


ARTICLE

Erasure as a Tool of Nineteenth-Century European Exploration, and the Arctic Travels of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik

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Abstract

The American publisher Charles Francis Hall had no previous experience with the Arctic before he travelled there in 1860. Yet, Hall transformed himself into an Arctic authority, and was given command of a United States governmental funded expedition in 1870. Hall was only able to undertake his work in the Arctic because of his relationship with Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, a married Inuit couple from Cumberland Sound, and this article examines the structural processes that enabled Hall to rescript their expertise as his own. Tookoolito and Ipiirvik travelled with Hall for over a decade, a relationship where the unequal power-dynamic was continuously transformed and renegotiated in the United States and the Arctic. Drawing on recent historiographical insights on the construction of exploration knowledge in the imperial context, this article interrogates the epistemic and physical violence involved in Hall's erasure of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's expertise and personhood. In doing so, I highlight the structural function of the erasure of Indigenous knowledge and labour in the production of nineteenth-century European and Euro-American Arctic science, and its enduring influence on the historiography.

I

Esquimau Joe.

The man who saved Captain Tyson's Party on the Ice.

A tale of heroism never surpassed.

Paid with ingratitude and neglect.

Only an Esquimau.

How Joe was forgotten by the men whose lives he saved.¹

¹ 'Esquimau Joe', *New York Herald*, 29 Dec. 1875, p. 11.

In December 1875, the American newspaper *The New York Herald* ran an exposé into the treatment of Ipiirvik and Tookoolito, known in the period as Joe and Hannah, following their participation in the ill-fated *Polaris* expedition that left New York in 1871.² The *Polaris* expedition had been marked by repeated disasters, including the death of the commander Charles Francis Hall shortly after their departure. In the autumn of 1872, the crew became separated during a severe storm, and half of its members, including Ipiirvik, Tookoolito and their young daughter, were caught on an ice floe unable to return to the *Polaris*. Over the next six months they drifted 1,300 miles on sheets of ice before they were finally rescued by a passing boat. As the article in *The New York Herald* argued, the miraculous survival of the ice floe crew was largely due to its Inuit crew members. Yet, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik received only a fraction of the financial rewards given to other members of the *Polaris* expedition. 'Is it not a little strange', the article in *The New York Herald* stated, 'that after all this, when these men came home...that no attention was called to what he [Ipiirvik] had done, no notice taken of him?'³ However, the article had already responded to this rhetorical question in its headline, quoted above: the contributions of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, who were originally from Cumberland Sound, had been forgotten because they were Inuit.

The processes of erasing, removing, reframing, and minimizing the contributions of Indigenous peoples during European and Euro-American Arctic expeditions has had an enduring influence on the history of Arctic studies. Traditionally, the voices of the so-called explorers, primarily European and Euro-American men, have been prioritized in research on Arctic exploration. To counter the historical prioritization of European and Euro-Americans,

² The couple frequently used and went by their English names, Joe and Hannah. The English-speaking sources spelled their Inuktitut names in many different ways. In the early 1850s, the British press often referred to Hannah as Tackalictoo or Tickalictoo, and Joe as Harkbah or Hackboch. Charles Francis Hall gave the English transliteration of their names as Tookoolito and Ebierbing. In modern sources, the English transliteration of Joe's name has been given as Ipiirvik (sometimes spelled Ipiivik), and Hannah's name as Tookoolito and Taquilittuq. In this article I refer to the couple as Ipiirvik and Tookoolito. This is, however, not unproblematic. Historian Karen Routledge has made a compelling case for using 'Hannah' rather than an uncertain transliteration of her Inuktitut name, with insightful reflections on the difference between private and public names and kinship terms (Karen Routledge, *Do you see ice? Inuit and Americans at home and away* (Chicago, IL, 2018), pp. 35–6, 173 n. 1). In her excellent biography, historian Sheila Nickerson uses 'Tookoolito' (Sheila B. Nickerson, *Midnight to the north: the untold story of the woman who saved the Polaris expedition* (New York, NY, 2002)). This has also been the choice of historian Kenn Harper, including in his articles for *Nunatsiaq News* (see Kenn Harper, 'Tookoolito and Ebierbing visit the queen', *Nunatsiaq News*, 10 July 2020, <https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/taissumani-july-10/>, accessed 2 July 2022). In the important edited collection of primary sources, *Northern voices*, Penny Petrone uses the spelling 'Taquilittuq': Penny Petrone, *Northern voices: Inuit writing in English* (Toronto, ON, 1988). The uncertainty surrounding their Inuktitut names reflects the violence of the colonial archives, and highlights how historical records were overwhelmingly collected by and for European and Euro-Americans. The main biographical accounts of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik are: Merna Forster, *100 Canadian heroines: famous and forgotten faces* (Dundurn, ON, 2004), pp. 248–52; and Nickerson, *Midnight to the north*. Another significant resource for unpacking encounters between Inuit and Euro-Americans is Routledge, *Do you see ice?*

³ 'Esquimau Joe', p. 11.

much important work has been done in recent years to critique, deconstruct, and de-centre the experiences and accounts of the so-called Arctic explorers. For example, researchers such as Michael Bravo, Julie Cruikshank, and Andrew Stuhl draw attention to the fact that European and Euro-American Arctic expeditions almost always relied on Inuit knowledge to fulfil their official geographical and scientific tasks.⁴ This was also the case with the *Polaris* expedition, which was under the command of the American publisher-turned-explorer Charles Francis Hall. Notably, in *Midnight to the north*, historian Sheila Nickerson shows the central role of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in the *Polaris* expedition, and interrogates their complicated relationship with Hall, something that had previously been overlooked in the historiography.⁵ Building upon Nickerson's formative work, this article focuses on another aspect of Hall's relationship with Tookoolito and Ipiirvik which has been largely overlooked: the role of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in the making of what was portrayed as Hall's scientific and geographical results. In doing so, I aim to elucidate the interplay between the construction of scientific expertise and personhood, as Hall, Tookoolito, and Ipiirvik navigated the racialized and highly violent colonial structures of the 1860s and 1870s United States, from their first encounters to the aftermath of the *Polaris* expedition.

