JOURNAL OF NORTHERN STUDIES Vol. 11 • No. 1 • 2017, pp. 11–36

GUY BORDIN

What Do Place-Names Tell about non-Human Beings among Canadian Inuit?

ABSTRACT Typologies have been proposed to organise Inuit place-names in several categories based on the meaning of and glosses on the names. One possible category gathers those toponyms that are related to beings that are neither human nor animal ("other-than-animal non-human beings"). In Nunavut and Nunavik (Canadian Eastern Arctic), this category is used quantitatively to name an almost insignificant number of sites. On the other hand, however, such particular place-names are to be found all over the lands inhabited by Inuit, witnessing the "other" nature of this space by comparison to the space commonly frequented by people and animals.

KEYWORDS Inuit, place-names, toponyms, typology, space, non-human beings, *tuurngait*, *ijirait*, Nunavut, Nunavik

Introduction. Inuit Place-Names and Their Typologies

Place-names, or toponyms, are empirical and symbolic testimonies of land occupation by humankind, plunging sometimes deep into history. They contribute to transforming spaces into places and homelands. They have a lot to tell about land knowledge, use, perception, appropriation by a people inhabiting a territory, or by the various societies and groups that may have jointly (no matter the modalities of such joint occupation) or successively been present on a territory. For instance, in the Canadian Arctic originally populated by the sole Inuit groups, aboriginal place-names form a toponymic substrate in the various dialects of the Inuit language. Depending on the region, areas presently known as Nunavut, Nunavik or Nunatsiavut can also be described by sets of place-names in English and/or French, which were attributed during the last centuries, first by navigators, explorers or traders, then by state authorities. Place naming reflects the variations in main political strengths at a given time. If one takes the example of the recent history of Nunavik (Northern Quebec), until the early 1960s toponymy was in the hands of the Canadian federal government which then populated the region largely with English place-names. After 1961, place-naming was transferred to the provinces, so Quebec started a policy of francization. In the last few decades, a new direction of making Inuit place-names official has been promoted (Müller-Wille 1983; Müller-Wille 1989–1990; Müller-Wille [ed.] 1990; Riopel 2012). A similar trend is being followed in other areas of the Inuit homeland in Canada.

Inuit toponyms collection and analysis have generated interest among successive generations of researchers, from early classical ethnographers to contemporary scholars. Among the main contributors in the Canadian Arctic, we should name, chronologically, Franz Boas, Knud Rasmussen, Therkel Mathiassen, Kaj Birket-Smith, the two Oblate of Mary Immaculate missionaries Guy Mary-Rousselière and Franz van de Velde, Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, Ludger Müller-Wille, Béatrice Collignon, or Darren Keith, who all worked in strong and necessary collaboration with and guidance from Inuit. Inventories, repositories, maps have been published, leading to major recent contributions, in particular the *Gazetteer of Inuit Place Names in Nunavik* (Müller-Wille 1987), the Nunavik Inuit Place Name Map Series initiated in 1991 (Müller-Wille [ed.] 1990), the series of Nunavut maps produced by the Inuit Heritage Trust covering presently a significant part of the territory[1] (in 2017, about 60 maps were publicly available).

These names participate of a reading and understanding of a territory and its landscapes, *directly*—to some degree—when a toponym is lexically the literal description of the designed place, for instance Tasikutaaq,[2] 'long lake,' or Tasiruluk[3] which is a lake "which is no good for fishing" in Nunavik,

Umiannguaq[4] designating a hill in the region of Iqaluit in Nunavut "that looks like an inverted boat," or Arviqsiurvik[5] in the area of Iglulik, which names a point as the "place where one hunts for bowhead whales," or *indirectly*—with variable evidence—when a gloss is necessary to reach full understanding of the name, for instance when the toponym recovers an underlying narrative originating possibly from long past, such as Qimivvik which designates an island not too far from Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet) in Eclipse Sound; the explanation for the name says that a "hunter returning from a hunt once got tangled in the dog team ropes in the 1800s, thus the name Qimivvik"[6] (map NU38B from Inuit Heritage Trust). An Inuktitut speaker without specific knowledge of the history of the area would understand that the name of the island has to do with "strangle" (*qimit-*), but could not tell more about the actual event.

As a very general rule, Inuit place-names reflect what seems to have appeared at the time as the most characteristic feature of a specific place to those who named it, whether attractive/positive, repulsive/negative or with no specific emotional marker, and then considered of prime importance to be transferred to others, orally for many generations, in repositories and maps as well for contemporary people. Looking again at the examples given above, experience taught people that fishing in a given lake was never very successful, hence its denomination as Tasiruluk, and that the island Qimivvik should be remembered first of all for what happened once to a hunter.

From these sets of data, typologies have been suggested as etic tools to classify toponyms into categories based on the meaning of and glosses on the names. Several of them, displaying varying level of granularity or different thematic focus, are summarized hereafter (wording and definitions are those of the respective authors).

G. Mary-Rousselière collected in 1966 about 250 place-names from the Mittimatalik area in North Baffin Island that he could distribute into four main categories: 1) strictly geographical names; 2) descriptive names; 3) names based on what can be found in the designated place; and 4) names that refer to Inuit customs (Mary-Rousselière 1966; see also Laugrand & Oosten 2009: 291–311)

In 1990, E. Goehring (1990: 75; cited in Byam 2013: 34), based on a name set from the region of Kuugaarjuk (Pelly Bay), proposed a typology made up of three classes: A) Descriptive names (which express physical features); B) Associative names (which relate to objects, animals or things that exist or have existed at a given place; and C) Commemorative names (which illustrate a specific event that occurred at a place). These two typologies are simple, but do not show a power of discrimination high enough to allow sensitive analysis.

Working among the Inuinnait in the Western Canadian Arctic, B. Collignon (1996; 2002; and 2006) proposed a three/four-layer classification ending up in ten categories, namely: A) Specific geographic terms; B) Non specific geographic terms (analogy); C) Non specific geographic terms (description of feature); D) Referenced to another place or to the general orientation of the land features; E) Self-reference; F) No other information; G) Daily life; H) Hunting and gathering; I) Movements and travels; and J) Accidental events.

