



RESEARCH CHAIR ON RELATIONS WITH INUIT SOCIETIES

Faculty of Social Sciences

MISSION

This Chair's mission is to support the development of good social relations with Inuit societies. It seeks to produce new knowledge on relations between Inuit and non-Inuit people and on how these relations have changed in recent decades. The Chair enhances Université Laval's expertise in northern research and gives the university a central role in the process of reconciliation with the Inuit.

CHAIR CREATION: October 1st, 2017

This research chair is part of Université Laval's Program for the Advancement of Innovation, Research, and Education (PAIRE), which aims to create a stimulating research environment for innovation, ingenuity, and creativity on the part of faculty members.

BACKGROUND

The Arctic is experiencing major physical, political, and social changes. For these changes to ensure the development of a sustainable society, it is important for the Inuit to be given centre stage. Since the report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was published, reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples has become a priority in governmental and institutional action plans. With this in mind it is important to analyze the nature of relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and grasp the historical, political, and cultural origins of many cultural misunderstandings.

Misunderstandings in a context of cultural domination are often the source of psychological abuse towards individuals and communities. They can also disrupt a society's ability to govern itself and undermine members' confidence in their own knowledge. If we look at this issue from the viewpoint of relational anthropology, we are better able to understand the Inuits' unique place in this world and identify the cultural conflicts that arise during contact with non-Inuit people.

CHAIRHOLDER

Caroline Hervé is an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at Université Laval and a member of the Interuniversity Center for Aboriginal Studies and Research (CIÉRA) and member of the *Études/Inuit/Studies* journal executive committee. For over ten years she has been researching the political dynamics of Inuit societies with a special interest in the relationships the Inuit have built with the *Qallunaat* (white people) who live and work in the North. After earning her doctorate in 2013 (Université Laval and École des hautes études en sciences sociales), she carried out postdoctoral work for a year at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has authored a large number of scientific articles as well as the book *Le pouvoir vient d'ailleurs. Leadership et coopération chez les Inuits du Nunavik* (PUL, 2015). In addition to her research work, she served as executive director of Saturviit, the Inuit women's association of Nunavik, from 2014 to 2017. In that role she represented Inuit women before regional and national authorities and developed projects to improve the well-being of Inuit women and families.



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OBJECTIVES

The Chair seeks to analyze the relationship between Inuit and non-Inuit people and how this relationship has changed in recent decades. There are three objectives:

- > To produce new knowledge on the history and social dynamics of Inuit societies in order to foster better intercultural understanding, whether on the topics of governance, justice, or health.
- > To develop training and educational tools for non-Inuit people (researchers, students, professionals, civil servants, politicians, etc.) to arm these individuals with the cultural and historical knowledge they need in order to build good relationships with the Inuit and provide more effective help for northern communities.
- > To put the Inuit at the forefront of research and educational projects in order to enhance their role as cultural experts and improve their ability to take action.

PARTNER

Funded by Sentinelle Nord, the Chair enhances Université Laval's expertise in northern research. Activities are carried out within the cross-disciplinary framework of Sentinelle Nord designed to generate the knowledge needed to monitor and plan for change in northern communities. The Chair will contribute to this vast undertaking on several levels, namely, by identifying the cultural misunderstandings that tarnish relationships between the Inuit and individuals who work in the North and by strengthening the Inuits' ability to take action and thus ensure they play a major role in the changes ahead.



BENEFITS

The Chair will consolidate Université Laval's northern expertise, particularly in social sciences, and will result in numerous research partnerships with various research institutions specializing in the North, whether at Université Laval, in the rest of Canada, or abroad. Thanks to the Chair, Université Laval is becoming a key player in the process of reconciliation with Inuit societies.

Training and educational materials will benefit students and others who work with Inuit people. A greater awareness of Inuit history, culture, and reality will allow them to develop professional practices that are better suited to and more respectful of cultural differences.

As partners in research activities or by playing a central role in the dissemination of knowledge about their own society, the Inuit receive greater recognition as cultural experts and are better prepared to act collectively.



INFORMATION

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