The erasure of Indigenous knowledge was not incidental, but an integral part of the construction of exploration identities in the imperial context.⁶ In focusing on knowledge-production, I interrogate how Hall, as a white man, drew upon and reinforced racialized hierarchies of both personal agency and scientific expertise to rescript Inuit knowledge into his own scientific research achievements. I do this through three main episodes. First, I show how Hall constructed an epistemic chasm between Inuit knowledge, including oral history and mapping, and what Hall presented as scientific data. As Hall did not speak Inuktitut, he relied on Tookoolito who was an expert translator to initiate conversations and translate for him. Accordingly, there is a tension in the way Hall portrayed his process for gathering data through interviews, as he acknowledged Tookoolito's expertise specifically and the veracity of Inuit oral history more generally, while also denigrating the same as unscientific. Secondly, I examine how Hall's professionalizing strategies of erasure and rescription functioned within a broader system of racialized objectification of humans. In constructing himself as an Arctic expert, Hall mobilized power structures of settler-colonialism that transformed Tookoolito and

⁴ Michael Bravo, 'The postcolonial Arctic', *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings*, 15 (2015), pp. 93–111; Julie Cruikshank, *Do glaciers listen? Local knowledge, colonial encounters and social imagination* (Vancouver, BC, and Seattle, WA, 2015); Julie Cruikshank, 'Nature and culture in "the field": two centuries of stories from Lituya Bay', *Knowledge and Society*, 13 (2002), pp. 11–43; Andrew Stuhl, *Unfreezing the Arctic: science, colonialism, and the transformation of Inuit lands* (Chicago, IL, 2016).

⁵ Nickerson, *Midnight to the north*.

⁶ I am particularly informed by Sujit Sivasundaram, *Waves across the south: a new history of revolution and empire* (Chicago, IL, 2021); Simon Schaffer, Lissa Roberts, Kapil Raj, and James Delbourgo, eds., *The brokered world: go-betweens and global intelligence, 1770–1820* (Sagamore Beach, MA, 2009); Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid knowledge in the early East India Company world* (Basingstoke, 2016).

Ipiirvik from expert knowledge-holders in the Arctic to specimens of natural history. To elucidate how Hall used the othering of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik as a central tool in his professionalizing and scientific strategies, I focus on Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's participation in the exhibition of living foreign peoples, to use the terminology of Sadiya Qureshi, first in Britain and later in the United States.⁷ Finally, in the third section, I turn to the *Polaris* expedition aftermath. The United States Navy carried out an investigation into the expedition, which partly sought to absolve the government of any wrongdoings. The Navy's investigation, and their use of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's statements, show how the constructions of authority played out not only at individual levels, but were mobilized to change master-narratives about the Arctic experience to favour the versions preferred by settler-colonial authorities.

There is a central epistemic transfigurative chasm in Hall's accounts through the process in which he sought to rescript the knowledge and labour of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in order to construct his own persona as an Arctic expert, as evidenced in both his private journals and his public writings and presentations. The strategies used by Hall to hide the importance of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik for the production of his scientific and geographical results were not unique to him. As the contributors to *The brokered world* show, colonial science was developed through a vast global network of researchers and collectors, and through the work of cultural brokers and go-betweens. Many of these go-betweens were, as Felix Driver and Lowri Jones reveal in *Hidden histories of exploration*, purposefully excluded in official scientific and geographical reports.⁸ The research and publication practices of European and Euro-American settlers, traders, and explorers in the Arctic both drew upon and worked to uphold systematic hierarchies of knowledge-making, as well as personhood. What was accepted as trustworthy testimony, as relevant and useful information, was shaped by factors such as the race, class, and gender of the knowledge-producers.⁹ Therefore, this article is a reconsideration of what has been designated as Hall's Arctic expeditions, and interrogates the epistemic and physical violence involved in Hall's rescripting of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's ethnographic, linguistic, and geographical work, which he represented as his own expedition results.

II

Tookoolito and Ipiirvik first met Hall in 1860, when Hall had decided to leave his job and wife in Connecticut behind to become an Arctic explorer. Hall was

⁷ Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on parade: exhibitions, empire, and anthropology in nineteenth-century Britain* (Chicago, IL, 2011), pp. 1–4.

⁸ Felix Driver and Lowri Jones, *Hidden histories of exploration* (London, 2009), p. 26; Felix Driver, 'Hidden histories made visible?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 38 (2013), pp. 420–35; Felix Driver, 'Exploration as knowledge transfer: exhibiting hidden histories', in Heike Jöns, Peter Meusbürger, and Michael Heffernan, eds., *Mobilities of knowledge* (Cham, 2017), pp. 85–104.

⁹ Nanna Katrine Lüders Kaalund, *Explorations in the icy north: how travel narratives shaped Arctic science in the nineteenth century* (Pittsburgh, PA, 2021), pp. 12–14.

fascinated with John Franklin's lost expedition, which had disappeared after leaving England in 1845, and Hall's first Arctic ventures aimed, at least officially, to discover more about the lost expedition. While Hall did not uncover much information about Franklin and his crew, he instead found older artefacts, including a large piece of iron covered by thick moss. These findings appeared to confirm that the British voyager Martin Frobisher reached Tikkoon's Point by Frobisher Bay in the sixteenth century, something that had previously been uncertain.¹⁰ This was an important find that enabled Hall to establish himself as a legitimate Arctic researcher in the scientific societies in the United States and United Kingdom. However, these objects did not on their own confirm that Frobisher had landed by Tikkoon's Point. There were numerous ways in which the iron, as well as the fragments of glass, pottery chips, and wood which Hall found, could have ended up there. Linking the objects to an expedition that took place some three hundred years prior required establishing a provenance record for the objects. For this, Hall turned to oral history: Indigenous knowledge relayed to him by Tookoolito and Ipiirvik.¹¹

Though Hall claimed to be an Arctic expert, he had very little in terms of qualifications to recommend himself as an expedition leader, or as an expert on anything related to the Arctic.¹² In contrast with other American Arctic expedition leaders, such as Elisha Kent Kane or Isaac Israel Hayes, Hall had neither a military, naval, nor scientific background. As Hall did not return with new information about the lost Franklin expedition, the discovery of Frobisher's relics was an important boon. Hall sent the piece of iron with other specimens and maps to the British government through the Royal Geographical Society of London.¹³ This was a tactical decision, that brought Hall into conversation with several key figures in British Arctic exploration, including Clements R. Markham, and helped solidify him as a reputable Arctic researcher. Another tactic employed by Hall to establish his scientific authority was to curate his persona as an Arctic explorer in a way that aligned with the resources at his disposal. Hall's limited finances meant that he could not model himself on previous American Arctic explorers who had commanded an expedition with a ship and a sizeable crew. Instead, Hall argued that travelling with large ships and crews was ineffective, as evidenced by the repeated disasters of the previous John Franklin searching expeditions, such as that of Elisha Kent Kane.¹⁴ Hall pointed to that experience as further

¹⁰ Charles Francis Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux: a narrative of Arctic experience, I: The narrative of Captain Charles Francis Hall of the whaling barque 'George Henry'* (London, 1864), pp. vii, 316; Charles Francis Hall, *Arctic researches and life among the Esquimaux: being a narrative of an expedition in search of Sir John Franklin* (New York, NY, 1865).

¹¹ Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, I, pp. vii, 316.