D. Keith (2000: 27–41; Keith 2004) working among the Harvaqtuurmiut from Kivalliq (West of Hudson Bay) came up with a seven-category system: A) Geographical/literal-descriptive toponyms (which employ geographical terminology with or without modifier information (like *big lake*), and names that are simply descriptive of some sensory aspects of the location); B) Mythological toponyms (that locate an event in traditional Inuit myth; these stories usually have aetiological implications for some aspect of the environment); C) Historical toponyms (that record the locations of historical events or genealogical relations); D) Spiritual toponyms (that refer to supernatural phenomenon, religious objects or religious observances); E) Resource toponyms (that record the location of floral, faunal, mineral and other material resources); F) Metaphorical toponyms (that point out the analogy between the named site or area and something else due to morphological similarity); and G) Human activity toponyms (that relate to the activity of people in their subsistence and cultural lives).

The latter typology appears particularly attractive since it covers most if not all name possibilities while using the reasonable number of seven relevant categories. Quite noteworthy, it has the merit to put in evidence the existence of highly particular toponyms, for instance those that are related to mythology or to the occurrence of other beings that are neither human nor animal,[7] something that other published typologies do not directly permit although such place-names are to be found all over the Inuit lands, as we will see in this paper dealing specifically with toponyms related to these "other-than-animal non-human beings." In the following, to avoid stylistic heaviness, I will more often refer to them by the shorter expression "non-human beings" knowing that it is only partly relevant.[8] Also, most of the works published earlier on Inuit place-names focussed on local scale,[9] whereas here I will extend the scope to the largest part of the Eastern Canadian Arctic (Nunavut and Nunavik).

Other-than-Animal non-Human Beings

An overview of their variety

It is indeed striking to observe that most data sets collected throughout the Inuit Canadian Arctic reveal such toponyms. To proceed with our study, it shall be useful as a first step to remind what these entities are.

Among all Inuit groups, it was believed not so long ago, and it is still the case to some extent,[10] that not only humans and animals but also various kinds of other-than-animal non-human beings inhabited the world. These beings were endowed with bodies and vital principles, possessed sentience and agency, and formed societies of their own.[11] Classical ethnographic texts relate that some were by nature more similar to men,[12] others to animals, yet others were hybrids. In all of these relations one finds myths and tales involving "strange" beings, belonging to categories displaying very fluid boundaries, often collectively referred to as "spirits" in English, and wielding great or extraordinary powers. They could also become helping spirits (*tuurngait*) of shamans. These creatures constantly interacted with humans, and had an important effect on their lives, some were inoffensive and even helpful, others hostile and dangerous, while others adapted their behaviour to circumstances. More generally the borderline between hostility and benevolence was quite permeable and the outcome of an encounter between humans and non-humans was never predictable, especially as some of these creatures also had a few specific weaknesses, meaning that men were not always without defence.

I will not review nor describe here the many categories that existed here and there, this would go outside the scope of this study, but yet I will briefly present those that were and are most frequently told about, whether in mythic stories or in accounts of proper encounters supposed to have happened during travelling or hunting for instance, collected in the Eastern Canadian Arctic.[13]

Many accounts notably report meetings with *ijirait* (or *ijiqqaat*), literally 'those who have something about the eyes' in reference to their eyes (*iji*) that are set lengthwise in the face, with the mouth in a similar position. Otherwise, according to, for instance, North Baffin Islanders (Rasmussen 1929: 204–208), they are anthropomorphic, except that their nostrils are like those of caribou. They are normally only visible to shamans, whereas ordinary people are very much afraid of them, and hear only their whistling; in this case they must never show fear, for *ijirait* only attack timid and cowardly people. They are fast runners and can outrun all animals, including caribou into which they can easily turn in order not to be seen. *Ijirait* are on the whole extremely strong and can also make people forget what they have seen.

Table 1. Typology and characteristics of main non-human beings in Nunavut.

Categories	South Baffin	North Baffin	Kivalliq
"Those who have something in the eyes"	*Ijirait* - make humans go fast - live on caribou - very strong	*Ijirait* - invisible to ordinary people - have optical de-vice-mirrors - nostrils like caribou's - attack cowardly people - make humans go fast	*Ijirqat* - invisible to ordinary people - live on caribou - make humans go fast
"The shadow beings"	*Tarriassuit* - invisible to humans - quite cordial to humans	*Tarriaksuit* - only their shade is seen - benevolent to humans	*The shadow people* - become visible when they die or when one looks at them from the corners of the eye - live with humans in the same country
"The beings of fire, those who shine"		*Ingniriugjait* - never sleep - often benevolent to humans	*Ignuckuark* - live near the shore - have no eyelids - never sleep - friendly to humans
"The dwarfs"	*Inuarulligait* - hunt with knife - very strong - hostile to humans	*Inugarulligait* - very powerful - often hostile to hu-mans	*Inuakluit (Inuarugdligait)* - can make wind blow - grow in size as they wish - hostile to people
"The giants"	*The giants* - very strong	*Inukpait* - very strong - rather benevolent to humans	*Inukpait* - very strong
"Those who have an *amauti* (back pouch) or equivalent"	*Qalupalit* - look like humans - live in the sea - hostile, keep children in their *amauti*	*Amajurjuit* - hostile female beings *Qallupilluit* - live in the sea - keep people in their pouch	*Amautalik* - hostile female beings, keep people in their pouch - live up inland

In the same large region (Rasmussen 1929: 210–211), *tarriaksuit* or *tarqajagzuit* ('the shadow people') are human-like beings of disembodied appearance, only their shadow is visible, whence their name (*tarraq*, 'shadow'). They hunt by running to overtake animals that they then bring down. They are always good to people and make excellent helping spirits for shamans.

Other non-human peoples, still limiting ourselves to North Baffin cases and to name just but a few (Rasmussen 1929: 121, 208–216), include *inugarulligait* ('the little people,' or 'dwarfs'), *inukpait* ('the giants'), *amajurjuit* (hostile female beings like ogresses with a big hood on the back in which they keep people they capture), or *ingniriugjait*,[14] whose name means 'the great fire' and which live either on the coast or far inland. The windows of the dwellings of the shore beings are sometimes seen lit up, while terrestrial ones have some kind of luminous lard bladders in their houses, which would explain their name. It is said that whoever succeeds in obtaining one of these mysterious sources of light will become a great shaman, provided that he keeps it permanently with him for the rest of his life.

