concept of *Qaujimajatuqangit* be taken into consideration in all areas of policy development (Wenzel 2004). Inuit *Qaujimajatuqangit* is a unified system of beliefs founded on four principles: working for the common good; respecting all living things; maintaining harmony and

balance; and continually planning and preparing for the future (Tagalik 2009, 1). It forms the basis of many planning processes in Nunavut, including the *Iqaluit Sustainable Community Plan* (2014), which states that Inuit *Qaujimaqatuqangit*:

encompasses all aspects of traditional and modern Inuit culture, including wisdom, behaviours, world-view, beliefs, language, relationships, life skills, perceptions, and expectations. Inuit *Qaujimaqatuqangit* helps us to better understand and adapt to today's changes and challenges. It recognizes that everything is related to everything else, in such a way that nothing can stand alone. This is actually the pulse of our sustainability (4).

Traditional governance structures in Inuit communities are inclusive and consensus-based (Pauktuutit 2006; Ritsema et al. 2015). However, contemporary governance systems in the North are rooted in Weberian-style hierarchical bureaucracies. Ritsema et al. have noted that such governance styles are often at odds with traditional community approaches. They have suggested that a better cultural match is needed to achieve a “more acceptable balance between Western and Aboriginal belief systems, modern and traditional lifestyles, Canadian and Inuit governance, and among different age groups in Inuit society” (2015, 170).

The need to bring culture into the planning mix is evident in a study of cruise tourism conducted by Dawson, Johnston, and Stewart (2012d), which included 270 interviews with local residents of seven Arctic communities. The study also surveyed 42 policy-makers and regulators, as well as 18 cruise operators. Concerns with safety, economic development, social interactions, culture, and the environment were identified. Strategies to deal with the cultural issues included the creation of tourism codes of conduct, marketing training for local artists, cultural sensitivity training for cruise tourists, and enhanced education for tourists about traditional and contemporary Inuit lifestyles.

Governments and industry associations in the North are taking heed of these concerns and are attempting to adapt program and planning initiatives to address them. The Government of Nunavut's Department

of Economic Development and Transportation (DEDT) has developed a *Nunavut Marine Tourism Management Plan 2016–2019* that includes activities in seven areas:

- Planning with communities
- Understanding economic impacts
- Helping communities prepare
- Providing information and resources
- Providing input for development support
- Developing and implementing regulations and policy supports
- Communicating with industry and visitors (DEDT 2016, 8)

It also states that “For marine tourism development to be successful, it must contribute to the economic well-being of individuals, businesses, and communities without negative social and cultural outcomes and it must not exhaust local and territorial government management resources needed to organize and control it” (12). Moreover, it has expanded the capacity of the government’s Community Tourism and Cultural Industries Program to provide assistance for arts creation, tourism development, tourism and arts marketing, and development of new arts, culture, and tourism infrastructure (DEDT n.d.). In addition, the AECO began work in 2017 to develop new guidelines of behaviour for cruise ship visitors and host communities (Nunatsiaq News 2017). In 2018, the AECO signed a memorandum of understanding with the Nunavut DEDT, forming a Community Engagement Committee to collaborate in a number of key areas, such as training and guidelines for visits to archaeological sites (DEDT 2019, 29–30). Since January 2017, cruise companies sailing in the Canadian Arctic are also subject to the Polar Code, developed by the UN’s International Marine Organization (Sevunts 2017).

Ship traffic in the Arctic tends to coincide with areas that Inuit and other stakeholders have identified as “sensitive cultural sites,” which often correlate with sensitive ecological sites (Dawson et al. 2016b, 7–8). Recently, the Government of Nunavut has responded by conveying community

concerns about ships disturbing traditional harvesting areas directly to cruise operators and by monitoring incidents as they occur (DEDT 2019, 31). However, Dawson and her colleagues point to the broader need “to identify and prioritize existing local and cultural risks, including to culture, lifestyle, wildlife, and the local environment” (6). In a separate analysis of the policy and governance challenges, Stewart, Dawson, and Johnston have concluded that the vast geographical territory and decentralized management of Arctic cruise tourism has caused “a diffusion of responsibility among large numbers of organizations and departments, leading to management gaps, oversights, and communication difficulties” (2016, 27). In view of such inconsistencies, the same scholars have recommended that a harmonized policy framework be “established to ensure environmental and human risk is minimized, and economic and cultural opportunities are maximized” (30).