¹² Michael F. Robinson, *The coldest crucible: Arctic exploration and American culture* (Chicago, IL, 2010), pp. 68–72.

¹³ Charles Francis Hall, 'Frobisher Strait proved to be a bay...communicated by Henry Grinnell', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 7 (1863), pp. 99–102.

¹⁴ For more on Kane, see Mark Sawin, *Raising Kane: Elisha Kent Kane and the culture of fame in Antebellum America* (Philadelphia, PA, 2008).

evidence for the legitimacy of his own project, his mode of travel, and himself as an Arctic expert. He quoted Kane as having said they ‘experienced many severe trials; but, I must say, the major part of them emanated from our mode of living. When we lived as Esquimaux, we immediately recovered and enjoyed our usual health.’¹⁵ Hall mirrored Kane’s language in the title of his narrative, *Life with the Esquimaux*, as he argued that adopting Inuit modes of living in the Arctic would enable him to achieve more than the plethora of past large-scale European and Euro-American expeditions.

Reflecting Kane’s experience, Hall wrote that it was his plan ‘to acquire personal knowledge of the language and life of the Esquimaux’ and ‘then endeavour, by personal investigation, to determine more satisfactorily the fate’ of the lost expedition.¹⁶ Hall’s argument for appropriating Inuit methods and traditions for travelling in the Arctic further extended to his knowledge-making practices. In his published work and lectures, Hall created a hierarchical and synthetic framework that prioritized the knowledge and practices of European researchers who immersed themselves in Inuit culture. This framework aimed to establish Hall as an expert on Arctic matters, superior to both armchair researchers and the Euro-Americans who visited the Arctic without engrossing themselves in the local cultures. As a review in the British newspaper *The Standard* described it, Hall drew on ‘traditional information respecting remains of white visitors’ to both locate and contextualize the relics.¹⁷ The way Hall presented the function of Inuit knowledge in relation to his own work is particularly significant as it reveals how the so-called explorers constructed and drew upon epistemological hierarchies of knowledge-making in the colonial contact zone.

Hall encountered the first of what he termed traditional history, or local knowledge, regarding Frobisher in April 1861.¹⁸ At this point, Hall was staying at Budington’s ship while recovering from a shoulder injury that rendered him unable to travel. In his journal, he wrote that

I learn through Capt. B. who has just had it from an intelligent Inuit (Quejese), that among the traditional matter handed down from one generation to another there is this, that many, very many, years ago some white men built a ship on one of the Islands of Frobisher Bay & away they went.¹⁹

Hall’s journal entries reveal his excitement over Quejese’s information, and he resolved to travel to Frobisher Bay as soon as his shoulder injury permitted him. In early May 1861, Hall had an important conversation with an Inuk elder. The woman’s name was recorded as O-ku-ju-a-gu-ni-no, and their

¹⁵ Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, I, p. 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁷ ‘Literature’, *Standard*, 6 Jan. 1865, p. 3.

¹⁸ As outlined in journal entries for 9 Apr., 10 May, and 11 May 1861, Charles Francis Hall Collection, Smithsonian Institution, Washington (hereafter Charles Francis Hall Collection): Journal IV.

¹⁹ Journal entry for 9 Apr. 1861, Charles Francis Hall Collection: Journal IV.

conversation was mediated through Tookoolito: 'The old lady I found a great talker – the words spinning out as only they can from a Woman's mouth. Tuk-oo-li-too answered well the high estimation I have made of her as Interpreter.'²⁰ O-ku-ju-a-gu-ni-no recounted how, as a child, she was told stories by elders of how 'many years before, ships had landed here with a good many people'. In support of O-ku-ju-a-gu-ni-no's account, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik both told Hall how they as children had heard the story of white foreigners arriving by Frobisher Bay 'a great many' years ago.²¹

In 1864, Hall published *Life with the Esquimaux: a narrative of Arctic experience*, with an American edition *Arctic researches and life among the Esquimaux: being a narrative of an expedition in search of Sir John Franklin*, appearing in 1865. Here, Hall argued that the mystery of the lost Franklin expedition could have been solved earlier if explorers had actively sought out Inuit knowledge. As he wrote,

neither M'Clintock nor any other civilized person has yet been able to ascertain the facts. But, though no *civilized* persons knew the truth, it was clear to me that the Esquimaux were aware of it, only it required peculiar tact and much time to induce them to make it known.²²

Hall was doing two things here. First, he was making the case that Inuit testimony was valuable and accurate; secondly, that it required skill, something he claimed to possess, to obtain and make sense of this information. In creating a dichotomy between civilized and uncivilized persons, Hall mobilized the racism entrenched in the construction of European and Euro-American nineteenth-century Arctic exploration identities to portray himself as an intermediary between discreet Inuit knowledge and useful scientific data.

The conversation with O-ku-ju-a-gu-ni-no led Hall to intensify his search for physical traces of Frobisher's expedition, and he used O-ku-ju-a-gu-ni-no's account, mediated through Tookoolito, as a key to unlocking the providence records of the relics he found. Tookoolito was described by Hall and other European and Euro-American commentators as a translator, but her work involved much more than simple interpretations. Hall compared her to the Danish translator, Carl Petersen, noting how she had 'the capacity for it surpassing' him.²³ Petersen worked as a translator on the Fox expedition, and the comparison between Tookoolito and Petersen further worked to highlight the importance of Hall's own searching mission. That Tookoolito was a more effective translator than Petersen is indicative of a central feature of the labour involved in the type of translational work that Tookoolito performed. It was

²⁰ Journal entry for 11 May 1861, Charles Francis Hall Collection: Journal IV.

²¹ Journal entry for 11 May 1861, Charles Francis Hall Collection: Journal IV. This was also recounted in Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, I, p. 300.

²² Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, I, p. 4.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 167. For more on Petersen, see Nils Aage Jensen, *Carl - Polarfarer* (Copenhagen, 2014); Nanna Katrine Lüders Kaalund, 'What happened to John Franklin? Danish and British perspectives from Francis McClintock's Arctic expedition, 1857–1859', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 2 (2020), pp. 300–14.

not simply that she translated for Hall, like Petersen had done, she was also mediating and facilitating the conversations that were so vital for Hall's project. She helped Hall piece together the types of data he was looking for in reconstructing the records of who may have seen traces of the lost Franklin expedition and mediated the conversations that led to the discovery of the Frobisher relics.