Table 1 gathers some of the main categories of non-humans encountered in Nunavut (Baffin Island and Kivalliq) as described in classical relations (Boas [1888] 1964; Boas 1901; Boas 1907; Rasmussen 1929; Rasmussen 1930). Their main features form the basis for their generic designation.

Among these categories, the particular importance of *ijirait* appears well reflected in their high prevalence in accounts on meetings between humans and non-humans, what seems further evidenced by the following aspect. Not much is said in general of the origin of these agencies, except for a few of them as narrated in a well-known pan Inuit myth, that of the girl who did not want to marry, but became eventually, after a series of dramatic incidents, the Sea woman (see also note 11). There are a number of versions with a rather similar start and final issue, but diverging episodes (see Merkur 1991 for an overview of the myth versions). The "typical" tale would go like this: A young girl refuses all suitors but finally accepts to have a dog for husband, which often takes human shape. She gets pregnant and gives birth to children—humans and/or puppies and/or half-men half-dogs—whom, after several events, she sends into the world in different directions where they would become ancestors of various "peoples." It is mainly from the births that divergences occur.

The main features of nine Nunavut versions of this myth are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Some features of the myth on the "Sea woman." (Names in bold designate non-human beings.)

Region	Husband nature	Children	Ancestors of
South Baffin (Boas [1888] 1964: 229)	Dog	a) Five puppies b) Five man-dog hybrids	a) *Qallunaat* b) Indians
South Baffin (Boas 1901: 164–166)	Father's dog in human shape	Puppies	- (*Qallunaat*) - ***Ijirait*** - ***Inuarulligait*** - Inuit
Kivalliq (Boas 1901: 327-328)	Father's dog in human shape	Puppies	- *Qallunaat* - Indians
North Baffin (Iglulik) (Rasmussen 1929: 63–64)	Father's dog in human shape	a) Five puppies b) Humans	a) *Qallunaat* b) Indians
North Baffin (Iglulik) (Oosten & Laugrand [eds.] 1999)	Father's dog	Puppies	- Indians - *Qallunaat* - ***Ijirait***
North Baffin (Iglulik) (Saladin d'Anglure 1983)	Family's dog	?	- *Qallunaat* - Indians - ***Ijirait*** - Tuniit[15]
North Baffin (Mittimatalik) (Boas 1907: 492)	Dog	?	- *Qallunaat* - ***Ijirait*** - **Dwarfs** - Inuit
Nattilik (Rasmussen 1931: 227–228)	Father's dog in human shape	Puppies	- *Qallunnat* - Indians
Nattilik (Utkuhikjalingmiut) (Rasmussen 1931: 498–499)	Father's dog	Puppies	- Indians - *Qallunaat* - ***Ingnerjuit***[16]

Besides the white people *Qallunaat* (in all versions) and Indians (in most versions), three categories of non-human beings are labelled as descending from this union between a young girl and a dog: the *ijirait* first of all (four occurrences), the dwarfs (two occurrences) and the "shining beings" (one occurrence). *Ijirait*, where they are attested, tend clearly to hold a prominent position among other-than-animal non-human peoples.

Shamans' Helping Spirits

In their mediation with other worlds, shamans needed the assistance of *tuurngait*, their helping spirits, which took on the most varied forms (see

for instance Boas [1888] 1964: 183–184; Rasmussen 1929: 113, 119–121, 144–145; Rasmussen 1931: 294, 300). Everything that existed could become a helping spirit, including rocks, animals, plants, humans, as well as all sorts of non-human beings such as those presented above. *Ijirait* were recognised as being particularly powerful helping spirits (Rasmussen 1929: 113–114).

The richest ethnographic source on the matter is most likely the compilation of the three hundred and forty-seven *tuurngait* established around 1914 by the Reverend Edmund J. Peck that F. Laugrand discovered in 1994 in the General Synod Archives of the Anglican Church of Canada. This list of helping spirits collected in South Baffin Island has since then been the object of a remarkable editing work (Laugrand *et al.* [eds.] 2000) in which each *tuurngaq* is presented with its main features: name, size, shape and appearance (such as human, animal, hybrid, dressed or naked, colour), residence, behaviour towards humans, etc.

Tuurngaq (singular of *tuurngait*) is hence a generic word for a "function," not a separate category of beings as such, at least in most Inuit regions, and a shaman could have several *tuurngait* that could be extremely different the ones from the others. In a few areas though, the word *tuurngaq* was or is still used to designate a particular category of beings. This is notably the case in the western part of Nunavik, and the neighbouring Belcher Islands, both being rather southern Inuit lands. There, the *tuurngait* form a distinct category, found in numerous accounts, which does not mean that shamans could not use them as helping spirits (Saladin d'Anglure 1992; Ouellette 2002).

Interestingly, the beings called *ijirait* in Nunavut are more than likely equivalent to those designated as *tuurngait* in large parts of Nunavik—where the word *ijiraq* is indeed rarely attested[17]—since they share the same main features: ability to be invisible to ordinary humans, have eyes set lengthwise, can see far with optical tools, are extremely strong and can make people forget about encounters with them.

In any case, these terms, *ijirait* and *tuurngait*, with their meaning framed by rather flexible limits, appear overwhelmingly in stories involving other-than-animal non-human beings.