## Conclusion

Culture is an integral part of the Inuit way of life. Therefore, adjustments to the consequences of cruise tourism in the North must also include cultural considerations and must proceed from a fundamental concern about the sustainability of life in the region. To this end, several factors must come together to ensure that cruise tourism is integrated within a sustainable framework in Canada’s North:

- Canada should become more proactive in integrating all cruise tourism stakeholders.
- The predominant economic model in the North—a mixed economy with a strong social economy element—should be harnessed more consistently to harvest the benefits of cruise tourism.
- Indigenous world views and the traditional resilience of northern communities should be taken into consideration when integrating cultural resources into planning and regulatory frameworks for managing cruise tourism.

With regard to the first point, the territorial governments, especially Nunavut's, and local communities are attempting to address the issues that fall within their jurisdictions, but the Canadian government still appears to be working in a number of silos with regard to safety, security, monitoring of traffic, infrastructure construction and maintenance, and tourism promotion. As Dawson and her colleagues observe, addressing the challenges of cruise tourism in the North will “demand a great deal of political will and determination at all levels of government, within all sectors, and amongst all stakeholder groups” (Dawson et al. 2016a, 1438). This is unlikely to happen unless concerns about Canadian sovereignty in the North are combined with environmental and commercial pressures to overcome bureaucratic inertia within the higher levels of government.

Social economy organizations in the North are active in both the tourism and arts-and-culture fields, and they are increasingly likely to be relied upon in the area of cruise tourism. For example, in the community of Arctic Bay, the Arctic Bay Adventures Co-op is owned by the community and proceeds from tourism are shared within the community (Sevunts 2017). This type of economic structure ensures that communities benefit more than outside businesses from the visits of cruise tourists, and allows local residents to control both the quantity and quality of tourist activities. Given the vastness of the region and the place-based nature of many of the environmental and cultural risks described above, community residents are better placed than other stakeholders to foster a sustainable cruise tourism industry into the future.

This chapter has discussed how culture as way of life, as vehicle for sustainable values, and as complex network of social and economic systems forms the basis of much of daily life in the North. It stands to reason that these frameworks should also apply when planning for and managing culture as capital (in both its tangible and intangible forms) and as forms of creative expression (including crafts, works of art, and performance). Considering that northern societies are built upon traditional values of sharing and community relationships, the economic aspects of cruise tourism in Canada's Arctic cannot readily be severed from its social, cultural, and environmental elements without compromising the cohesive fabric of local communities. When the cruise ships do come into these communities, they are not simply vehicles for their passengers. They are

becoming part of the lives and relational fabrics of northern communities, with all the complex cultural interactions that this implies.

## NOTES

- 1 Three Aboriginal groups are recognized in the Canadian Constitution—First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (people of mixed European and Aboriginal heritage). The majority of Inuit are located in Nunavut, although there are small numbers in the Northwest Territories, Nunavik (northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut (Newfoundland and Labrador). First Nations and Métis Peoples in the North are primarily located in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories.
- 2 Satellite data show that since 1979, the summer sea ice has retreated by an average of 13.7 per cent per decade (Guy and Lasserre 2016, 6).
- 3 There are several routes through the Northwest Passage, owing to the many islands and straits in the Arctic Archipelago.
- 4 Despite the summer retreat of the ice, Arctic waters are only navigable by cruise ships in a narrow window of time between late July and early September.
- 5 Canada has only fifteen icebreakers to patrol the longest coastline in the world. In 2016, only seven were assigned to the Canadian Arctic, an area spanning 4.4 million square kilometres (Sorenson 2016).
- 6 Figures here and below are in Canadian dollars.

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