While Hall freely acknowledged in his public writings and lectures that Tookoolito translated for him, her work was significantly diminished in these compared to what we can glean from his private notes. In addition to acting as a knowledge broker for Hall, Tookoolito was also Hall's teacher. In a journal entry for 22 November 1860, Hall described how Tookoolito was teaching him Inuktitut.²⁴ Learning basic Inuktitut was important. Not only did it enable him to communicate more effectively, it also formed part of his performance of Arctic expertise. Hall's claims to authority on Arctic matters rested on his professed understanding on Inuit knowledge with himself as the anthropologist who synthesized and interpreted – as the translator of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's translations. The scientific results from the expedition were, in this portrayal of knowledge-production, produced by Hall alone. As Hall wrote in his published narrative, 'I had to make all the observations – scientific, geographical, and otherwise – by myself.'²⁵ Yet, Hall did not collate the data included in his narrative on his own. This division between who was a scientific practitioner and who was not formed part of the broader Euro-centric perceptions of knowledge, regional authority, and humanity in the mid-nineteenth-century United States. As the next section shows, in constructing his Arctic authority as someone who could stand as an intermediary between Inuit knowledge and science, Hall simultaneously presented Inuit, specifically Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, as objects of and for natural history.

III

When describing his Arctic travels to outsiders, Hall interchangeably described Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's roles as his translators, seamstress, hunters, and dog-sled drivers. In actuality, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik took care of almost everything while they were in the Arctic. In addition to helping Hall survive, they also did their best to ensure that he was able to accomplish his official expedition goals. Hall's private journals reveal that he was keenly aware of this. He noted, for example, how Tookoolito helped him check his face and extremities for frost-bite, while Ipiirvik did not require this type of assistance. It was a well-known fact amongst Inuit, Hall wrote in his private journal, that Europeans and Euro-Americans required a lot of help in the Arctic. Or, as Ipiirvik reportedly put it, 'They be all the same as very small boys.'²⁶ When Hall convinced Tookoolito and Ipiirvik to come with him to the United States, the voyage involved both a physical and epistemic shift. Hall had voluntarily relied on

²⁴ 22 Nov. 1860, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

²⁵ Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, I, p. 1.

²⁶ Hall, 2 Jan. 1862, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 2 folder 2.

Tookoolito and Ipiirvik for his survival and welfare in the Arctic, but he forcefully sought to control all aspects of their lives once in the United States. The move from the Arctic to the United States enabled Hall to exert control over Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, in a physical and epistemic shift. In doing so, Hall worked to publicly transform Tookoolito and Ipiirvik from co-travellers and teachers into ethnographic specimens and objects of curiosity.

Immediately upon their arrival in the United States in 1862, Hall began to set up arrangements to enrol Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in the foreign living peoples shows, to use historian Sadiyah Qureshi's terminology. Tookoolito and Ipiirvik appeared in Barnum's Museum and the New Boston Aquarial and Zoological Gardens, in addition to Hall's lecture tour.²⁷ To fully understand the significance of how the foreign living peoples shows and lectures functioned to both construct Hall's authority and erase that of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, it is instructive to first consider Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's earlier experiences with the foreign living peoples shows in Britain in the 1850s. The deal with P. T. Barnum as well as the lecture-tour were not only ways for Hall to earn money, it also allowed Hall to position himself as the gatekeeper of Inuit knowledge. Similarly, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's time in Britain was shaped by the professional and social desires of others. At the same time, a comparison between these experiences of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in the two countries reveals their centrality in shaping public perceptions of the Arctic and Inuit in Britain and the United States.

As young teenagers,²⁸ Tookoolito and Ipiirvik travelled with the British whaler John Bowlby²⁹ from Cumberland Sound (one of its Inuktitut names is Kangiqtualuk) to Hull in 1853. In Hull, they lived with the pharmacist William Gedney and his family. Gedney had previously worked as a surgeon for the whaling captain John Parker – the same Parker who, together with Budington, later introduced Tookoolito and Ipiirvik to Hall.³⁰ Ipiirvik had also worked as a pilot for Parker, and Ipiirvik's uncle Uugaq³¹ had not only worked with the same whalers in Cumberland Sound, but also spent the winter of 1854–5 in the United States with Budington.³² Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were, in this way, part of an international Arctic network. While in England, they participated in exhibits of living foreign peoples, political meetings, and other public lectures together with an unrelated child named Akulukjuk.³³ Although Akulukjuk was around eight years old, and Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were nowhere old enough to be Akulukjuk's biological parents, the three were presented as an example of a 'family unit' in the foreign living peoples

²⁷ Routledge, *Do you see ice*, pp. 44–6.

²⁸ According to early newspaper reports Ipiirvik was eighteen, Tookoolito was sixteen, and Akulukjuk was seven.

²⁹ In the period John Bowlby also went by Thomas Bowlby, he sailed with the *Bee*.

³⁰ The whaling industry connected large parts of the Arctic and non-Arctic world, as shown by Kenn Harper, *In those days: tales of Arctic whaling* (Inhabit media, 2018).

³¹ Also known to Euro-Americans in the period as Ugarng.

³² For more on Kalersik, see W. Gillies Ross, *Hunters on the track: William Penny and the search for Franklin* (Montreal, QC, 2019), pp. 161–2. For more on Ugarng, see Petrone, *Northern voices*, p. 65.

³³ Also known to Euro-Americans as Harlookjoe in the period.

shows throughout England. In the context of the exhibits and accompanying lectures, Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Akulukjuk were made to represent type-specimens of Inuit, a standard ethnographic practice in the period.³⁴ This had people act as representatives of the region they originated from, in an embodied othering where the audience encountered ‘living specimens’ for ethnographic study, rather than individuals.³⁵ As the newspaper advertisements promised, paying visitors could meet the ‘first natives of the Polar regions ever seen in London’, who would be ‘in their Native Costume, with their Huts, Canoe, and other accessories of Arctic life’.³⁶ In addition to this epistemic violence, which erased their personhoods, the exhibits were also physically difficult.³⁷ Their schedule was packed, the rooms were hot, and the days were long.

The shows formed part of an emerging commodity culture in Britain and English-speaking North America, which contributed to the continued (and increased) denigration of extra-Europeans.³⁸ The audiences who attended the shows were paying to be amused, and it was a form of entertainment that was billed as instructive, as scientific. The extent to which such viewings were considered an opportunity to further scientific research, is clear in the fact that Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Akulukjuk were visited by the Ethnological Society of London in February of 1854, and this was the topic of a paper at the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science that year.³⁹ Similarly, when Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and their infant son Tarralikitaq arrived in the United States just under a decade later, the geologist, biologist, and anthropologist Louis Agassiz wrote to Hall to enquire whether it would be possible to organize an exhibit together. ‘[Y]ou may perhaps feel inclined’, Agassiz wrote, to have Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Tarralikitaq ‘seen by those who would value highly the opportunity of extending their

³⁴ This reductive othering was standard ethnographic practice in the period. For more on ethnography and anthropology in the mid-nineteenth century, see Søren Rud, ‘Erobringen af Grønland: opdagelsesrejser, etnologi og forstanderskab i attenhundredtallet’, *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 106 (2013), pp. 488–520; Søren Rud, ‘Ethnography, time, and the idealization of tradition’, in Søren Rud, ed., *Colonialism in Greenland: tradition, governance and legacy* (Cambridge, 2017), pp. 9–31; Efram Sera-Shriar, *The making of British anthropology, 1813–1871* (London and Pittsburgh, PA, 2013); James Urry, *Before social anthropology: essays on the history of British anthropology* (London, 2012); Qureshi, *Peoples on parade*.