Tuurngait, in the most common understanding of the word, are now often considered by Christian Inuit as demons or bad spirits (Dorais 1997; Laugrand 2002: 350), or even simply declared as belonging to a completed past, which is also the case of *ijirait*, as exemplified in the following two statements from Mittimatalik (Bordin 2015: 318, 321):

> I never heard anything about whether there are *tuurngait*, I only heard say that there were *tuurngait* a long time ago, before people believed in God, that there were also *ijirait* before people believed in God, but now it is no

> longer like that, I know that there is no longer *tuurngait* or *ijirait*, I do not think that they still exist, even when one travels inland. (Maata Kunuk)[18]

> Now that people are Christian there is no longer anything [i.e. no non-human beings], but formerly they existed through the shaman, through his body, people believed in the existence of *ijirait*, there are even places named after them, Ijiqqat, and it was said that although they were human they were invisible, they could fish, people saw them when shamans existed, through their bodies, they said that there were also other beings like the *inurajait* which could become caribou but could not be seen; once you have been baptized they are not visible, it is impossible to see them. (Alan Maktaaq)[19]

Place-Names Related to non-Human Beings from Nunavut and Nunavik

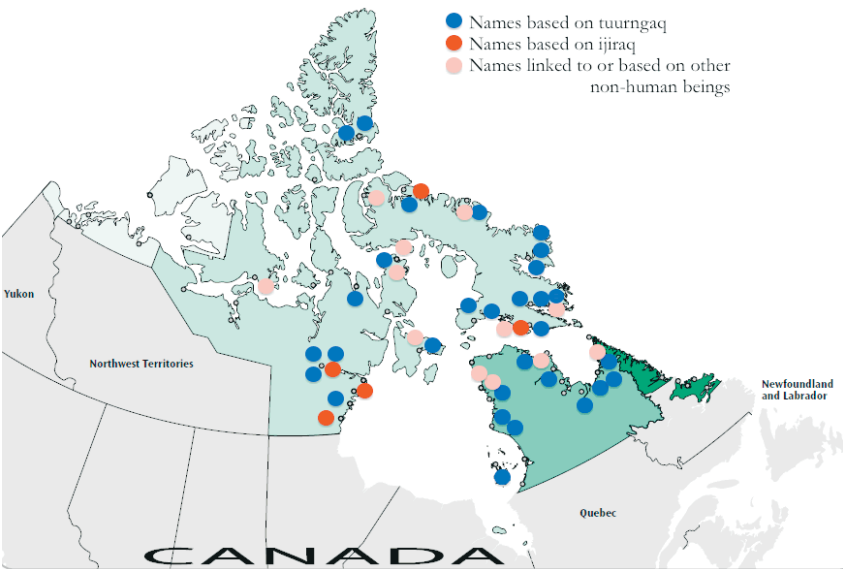
If we follow the place-name topology suggested by Keith and reminded in the introduction, then the testimony by Alan Maktaaq above provides a first example of a "spiritual" toponym[20] (Ijiqqat, 'where there are *ijiqqat*'). I have then scrutinized all toponymic material available from Nunavut and Nunavik that I could have access to[21] in order to identify place-names belonging to this category. The survey has resulted in a set of roughly fifty names, which are gathered in Table 3, by region and community/village.

Lexical reminder to read the table:
amajurjuk (sg.) = malevolent being which has a back pouch to keep people in
ijiraq (sg.) = anthropomorphic and very strong being which can get invisible
inugarulligaq (sg.) = non-human dwarf
tarriassuk (sg.) = shadowy non-human being
tupilak (sg.) = deadly spirit (see note 11)
tuurngaq (sg.) = shaman's helping spirit

This set of data is certainly not exhaustive since for several areas there are neither maps nor registries with Inuit toponyms available. This is notably the case for some parts in Western Nunavut (in the Qitirmiut region, see for instance the few available maps on www.ihti.ca). On the other hand, maps and other data in the Inuit language cover most of the areas Inuit used to inhabit when they were living according to their semi-nomadic lifestyle. Hence, this data constitutes a significant sample of place-names related to non-human beings that can be found in the Eastern Canadian Arctic.

On the whole, it comes out that the number of such place-names in Nunavut and Nunavik remains very low (<0.5%), confirming on a much bigger scale what local surveys already showed previously. The quantitative dimension, however, does not depict the whole picture, far from it.

Although not plentiful, these "spiritual" toponyms are indeed to be found all over the Inuit lands concerned, in particular in the Baffin Island and Kivalliq regions of Nunavut where they are relatively more abundant. Contemporary Inuit live in about fifty villages,[22] established largely in the 1950s and 1960s but which were already for most of them major places of life before Inuit settled down permanently. As depicted on Map 1 (built from the data in Table 3), and as far as Eastern Nunavut and Nunavik are concerned, it can be seen that there is one or two such place-names in the extended territory of most communities.



Map 1. Place-names related to non-human beings in Eastern Canadian Arctic.

Table 3. Place-names linked to non-human beings in Nunavut and Nunavik.

Place-name	**Meaning**[23]	**Nearest village + map**
EASTERN NUNAVUT—QIKIQTAALUK		
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Ausuittuq NU49A
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Ausuittuq NU49A
Inungnait	(Place where there are) *inungnait*	Tununirusiq NU47G
Tuurngaasi	Place related to *tuurngait*	Mittimatalik NU37G
Ijiqqat	(Place where there are) *ijirait*	Mittimatalik NU38B
Tarriasulik	Place where there are *tarriassuit*	Kangiqtugaapik NU27F
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Kangiqtugaapik NU37E
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Iglulik NU47D
Alianaqtulik	Place where there is something frightful	Iglulik NU47D
Quaqsaaraarjuk	A place where you wait for freeze up	Iglulik NU47E
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Panniqtuuq NU26I

Coordinates	Feature	Description (provided by the sources)
76.9642N 81.8474W	Valley	A place where there is something strange or eerie.
76.4269N 83.9778W	Old camp	Haunted place. (Archaeological site)
71.9886N 86.0330W	Point	Haunted place. They used to see little people there. Some Inuit were afraid of them. There are old sod houses around this point. It is a good place for seal hunting. "*Inungnait* were like *tarriaksuit* but more vicious as my grandmother said, they used to live in that place long ago, that's why it is called Inungnait" (pers. comm. from Max Kalluk 2017).
71.8925N 79.0918W	Lake	Sighting point of spirits. Booming pressure in ice in lakes causes loud spooky sounds.
72.5200N 77.5409W	Land	Ghostly forms that you cannot see directly, but at the corner of your eyes.
70.3472N 71.7053W	Point	Place where you can hear ghostly sounds. Not much known about this place.
70.8580N 72.1052W	Valley	No ghost. Sounds in this area likely related to glacier movement.
69.0656N 81.4665W	Rocks	A place where there are *tuurngait* (near the sea).
69.1712N 82.2733W	Hill	Spooky place; people have gotten frightened by some unseen force (5 km from the coast).
70.0827N 83.4045W	Creek	Place where someone got suddenly frightened or startled.
66.3514N 64.3569W	Route	Place where two people went to sleep in their tent but did not wake. Those who found them, perhaps bad spirits, took them.