³⁵ Routledge has highlighted how furs were used to display authenticity in these exhibits: Routledge, *Do you see ice*, p. 42. See also Qureshi, *Peoples on parade*, p. 186.

³⁶ See, for example, ‘Advertisement’, *Athenaeum*, 1370 (28 Jan. 1854), p. 121; ‘Classified’, *Observer*, 5 Mar. 1854, p. 1. The cost of admission in London, at the Lowther Arcade Exhibition Rooms at Adelaide Street, was 1s for adults, 6d for children, which included an ‘illustrated lecture’ by Leicester Buckingham.

³⁷ ‘Advertisement’, p. 121; ‘Classified’, p. 1.

³⁸ Anne McClintock, *Imperial leather: race, gender, and sexuality in the colonial contest* (New York, NY, 1995).

³⁹ The section of Geography and Ethnology at the BAAS included a paper entitled ‘A description of three Esquimaux, lately in London’ by Richard Cull, as reported in ‘Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London. Session 1853–1854’, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, 24 (1854), p. lxxi.

acquaintance with the human family'.⁴⁰ This proposed show, Agassiz emphasized, would be a useful educational resource rather than a fanciful or marvelous curiosity. The border between entertainment and scientific research was fluid, and racism was entrenched in both.⁴¹

While the conversations with Agassiz fell through, Hall organized other shows and events. He quickly set up a contract with Barnum's Museum and the New Boston Aquarial and Zoological Gardens, which began shortly after their arrival in the United States in 1862.⁴² The experience at Barnum's Museum was particularly horrible.⁴³ Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Tarralikitaq were made to appear at least four evenings per week in their fur clothes, and the showrooms at P. T. Barnum's infamous site in New York were sweltering hot. Hall was aware of their unhappiness, and told Budington about this in their frequent correspondences. In December 1862, Hall wrote to Sidney Budington's wife, Sarah Budington, that although Barnum 'wishes to make arrangements with me to have them again at his Museum' and that he had offered a lot of money, 'he cannot have them again'.⁴⁴ Sarah and Sidney Budington in turn were unhappy about the toll the exhibits were taking on the young family, and a letter from an unknown writer observed that Sidney Budington 'has got enough of Esquimaux exhibits'.⁴⁵ Yet, Hall was continuously trying to set up new ways of extracting financial income, and he attempted to set up further exhibition arrangements in the spring of 1863 – after making a point of telling Budington that he had rejected Barnum. The conflicts that arose out of Hall's desires to use the young family for financial gain are particularly revealing not only of his relationship with Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, but also for their dynamic with Budington, which becomes significant for the United States governmental investigation into the *Polaris* expedition in the mid-1870s.

Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's experiences in Britain and the United States were clearly shaped by the desire of white men to benefit economically, and to increase their political and social statuses. The extent to which these men succeeded in using Tookoolito and Ipiirvik for their own gain is particularly

⁴⁰ Letter from Agassiz to Hall, dated 1862. Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

⁴¹ Sadiah Qureshi, 'Peopling the landscape: showmen, displayed peoples and travel illustration in nineteenth-century Britain', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 10 (2012), pp. 23–36; Christina Welch, 'Savagery on show: the popular visual representation of Native American peoples and their lifeways at the World's Fairs (1851–1904) and in Buffalo Bill's Wild West (1884–1904)', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 9 (2011), pp. 337–52; Alexander Scott, 'The "missing link" between science and show business: exhibiting gorillas and chimpanzees in Victorian Liverpool', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 25 (2020), pp. 1–20.

⁴² Hall discussed these circumstances in his private correspondence: letter from Hall to Agassiz, 13 Nov. 1862, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

⁴³ For more on Barnum's Museum and its place in the sphere of ethnographic entertainment, see Carin Berkowitz and Bernard Lightman, eds., *Science museums in transition: cultures of display in nineteenth-century Britain and America* (Pittsburgh, PA, 2017); John Springhall, *The genesis of mass culture: show business live in America, 1840 to 1940* (New York, NY, 2008); Ellen Bryson, *The transformation of Bartholomew Fortuno* (London, 2011).

⁴⁴ Hall to Sarah Budington, 7 Dec. 1862, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

⁴⁵ Anon to Hall, 18 Dec. 1862, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 5.

evident in the following example from Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's stay in England in the early 1850s. While in London, Bowlby and Gedney were able to gain an invitation to accompany Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Akulukjuk at an audience with Queen Victoria.⁴⁶ The treasurer of the Hull Zoological Garden, Robert Bowser, also attended, and Bowlby was given a sum of £25 as payment for the audience. This shows the social advantages gained by people like Bowlby and Gedney through the exploitation of Indigenous peoples, as meeting the queen was an honour the two whalers were unlikely to have achieved without Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Akulukjuk. Afterwards, advertisements for the London shows were amended to include that 'the Esquimaux family, from the Polar regions...had the honour of appearing by Royal Command before her Majesty, at Windsor Castle'.⁴⁷ Organizing the audience with the queen was certainly an effective way of generating newspaper interest in their political reformation projects, but it was also a way of advertising the exhibits and lectures. As one newspaper noted, the attention they received in London 'must be highly gratifying to Mr. John Bowlby, and to all concerned in the welfare of this curious and hitherto neglected race of people'.⁴⁸ This quotation further reflects the rhetoric of the so-called civilizing mission.

The racist and paternalistic practices of the civilizing mission positioned white European males as benevolent father-figures acting to protect Indigenous peoples, who were framed as child-like and in need of control.⁴⁹ Indeed, as historian Michael Mann has noted, 'the concept of the *mission civilisatrice* was used above all for the self-legitimation of colonial rule'.⁵⁰ That is not to say, however, that there was a discursive or enacted agreement between the religious missions and governmentally enforced colonial policies, but these shared an overarching belief in the European and Euro-American superiority that was used to naturalize different forms of imperialism. For example, although the Aborigines Protection Society (APS) advocated for abolitionism and for the rights of Indigenous peoples throughout the world, the practices they backed were deeply enmeshed in religious imperialism and a racialized

⁴⁶ The queen recorded the encounter in her private journal, where she noted that Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Akulukjuk were 'the first to have ever come over...they are my subjects'. Queen Victoria, 3 Feb. 1854, Queen Victoria's Journals, Princess Beatrice's copies, 37, pp. [46–8].

⁴⁷ See, for example, 'Advertisement', *Athenaeum* (11 Feb. 1854), p. 185.

⁴⁸ 'Our little chatterbox', *Theatrical Journal*, 15 (1854), pp. 39–40.

⁴⁹ For more on the religious missions and the civilizing mission, see Efram Sera-Shriar, 'Civilizing the natives: Richard King and his ethnographic writings on Indigenous northerners', in Edward Jones-Imhotep and Tina Adcock, *Made modern: science and technology in Canadian history* (Vancouver, BC, 2018), pp. 39–59; Harald Fischer-Tiné and Michael Mann, eds., *Colonialism as civilizing mission: cultural ideology in British India* (London, 2004); Sujit Sivasundaram, 'Natural history spiritualized: civilizing islanders, cultivating breadfruit, and collecting souls', *History of Science*, 39 (2001), pp. 417–43; Søren Rud, 'A correct admixture: the ambiguous project of civilising in nineteenth-century Greenland', *Itinerario*, 33 (2009), pp. 29–44; Tony Ballantyne, 'Entangled mobilities: missions, Māori and the reshaping of Te Ao Hurihuri', in Rachel Standfield, ed., *Indigenous mobilities: across and beyond the Antipodes* (Acton, 2018), pp. 115–44; Karen Vallgård, *Imperial childhoods and Christian mission: education and emotions in South India and Denmark* (Basingstoke, 2014).

⁵⁰ Fischer-Tiné and Mann, *Colonialism as civilizing mission*, p. 4.

belief in British, and Euro-American, superiority.⁵¹ Similarly, Hall framed himself as a parental figure to Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, whom he described as his 'idol children'. A central way in which Hall invoked the rhetoric of the civilizing mission, and its associated paternalism, was to transform Tookoolito and Ipiirvik from active collaborators to child-like adults in need of guardianship. This infantilization further underwrote Hall's strategy for constructing his Arctic expertise, and is particularly visible in the foreign living peoples shows and Hall's lecture tour.

Hall claimed to have become an Arctic expert by immersing himself in Inuit culture, and having Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and their baby Tarralikitaq⁵² with him during his tour enabled Hall to further his claim position to be a gate-keeper of Inuit knowledge. The extent to which Hall relied on them becomes particularly clear when we look to Hall's private correspondence around Tarralikitaq's tragic death. Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and Tarralikitaq contracted a severe respiratory illness in early 1863, while touring with Hall. Tookoolito and Ipiirvik recovered, but Tarralikitaq passed away in New York, on 28 February 1863, aged only eighteen months.⁵³ Yet, as his letters to Grinnell and Budington show, Hall was primarily concerned about how this tragedy and Tookoolito's emotional and physical well-being would impact his next Arctic project. Hall told Grinnell that he 'shall return' to the Arctic 'as soon as Tuk-oo-li-too recovers from her serious illness. I hope & pray her life may be spared that she may aid me in unlocking the great secrets that are locked up in the regions of the North about King Williams Sound & Boothia Peninsula.'⁵⁴ Once Tookoolito was beginning to recover physically, Hall wrote to Budington that he 'rejoice[d] in the fact that the prospect are so good of the surely recovery of this noble hearted woman. I am looking anxiously to the time when she will be of invaluable good to the work by acting as my interpreter when I shall reach King William's Land & Boothia.'⁵⁵ These two letters reveal what Hall frequently sought to hide, that without Tookoolito and Ipiirvik he would not be able to carry out his Arctic plans; not just because they helped him travel and survive, but because he needed them to 'unlock' the Arctic. That is, he relied on Tookoolito and Ipiirvik for all aspects of his Arctic work, and he saw their deep personal tragedy as an inconvenience to his plans. In hiding this dependency, Hall drew on

⁵¹ For more on the APS, see Jane Samson, *Race and redemption: British missionaries encounter Pacific peoples, 1797–1920* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2017); Sera-Shriar, 'Civilizing the natives'; Zoë Laidlaw, 'Heathens, slaves and Aborigines: Thomas Hodgkin's critique of missions and anti-slavery', *History Workshop Journal*, 64 (2007), pp. 133–61; James Heartfield, *The Aborigines' Protection Society: humanitarian imperialism in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Canada, South Africa, and the Congo, 1836–1909* (London, 2011).

⁵² Known to Euro-Americans in the period as Tukeliketa.

⁵³ Tookoolito and Ipiirvik had three children, two sons, and a daughter. All three children died in circumstances directly or indirectly related to their work with Hall. Their second-born son, known as King William, was born in 1864 during their second expedition with Hall. King William died aged eight months during a sledge journey. Their daughter Punna died in 1875, and Tookoolito passed away the following year. Tookoolito was buried in the same graveyard as Tarralikitaq and Punna, in Groton, Connecticut, near Budington's family home.

⁵⁴ Hall to Henry Grinnell, 4 Mar. 1863, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

⁵⁵ Hall to Sidney Budington, 14 Mar. 1863, Charles Francis Hall Collection: box 4 folder 2.

pre-existing structures of racialized othering of extra-Europeans to present himself as the translator of a discreet Inuit knowledge that he could reveal as scientific and exploit for financial and social capital. When Hall made agreements to display the family for financial gain, he was also publicly constructing identities for Tookoolito and Ipiirvik as subjugated others. It was part of how Hall portrayed himself as an Arctic expert, and, as the next section shows, very similar strategies were used by the United States government to reconstruct the narrative of the *Polaris* expedition.

IV

The *Polaris* expedition was the third time Tookoolito and Ipiirvik travelled with Hall in the Arctic, but this venture was much larger than the previous two. This was not a Franklin searching-expedition, but an attempt at the North Pole. Like the Second Grinnell Expedition under Kane, and the expedition led by Hayes, Hall had chosen to travel north towards the Pole through the waterway known as Smith Sound. Hall had secured funding from the United States Congress, and sailed with a small crew. His long-term collaborator Budington was the sailing-master to the expedition. The expedition was troubled by conflicts amongst the crew from the outset. Hall died under suspicious circumstances in November 1871, and the period that followed was marked by further conflicts. The majority of the seamen were German, as was the chief scientist Emil Bessel and the chief engineer Emil Schumann, and the conflicts appear to have split along national lines.⁵⁶ In addition, there were disagreements around whether the expedition ought to continue north, or attempt to travel towards south Greenland. In the autumn of 1872, during a storm, the crew was separated leaving half of the crew on the ship, and the other half on an ice floe. The circumstances leading to this separation were highly suspicious, and the separation became a key point of controversy once the crew was back in the United States. As the aftermath of the *Polaris* expedition in the mid-1870s shows, the imperialistic notions of extra-European testimony as less reliable than that of European and Euro-Americans were not only used by individuals such as Hall, but as strategies mobilized to change master-narratives about the Arctic experience.