Place-name	Meaning[23]	Nearest village + map
EASTERN NUNAVUT—QIKIQTAALUK		
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Panniqtuuq NU26I
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Panniqtuuq NU26J
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Iqaluit NU25I & 15L
Inurujulik	Place where there are *inurujuit*	Iqaluit NU25J & G
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Iqaluit NU25N
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Iqaluit NU25O
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Kinngait NU25M
Tuurngaqtalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Kinngait NU36A
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Kimmirut NU25K
Inugagulikkat	(Place where there are) dwarfs	Kimmirut NU25K
Ijiraqtalik	Place where there are *ijirait*	Kimmirut NU25M

Coordinates	Feature	Description (provided by the sources)
66.04N 65.24W	Campsite	Seasonal camp. Big char (on the coast).
66.2344N 67.7109W	Bay	Has to do with spirits (marine area).
62.9410N 65.9107W	Peninsula	Ghosts. This place has had this name for a long time, reason not known.
62.9260N 66.7850W	Island	Spiritual presence there a long time ago. Unusual experiences have been had here. (*Inurujuk* is somebody with no moral who does not care about others and rules.)
63.5591N 68.7562W	Valley	Valley north side of river (entire side). It has ghost or spirit and may be haunted? Eliya Padluq's brother lost in this area, never found. Inuki's father caught a caribou, called his wife for help, she left her baby in the tent to help and the baby was never found again. Place gives people eerie feeling.
63.0105N 66.3677W	Hillside	It has a ghost. Water can be obtained by travellers from here. A creepy place, when water is poured, there is a "creepy" echo-sound of water.
˜63.65N ˜71.67W	Island	Explanation unknown. (Just north of Ijiraqtalik below.)
˜64.23N ˜73.10W	Island	A place where there are ghosts, a place where people appear and disappear on the land.
62.7411N 69.6726W	Point of land	A creepy place, high waves in this area.
62.6442N 69.5683W	Island	A place of little people.
63.6037N 71.6771W	Island	Name for the invisible people that live at this island.

Place-name	**Meaning**[23]	**Nearest village + map**
EASTERN NUNAVUT—QIKIQTAALUK		
Tuurngasiti(ik)	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Sanikuluaq
WESTERN NUNAVUT—QITIRMIUT		
Inuarulligaq	(Place where there is a) dwarf	South of Kent Peninsula
Uvayuq	Person's name	Iqaluktuuttiaq NU77D
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Kuugaarjuk NU57A
Tuurngaqtuuq	Place where there are many *tuurngait*	Kuugaarjuk
EASTERN NUNAVUT—KIVALLIQ		
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Salliq
Tupilak	(Place where there is a) *tupilak*	Salliq
Tuurngaqtalik Kivalliq	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Qamanittuaq NU56D
Tuurngaqtalik Kanannaq&iq	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Qamanittuaq NU56D
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Qamanittuaq NU65P
Iglutalik ijirangmik	Place where there is the house of a *ijiraq*	Qamanittuaq
Ijiralik	Place where there are *ijirait*	Kangiq&iniq

Coordinates	Feature	Description (provided by the sources)
55.8394N 79.8930W	Point	Haunted place. Where there are spirits.
68.2408N 106.7536W	Island	Small island between Kent Peninsula and the continent (pers. comm. from Béatrice Collignon 2017).
69.1716N 104.7147W	Hill	This hill is a giant who was named *Uvayuq*. Related to the story about the origin of death.
68.7270N 89.0235W	Lake	
68.8908N 90.4300W	Islands and points	
65.0150N 84.6416W	Valley	Place where there may be spirits or ghosts.
63.9311N 81.7446W		Tupilak is probably the carving pendant resembling a demon with a large mouth. Place probably named for a person named *Tupilak*.
64.1146N 95.3986W	Island	Reason for name not known (kivataani: on the south-west).
64.1295N 95.3327W	Island	Reason for name not known (kanannaq: north-east).
	Cave	(Close to Qikiqtalugjuaq) (Keith 2000: 63–64)
64.64 N 97.14 W	Cave	It is a cave of an *ijiraq*—little people that disappear (Kigjugalik Hughson 2010: 106).
62.8856N 92.1439W	Land	Spirits can be felt here.

Place-name	**Meaning**[23]	**Nearest village + map**
EASTERN NUNAVUT—KIVALLIQ		
Tuurngalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Tikirarjuaq
Ijiralik	Place where there are *ijirait*	Arviat NU55E
NUNAVIK		
Tupilavvik	Place where there are *tupilait*	Killiniq
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Kangirsualujjuaq 24P-11
Tuurngait	(Place where there are) *tuurngait*	Kangirsualujjuaq 24P-11
Tuurngaq	(Place where there is a) *tuurngaq*	Kangirsualujjuaq 24P-07
Tuurngatalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Kuujjuaq 24J-05
Tuurngatuuq	Place where there are many *tuurngait*	Kangirsuk 25C-04

Coordinates	Feature	Description (provided by the sources)
62.4728N 92.6600W	Island	Shaman island, bad spirits, not a good place to camp.
61.8596N 95.4555W	Land	Ghosts.
	Island	A traditional winter camp where there were *tupilait*, deadly spirits which result from the pollution of a place too long inhabited, from the evil deeds of a shaman, or from the dissatisfaction of the soul of a dead (Saladin d'Anglure 2004: 118).
59.5667N 65.4405W	Cave	*Tuurngait*, the name of a rocky mountain, between Kangirsualujjuaq and Killiniq, overlooking the sea. There is a cave where Tuurngajuaq ['The Great Tuurngaq'] lived, in the form of a giant bear. The Moravian Brethren who passed near Tuurngait in 1811 talked about the "dwelling of the dragon" and the fear that it inspired in their Inuit guides (Saladin d'Anglure 2004: 118).
59.5644N 65.4388W	Cliff	
59.3997N 64.6872W	Mounts	
58.4695N 67.7667W	Island	
60.2250N 69.5069W	Island	