The ice floe crew consisted of twenty people, including Tookoolito, Ipiirvik, and their daughter Punna,⁵⁷ and the Inuuk explorers Suersaq and his wife Mequ,⁵⁸ together with their three children.⁵⁹ The American assistant navigator George Tyson was also on the ice floe, and claimed the title of captain. The ice floe crew was discovered in the spring of 1873 by the whaling ship the *Tigress*,

⁵⁶ The relationship between Hall, Budington, and the German crew is detailed in Richard Parry, *Trial by ice: the true story of murder and survival on the 1871 Polaris expedition* (New York, NY, 2009).

⁵⁷ Also known to Euro-Americans in the period as Isigaittuq or Panik, and as Sylvia Grinnell. Punna became ill during the *Polaris* expedition, and never recovered fully. She passed away in Groton in 1875, and was buried near her brother.

⁵⁸ Also known to Euro-Americans in the period as Mersek.

⁵⁹ The children were Augustia, Tobias, and Charlie Polaris. Charlie was born during the drift on the ice floe, taking the total to twenty people.

just off the coast of Newfoundland. These rescued had drifted on sheets of ice for 190 days, travelling a distance of around 1,500 miles. At this point, the crew that remained on the *Polaris* had not yet been heard from. The arrival of the *Tigress* with the ice-floe crew became an immediate media-sensation.⁶⁰ Many of the early newspaper reports, some which were based on interviews with the crew including Ipiirvik and Tyson, more than suggested that Hall had been poisoned. There were reports of mutiny, drinking, and general improper behaviour, in particular by Budington.⁶¹ As this was a governmentally sponsored expedition, the United States Navy quickly sought to rein in the speculation. As part of their efforts to control the flow of information to the press, the United States Navy brought the ice floe crew to the Navy Yard.⁶² But once at the Navy Yard, the crew was not immediately brought ashore. Instead, they were kept on the ship, and the Navy issued strict orders that no one was allowed to board or leave until the secretary of the Navy, George Maxwell Robeson, had concluded his interviews. We know from the *Herald*, which had a reporter camp out by the Navy Yard, that Tyson was allowed to leave the ship after his interview, but was forbidden from speaking about the expedition while it was being investigated under threat of loss of pay. In a move that further suggests the Navy attempted to exercise as much control as possible over the situation, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were removed from the rest of the ice floe crew before the investigation was finished, and Hall's widow was kept from meeting with them to discuss what had happened.⁶³ In silencing Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, in separating and isolating them, the Navy mobilized similar structures of imperialistic control that Hall had used to construct his Arctic authority. This was part of a series of clear efforts to rewrite and control the account of what had happened on the *Polaris*.

There were several reasons for the newspapers to focus on Ipiirvik. He had a well-known and long-standing history with Hall; he had a home in the United States, and he had played a crucial role in keeping everyone alive on the ice floe. Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were both by his side as Hall became increasingly ill and died, but Tookoolito appears to have been shielded from this initial media attention because she was caring for their daughter. Ipiirvik's interviews in the newspapers reported a complete collapse of order on the *Polaris*, that Budington had been drunk and threatened the crew in various ways, and that Hall had told him he had been poisoned.⁶⁴ The problem for the United States Navy was, therefore, that the early newspaper interviews had more than insinuated that Hall had been poisoned by Budington. After the investigation, Tyson's early testimonies in the press were set aside as

⁶⁰ The story broke on 10 May 1873; see, for example, 'The *Polaris*', *New York Herald*, 10 May 1873, pp. 3, 6; 'This evening's dispatches', *Daily Evening Bulletin*, 10 May 1873, p. 3.

⁶¹ See, for example, 'Further statements', *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel*, 22 May 1873, p. 4; 'New York', *Cleveland Morning Daily Herald*, 22 May 1873, p. 1; 'The *Polaris*', *New York Herald*, 7 June 1873, p. 7.

⁶² The Navy Yard was in Washington; the journey took nine days.

⁶³ See, for example, 'The American Arctic expedition', *Daily News*, 26 June 1873, p. 5.

⁶⁴ 'The *Polaris*', *New York Herald*, 10 May 1873, p. 3; 'The *Polaris*', *New York Herald*, 11 May 1873, p. 9; 'Fate of the *Polaris*', *New York Herald*, 12 May 1873, p. 7.

the confused ramblings of someone who was unwell from having spent so long drifting on a sheet of ice. Robeson, the secretary of the Navy, drew on another strategy for discrediting the early newspaper interviews given by Ipiirvik. This strategy was fundamentally identical to the one utilized by Hall in establishing his Arctic authority: that is, they positioned Inuit testimonies as requiring an epistemic translation by European and Euro-Americans. For Hall, this had been an effective way to construct his own authority of the work of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, and it was similarly effective for Robeson in discrediting the veracity of Ipiirvik's early newspaper interviews. In the imperial context, rescripting and silencing of Inuit voices went hand in hand with the construction of European and Euro-American authority and narrative control.

Robeson interviewed Tookoolito and Ipiirvik as part of his investigation, and their testimonies were included in the official Navy report. Although they could speak, read, and write English, the Navy report presented them as being unable to understand basic questions. In the Navy report, the first paragraph of the transcribed interview included the following exchange and editorial observation:

Question. Can you tell us what happened on board the *Polaris* after you left Brooklyn? [An evident difficulty in comprehending question.]

Answer. Ship all right while Captain Hall alive.⁶⁵

The official conclusion of the Navy report was that Hall had suffered a stroke, and had been in a state of mental confusion as he deteriorated. This explanation sought to account for Hall's claims to have been poisoned. The Navy report acknowledged that Hall may have *believed* he was poisoned, and have told this to Tookoolito and Ipiirvik, but this was framed as the ramblings of someone suffering from a naturally acquired illness. If Ipiirvik was unable to understand a 'what happened' question, as indicated in the official Navy report, how could you trust that he could differentiate between Hall's supposed hallucinations and what was true? The implied answer was, that you could not. Although he kept the crew alive on a sheet of ice, Ipiirvik's testimony was not considered reliable back in the United States. Just as Hall had positioned himself as the translator of Tookoolito's investigations into the Franklin mystery, so could Robeson put himself in the role of the translator of Ipiirvik's testimony. Inuit knowledge was, it was made clear, not reliable in of itself.

When the government sent out a rescue mission to search for the rest of the *Polaris*, Ipiirvik went with them. With her husband back in the Arctic, Tookoolito and their daughter went to stay with Budington's wife.⁶⁶ Budington was, of course, still in the Arctic. Tookoolito and Ipiirvik had lived with Budington and his family at different points for many years, and it was from this perspective not unusual that Tookoolito and her daughter

⁶⁵ George Robeson and the United States Navy Department, *Report to the president of the United States of the section of the Navy Department in the matter of the disaster to the United States exploring expedition toward the North Pole* (Washington, DC, 1873), p. 53.

⁶⁶ 'State news', *Connecticut Western News*, 29 Aug. 1873.

went to stay there. However, in the early newspaper reports, Ipiirvik and Tyson had suggested that Budington had murdered Hall, and Budington had further been portrayed as an abusive drunk. In contrast, Mrs Budington was interviewed in the newspapers where she strongly rejected that her husband drank, and she emphasized her close relationship with Tookoolito.⁶⁷ Based on Tookoolito's personal correspondence with Mrs Budington, the two had been very close, but this friendship was still shaped by an inherently uneven power-dynamic.⁶⁸ With no significant money of her own, Tookoolito had few other places to go while Ipiirvik was away, just as had been the case when they lived in New York with Hall.⁶⁹ It is suggestive of the pressures that the government put on Tookoolito and Ipiirvik that they not only separated them from the other crew members, but that Tookoolito went to Budington's family during the investigation into the *Polaris* disaster after Ipiirvik had been so publicly critical of Budington. It is worth keeping in mind, as the American government did not financially compensate Tookoolito and Ipiirvik in the same way as, for example, Budington and Tyson, which meant that Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were now dependent on Budington and his family for their welfare if they wanted to remain in the United States. For comparison, Budington was awarded \$1,500, Tyson \$1,200, while Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were given \$300.⁷⁰ With no income, no government pension or support, Tookoolito and Ipiirvik were clearly under severe financial and emotional pressure during the investigation into the *Polaris* disaster and in the years that followed.

The way Hall transformed Tookoolito and Ipiirvik from co-travellers and teachers in the Arctic to subjugated others in the United States had very real and devastating consequences for their lives, and is revealing of the epistemic and physical violence of Arctic exploration. It also shows the range of situations in which this subjugation has influenced historical narratives; in this case, the conversation around the *Polaris* expedition. It is a point of historical irony that the same societal structures Hall employed to construct his Arctic authority were used by Robeson to create his desired narrative of Hall's death and the wider events of the *Polaris* expedition. In 1873, the presiding president of the American Geographical Society, Charles Daly, reportedly stated that he placed 'little or no reliance in the stories of Esquimaux Joe and his friend Hans as to the death of Capt. Hall and the conduct of the Sailing-Master Budington'. Daly argued that Hall had been 'incapable of leading the expedition entrusted to him', and that Hall had undertaken the project 'not by a generous scientific zeal, but by a personal vanity'.⁷¹ This assessment reflected the structural processes that erased and subjugated Indigenous

⁶⁷ See, for example, 'The story of the ice', *New York Herald*, 21 Sept. 1873, p. 12.

⁶⁸ Collection 'Ipiirvik, Hannah and Joe', Indian & Colonial Research Center, Connecticut.

⁶⁹ Tookoolito and Sarah Budington kept a long-standing correspondence, where, for example, Tookoolito expresses her sadness at the loss of Tarralikitaq: Ms Eb47 M1161, Collection 'Ipiirvik, Hannah and Joe', Indian & Colonial Research Center, Connecticut.

⁷⁰ 'The *Polaris* expedition', *New York Herald*, 1 July 1874, p. 2.

⁷¹ As quoted in 'The East', *Redwood Gazette*, 5 June 1873, p. 2.

peoples; processes that were constructed and upheld both by European and Euro-American individuals and governments.

V

In some ways, the lives of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik are unique in that they spent extended periods in the United States, their lives were well documented by the press, and some of their correspondences and personal files have survived. But the majority of nineteenth-century Arctic explorations relied on Indigenous peoples for different aspects of their Arctic work. When Hall shifted the historical, scientific, and geographical contributions of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik and their significance for his venture, from one of collaboration to one of racialized hierarchy, he was drawing on a structure of knowledge-making deeply embedded within the colonial and paternalistic rhetoric surrounding Indigenous Arctic peoples at the time. These processes of erasing, removing, reframing, and minimizing the contributions of Indigenous peoples applied to all aspects of Arctic exploration, and not simply the practical ones such as dog-driving and hunting. Though such support was also incredibly skilled and significant, the erasure of the contributions of Inuit to the broader knowledge-productions claimed by explorers as was an act of epistemic violence. Yet, this work is typically still described only as practical or supportive, thereby upholding the same narratives created by people like Hall.

Hall was not by any means the first, or the last, explorer to make the argument that Inuit accounts were only useful if interpreted by the explorer in the right way. This was a popular strategy for many European and North American explorers throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indeed, it was embedded within the entire concept of exploration around the world, and not unique to Hall's work or to Arctic exploration more generally. As historian Mary Louise Pratt notably argues, there is a 'dehumanizing western habit of representing other parts of the world as having no history' in the practice of exploration.⁷² As this article shows, it was a 'habit' that functioned at many different levels to construct European and Euro-American narratives of the imagined imperial periphery. For Hall, Inuit oral history came to form a key part in this construction of epistemic hierarchies, hierarchies which formed an engrained part of European and Euro-American exploration. Although Hall always emphasized that Inuit oral history was highly reliable, it was understood that it was only 'really' reliable when further translated, or reconceptualized, by him. The translation was from one language to the other, but also involved an epistemic shift, as Hall presented himself as the translator and interpreter of Tookoolito's translations – thereby making Inuit knowledge reliable and scientific. The differentiation between levels of knowing, what was known to European and Euro-American Arctic explorers and what was known to Inuit, was the same process through which Hall rescripted Tookoolito and Ipiirvik's labour as his own. While Hall acknowledged

⁷² Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (London and New York, NY, 1992), p. 219.

Tookoolito's intelligence and abilities to teach others, it was still necessary, he argued, to have Europeans and Euro-Americans oversee, translate, and, effectively, control her. It was an argument founded in a Euro-centrist sense of superiority, and embedded within a highly racialized and paternalistic framework.

As I show throughout this article, the same societal norms that drew crowds to see living foreign peoples and other 'curiosities' were also at play in the erasure of Indigenous labour and knowledge in relation to Arctic exploration. The consequences of this erasure were severe, and manifested themselves at multiple interconnected levels. The way Hall minimized and erased the contributions of Tookoolito and Ipiirvik clearly mirrored the process by which the United States Navy worked to discard the early newspaper interviews with Ipiirvik. Hall emphasized the necessity of his own role in transferring Tookoolito's testimony into a scientific account. In the same way, the United States government, through Robeson, argued that the journalists had failed to properly translate Ipiirvik's testimony. The newspapers had not misquoted Ipiirvik, Robeson argued, but simply failed to act as mediators. In confronting how the processes of nineteenth-century scientific knowledge making were entrenched in imperialistic structures of epistemic and physical exploitation, we can begin to unravel how these structures have continued to be reproduced in Arctic studies today, and the role of the colonial archives in upholding such narratives.

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