Place-name	Meaning[23]	Nearest village + map
NUNAVIK		
Illutalialuk	The great place that has houses	Quartaq
Tuurngatuuq	Place where there are many *tuurngait*	Kangirsujuaq 25E-05
Amajurjuk	(Place where there is a) *amajurjuk*	Akulivik 35C-12
Amajurjuk	(Place where there is a) *amajurjuk*	Akulivik 35C-12
Tuurngatalik	Place where there are *tuurngait*	Puvirnituq 34N-06
Tuurngaup Illuvininga	The ruined dwelling of a *tuurngaq*	Inujjuaq 34K-04
Tuurngaup Illuvininga	The ruined dwelling of a *tuurngaq*	Inujjuaq 34K-06

These toponyms are not specific in terms of geomorphology as they are used to designate all kinds of landscape features: bay, cave, cliff, hill, island, lake, point, route, valley, etc. But they share in contrast similar negative appreciations. Indeed, these places are always described, when using English words, as being spooky, creepy, frightening, haunted, places of bad spirits, ghostly forms or sounds, unusual experiences.[24]

People speak about such locations. For instance George Agiaq Kappianaq, who grew up in the Salliq area, remembers that some places were actually said to be dangerous, being considered inhabited by "beings," and someone who decided to go to such a place on purpose would lose his strength

Coordinates	Feature	Description (provided by the sources)
		A seemingly trivial designation ('the great place that has an igloo') that is actually the home of the great Amautil-ialuk, the flying ogress that captured the humans she carried in her back hood. The Inuit of Kangirsujuaq claimed, some fifty years ago, that they still saw her passing through the sky, coming from Tuvaaluk in the Quartaq area (Saladin d'Anglure 2004: 119).
61.4250N 71.7125W	Island	An island where there is a cave (Saladin d'Anglure 2004: 118)
60.5619N 77.6580W	Hills	
60.5661N 77.7175W	Shore	
59.4141N 77.3214W	Lake	
58.2442N 77.6980W	Cliff	
58.2905N 77.4519W	Site	

(Oosten & Laugrand [eds.] 2001: 80–83). Guy Mary-Rousselière recorded Michel Kanajuq in Qamanittuaq in 1955, who declared:

> There are two islands over there that are called Tuurngaqtalik. The people before us would be afraid to sleep on those islands. They say that there was a family that had stayed there just for the night and that they had ended up dying. I heard this from the people before us. Nowadays people go there, but nobody dies anymore. I wonder what it was that happened to those people? I don't know whether this incident was true, or if someone just made up the story. (Laugrand & Oosten 2009: 77–78)

Or yet Andy Mamgark from Kivalliq recalls:

> There is a valley [near Angmagiilaq] and my father-in-law and I went there once through the valley. We travelled on the north side. I followed close behind and he told me not to fall behind because it is an area where a person should not be travelling alone... It has to do with *ijirait*. In fact people say you can't leave objects there, as you will lose them. (Bennett & Rowley [eds.] 2004: 154)

The last quote mentions the *ijirait* that were described earlier. This brings us to another notable observation that, among the many species of non-human beings, two of them have been source of major place nomination: almost 70 per cent of all "spiritual" toponyms reported are either related to the category of *tuurngait* in the first place (*tuurngaq* and its derivatives: *tuurngaqtalik*, *tuurngalik*, etc. with a total of 31 names) or to a lesser extent to that of *ijirait* (*ijiraq* and its derivatives: *ijiraqtalik*, *ijiqqat*, etc. with 5 names). This is well illustrated on Map 1.

Whereas *tuurngaq*-toponyms are found in all Inuit lands, with a relatively higher proportion in Nunavik, *ijiraq*-names are logically absent from this latter territory. Every other type of non-human being used to generate toponyms accounts for one or two cases at most (for instance two places named after the dwarves). There are also a few names where only the gloss allows linking to non-human beings: the cases of Alianaqtulik in Baffin Island and Illutalialuk in Nunavik are good examples. Hence the prevalence of *tuurngait* and *ijirait* over other beings in oral literature finds its correspondence in specific place-names related to these beings, reflecting also local situations. For instance, there is only one place in the whole set of data which is linked to the *tarriaksuit* (anthropomorphic beings of disembodied appearance), and it is located in the east Baffin community of Kangiqtugaapik, precisely the area where stories about these beings seem to be more frequent (Saladin d'Anglure [ed.] 2001: 51–52, 216).

Remembering finally that *tuurngait* was largely a generic term for all shaman helping spirits, and that *ijirait* were probably the most cited non-human species in narratives (except in Nunavik, replaced by *tuurngait*) and therefore sometimes used as a vague generic for land non-human beings, one may infer that Inuit "spiritual" place-names refer largely to two metacategories which represent the essence of non-human beings. These toponyms are living evidence that alongside the usual space called *tumitaqaqtuq* ('where there are footmarks') frequented by humans and animals, there is another type of space called *tumitaittuq* ('where there is no footmark') where all kinds of non-human beings are "at home." These creatures do not

leave footmarks and their presence is acknowledged in places spread all over the lands that remained enchanted by their particular names.

NOTES

[1] See http://ihti.ca/eng/place-names/pn-seri.html. On these maps, each Inuit toponym is listed in both syllabic and Roman writings, including also the feature designated (hill, lake, river, etc.) and an explanation in English. Inuit (mostly elders) who contributed to a map are sometimes referenced.

[2] From *tasiq*, 'lake,' *-kutaaq*, 'long.'

[3] From *tasiq*, 'lake,' *-ruluk* pejorative.

[4] From *umiaq* 'boat,' *-nnguaq*, 'looks like.'

[5] From *arviq* 'bowhead whale,' *-siuq-*, 'hunt,' *-vik*, 'place where.'

[6] From *qimit-*, 'strangle,' *-vik*, 'place where.'

[7] In fact, these two place-name categories overlap partly and could be easily merged into a single one; that would not, however, change the reasoning behind.

[8] Strictly speaking the expression "non-human beings" also applies to animals. See Hill (2012) for an interesting study on the personhood of such beings.

[9] In addition to the works referred to earlier in the introduction, we could also mention those by Dudley (1972) on the Cumberland Peninsula (Baffin Island), or by Fair (1997) on the region of Shishmaref (Alaska).

[10] See for instance Oosten & Laugrand (eds.) (2001: 71–80); Oosten & Laugrand (eds.) (2002: 130–136).

[11] Hence this notion excludes entities such as the souls (*tarniit*) of the dead for which ritual prescriptions were not respected, and who could then turn into evil spirits (*tupilait*) seeking to revenge themselves on the living, as well as singular beings such as the Sea woman or Mother of the sea animals known as, among others and depending on the regions, Sanna (Sedna), Kannaaluk, Takanakapsaaluk or yet Nuliajuq.

[12] Human-like non-human beings are sometimes called *inurajait*. The concept of *inurajaq* is however not perfectly grounded and varies between regions (Saladin d'Anglure [ed.] 2001: 51–71).

[13] For overviews on these creatures, see in particular Bennett & Rowley (eds.) (2004: 150–159), Laugrand & Oosten (2010: 168–198), Bordin (2015).

[14] Built on *ingniq*, 'fire, spark produced with a flint and steel;' *ingniruqtuq*, 'what shines phosphorescently on the sea at night.'

[15] The Tuniit are the ancestors of the Inuit.

[16] These beings are equivalent to the *ingniriugjait* from North Baffin (see Table 1).

[17] I am aware of two published occurrences on *ijirait* from Nunavik. The first one is by Tiivi Ittuq (Tivi Etok), an elder from Kangiqsualujjuaq in Northeast Nunavik, who says: "There are other things we call *Ijirait*. These deceivers also take on the form of animals, although they can also take on human form. The only experience I had with them was when I was part of a hunting party [...]" (see Weetaluktuk & Bryant 2008: 51, 207). The second one is found in a study by Graburn (1980: 197): "*Ijirak* (dialectal variant *ijuruk*) are close to what we call ghosts, that is, the spiritual presences of deceased people, often known and recognized people." The latter is clearly different from the notion of *ijiraq* that is found in Nunavut, and it rather corresponds to what is generally known as *tupilak*, 'evil spirit' (see above note 11).

[18] *Tusaumanngittiaqtunga tamakkuninga tuurngaqtaqarmangaat, kisiani tusaumajunga tuurngaqtaqaqattalauqturuuq immakallak ukpirasualuanngitillugit, ijiraqtaqaqattalauqturluunniit ukpirasualuanngitillugit, maannali taimaittuqajjaanngittuq tuurngaqtaqajjaanngittut ijiraqtaqajjaanngitturluunniit qaujimaliqtunga, pitaqajjairasugijunniiqtara taimaittumi aullaqsimagaluarluni.* (Maata Kunuk from Mittimatalik)

[19] *Maannakkut ukpirusuliqtillugit pitaqanngittiammariliqtuq, taima taissumani angakkukkut timikkuutillugit pitaqaqtuminiq, ukpirijaungmata pitaqaqtuminiungmangaata ijirait, nunaulluni ilangit atiqauqtuqarmingmat Ijiqqat, suurlu inuugaluaruuq takuksaujunnanngittuit iqalugasugunnaraluaq&utik, takujauvaktuminiit angakkurujuutillugit timikkuutillugit, taimanna pitaqauqtuminiit taikkuattauq inurajaittauq pitaqaniraqtaumingmata tuktuulirunnaq&utiguuq takuksaujunnanngittiaqtut, takujaksaunngittunikkua vaaqtitausimallunili, takuksaunngittut ajunnaqtuq.* (Alan Maktaaq from Mittimatalik)

[20] "Spiritual" refers here to the fact that other-than-animal non-human beings are often designed as "spirits" in ethnographical relations. Hence "spiritual place-names" refer here to sites related to non-human beings.

[21] Main sources include: the Inuit Heritage Trust's Nunavut Map Series and the Google MyMaps Series available on www.ihti.ca, the Gazetteer of Inuit Place Names in Nunavik (Müller-Wille 1987). Other sources are specifically mentioned in Table 3.

[22] Only the capital of Nunavut, Iqaluit, is a city, with more than 7,000 inhabitants in 2016.

[23] Many of the place-names listed are built on the scheme noun + *-lik* or noun + *-talik*, both meaning 'one who has' or 'there is/are.' Hence both Tuurngalik and Tuurngaqtalik mean 'place where there are *tuurngait*,' the only difference being in the *-ta-* which suggests that the individual(s) who named the place times ago could guarantee the veracity of the statement, possibly by personal experience.

[24] See Bordin (2011) on the expression of fear in Inuktitut.

REFERENCES

Bennett, J. & Rowley, S. (eds.) (2004). *Uqalurait. An Oral History of Nunavut*, Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Boas, F. [1888] (1964). *The Central Eskimo*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Boas, F. (1901). "The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay. From notes collected by Capt. George Comer, Capt. James S. Mutch, and Rev. E.J Peck," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, 15:1, pp. 1–370.

Boas, F. (1907). "Second report on the Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay. From notes collected by Capt. George Comer, Capt. James S. Mutch, and Rev. E.J. Peck," *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, 15:2, pp. 374–570.

Bordin, G. (2011). "L'expression lexicale de la peur en inuktitut dans le nord de la Terre de Baffin," *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 35:1–2, pp. 223–244.

Bordin, G. (2015). *Beyond Darkness and Sleep. The Inuit Night in North Baffin Island*, Louvain-Paris: Peeters.

Byam, A. (2013). "Strengthening the Integration of Traditional Knowledge in Environmental Impact Assessment. An Analysis of Inuit Place Names near Steensby Inlet, NU," MA thesis, Ottawa: Carleton University.

Collignon, B. (1996). *Les Inuit. Ce qu'ils savent du territoire*, Paris: L'Harmattan.

Collignon, B. (2002). "Les toponymes inuit, mémoire du territoire. Étude de l'Histoire des Inuinnait," *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, 26:2–3, pp. 45–69.

Collignon, B. (2006). *Knowing Places. The Inuinnait, Landscapes, and the Environment*, Edmonton: CCI Press, University of Alberta.

Dorais, L.-J. (1997). "Pratiques et sentiments religieux à Quaqtaq. Continuité et modernité," *Études/Inuit/Studies*, 21:1–2, pp. 255–267.

Dudley, K.F. (1972). "The Eskimo names of Northern Cumberland Peninsula from Home Bay to Cape Dyer, Baffin Island, N.W.T," *Arctic and Alpine Research*, 4:4, pp. 343–347.

Fair, S.W. (1997). "Inupiat naming and community history. The Tapqaq and Saniniq coasts near Shishmaref, Alaska," *Professional Geographer*, 49, pp. 466–480.

Goehring, E.B. (1990). "Inuit Place-Names and Man-Land Relationships, Pelly Bay, Northwest Territories," MA thesis, University of British Columbia.

Graburn, N.H. (1980). "Man, beast, and transformation in Canadian Inuit art and culture," in *Manlike Monsters on Trial. Early Records and Modern Evidence*, eds. M.M. Halpin & M.M. Ames, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, pp. 193–210.

Hill, E. (2012). "The nonempirical past. Enculturated landscapes and other-than-human persons in Southwest Alaska," *Arctic Anthropology*, 49:2, pp. 41–57.

Keith, D. (2000). "Inuit Place Names and Land-Use History on the Harvaqtuuq [Kazan River], Nunavut Territory," MA thesis, McGill University; http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/R/?func=dbin-jump-full&object_id=30180&local_base=GEN01-MCG02; access date 27 September 2017.

Keith, D. (2004). "Caribou, river and ocean. Harvaqtuurmiut landscape organization and orientation," Études*/Inuit/Studies*, 28:2, pp. 39–56.

Kigjugalik Hughson, P. (2010). "Our Homeland for the Past, Present and Future. Akulliqpaaq Qamaniq (Aberdeen Lake) and Qamaniq Tugliqpaaq (Schultz Lake) Landscapes Described by Elder John Killularк," MA thesis., University of Manitoba.

Laugrand, F. (2002). *Mourir et renaître. La réception du christianisme par les Inuit de l'Arctique de l'Est canadien (1890–1940)*, Québec & Leiden: Presses de l'Université Laval & CNWS.

Laugrand, F. & Oosten, J. (2009). *The Ethnographic Recordings of Inuit Oral Traditions by Father Guy Mary-Rousselière (OMI)*, Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.

Laugrand, F. & Oosten, J. (2010). *Inuit Shamanism and Christianity. Transitions and Transformations in the Twentieth Century*, Montréal-Kingston: McGill-Queens's University Press.

Laugrand, F., Oosten, J. & Trudel, F. (eds.) (2000). *Representing Tuurngait* (Memory and History in Nunavut Series 1), Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.

Mary-Rousselière, G. (1966). "Toponymie esquimaude de la région de Pond Inlet," *Cahiers de Géographie de Québec*, 8, pp. 301–111.

Merkur, D. (1991). *Powers which We Do not Know. The Gods and Spirits of the Inuit*, Moscow: University of Idaho Press.

Müller-Wille, L. (1983). "Inuit toponymy and cultural sovereignty," in *Conflict in Development in Nouveau-Québec* (McGill Subarctic Research Paper 37), ed. L. Müller-Wille, Montréal: McGill University, pp. 131–150.

Müller-Wille, L. (1987). *Gazetteer of Inuit Place Names in Nunavik (Québec, Canada)*, Inukjuak: Avataq Cultural Institute.

Müller-Wille, L. (1989–1990). "Place names, territoriality and sovereignty. Inuit perception of space in Nunavik (Canadian Eastern Arctic)," *Bulletin de la Société Suisse des Américanistes*, 53–54, pp. 17–21.

Müller-Wille, L. (ed.) (1990). *Inuit Place Name Map Series in Nunavik*, Inukjuak: Avataq Cultural Institute.

Oosten, J. & Laugrand, F. (eds.) (1999). *Introduction* (Interviewing Inuit Elders 1), Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
Oosten, J. & Laugrand, F. (eds.) (2001). *Travelling and Surviving on our Land* (Inuit Perspectives on the 20th Century, Vol. 2), Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
Oosten, J. & Laugrand, F. (eds.) (2002). *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Shamanism and Reintegrating Wrongdoers into the Community* (Inuit Perspectives on the 20th Century, Vol. 4), Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
Ouellette, N. (2002). "Les *tuurngait* dans le Nunavik occidental contemporain," *Études/ Inuit/Studies*, 26:2, pp. 107–131.
Rasmussen, K. (1929). "Intellectual culture of the Iglulik Eskimos," *Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921–24*, 7:1, København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag.
Rasmussen, K. (1930). "Observations on the intellectual culture of the Caribou Eskimos," *Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921–24*, 7:2, København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag.
Rasmussen, K. (1931). "The Netsilik Eskimos. Social life and spiritual culture," *Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921–24*, 8:1–2, København: Gyldendalske Boghandel, Nordisk Forlag.
Riopel, H. (2012). "La place du Grand Nord dans la sémiosphère québécoise," MA thesis, Université du Québec à Montréal ; http://www.archipel.uqam.ca/5004/1/M12445.pdf; access date 27 September 2017.
Saladin d'Anglure, B. (1983). "Ijiqqat. Voyage au pays de l'invisible inuit," *Études/Inuit/ Studies*, 7:1, pp. 67–83.
Saladin d'Anglure, B. (1992). "Pygmées arctiques et géants lubriques ou les avatars de l'image de l'«autre» lors des «premières» rencontres entre Inuit et Blanc," *Recherches amérindiennes au Québec*, 22:2–3, pp. 73–88.
Saladin d'Anglure, B. (ed.) (2001). *Cosmology and Shamanism* (Interviewing Inuit Elders 4), Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College.
Saladin d'Anglure, B. (2004). "La toponymie religieuse et l'appropriation symbolique du territoire par les Inuit du Nunavik et du Nunavut," *Études/Inuit/ Studies*, 28:2, pp. 107–131.
Weetaluktuk, J. & Bryant, R. (2008). *The World of Tivi Etok. The Life and Art of an Inuit Elder from Kangiqsualujjuaq, Nunavik* (Text in Inuktituk, French and English), Québec: Éditions MultiMondes.

AUTHOR

Guy Bordin is an anthropologist and filmmaker. He has been working on the Eastern Canadian Arctic Inuit culture for more than fifteen years.

guybordin@skynet.be