Relations of Power & Domination in a *World Polity*:

The Politics of Indigeneity & National Identity in Greenland

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Established in 1979 as Home Rule and replaced in 2009 as self-government, the Greenlandic Inuit have developed the most advanced form of self-government. Concerning the status of the Greenlandic Inuit, this process of nation-state building may have an influence on being indigenous. The focus of this article is to answer the question of how indigenous peoples are affected by the existing relations of power and domination in a world polity. Taking the continued permission to hunt whales of the Greenlandic Inuit as an example, the article will demonstrate that Greenlanders adopt the projected images of otherness as their own because of the fear of losing the rights exclusively reserved for indigenous peoples. The early and later versions of a working paper by an international group of experts commissioned by the Greenlandic self-government illustrate the debate about the cultural self-images in Greenland. While the narration of the Greenlandic Inuit as indigenous peoples secures rights in international fora, a second narration of a collective identity of a small Nordic nation emerges and is discussed. The later version of the working paper emphasizes Greenland's indigenous status. The analysis shows the authority of global models since the categories of world polity dominate discourses on the cultural collective identity of the Greenlandic Inuit.

Introduction

The protection of indigenous peoples' ways of life is one of the key concerns of international law and underscores respect for cultural difference and recognition of culturally specific grounds as a basis for legitimation. These rights within global society are generally for groups of indigenous people who did not, as former colonized communities, acquire the status of an own nation-state and hence do not comprise the majority in a society within the framework of such a state. Indigeneity is thus linked to a special status that guarantees participation in the various committees of the United Nations as well as other international forums and additionally comprises self-government or rights of land use. Furthermore, with ecological discourse finding global acceptance, various political and scientific stakeholders have succeeded in establishing an additional, non-scientific access to nature in the interests of protecting biological diversity (Berkes, 1993, 1999; Freeman & Carbyn, 1988; Hobson, 1992; Inglis, 1993; Johannes, 1993;

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Johnson, 1992). Hence, the established co-management regimes not only recognize the validity of scientific methods but also strive to integrate the traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous communities (Berkes, 1994; Berkes, George, & Preston, 1991; IUCN, UNEP, & WWF, 1991; Notzke, 1995; Osherenko, 1988; Pinkerton, 1992).

At first glance such a development suggests a step forward for indigenous peoples on the road to increased self-determination. However, this article argues that, through the acceptance of indigenous peoples, the distribution of power of Euro-American societies and post-colonial communities remains cemented, albeit in another language and by different means. Communities that were once defined as 'primitive peoples' by Euro-American societies now become 'indigenous peoples' and, as such, are 'between nature and culture'. Inherent in the global model of indigeneity (Sowa, 2013b) is the idea that indigenes exist in a 'natural' and 'pre-modern' state in contrast to 'enlightened,' 'modern' cultures that have founded their own independent sovereign states. They become captives of the categories of the *world polity* (Meyer, 1987; Meyer, Boli, Thomas, & Ramirez, 1997). In this way they are granted specific rights, such as the authority to manage their natural resources or permission to continue whaling, only as long as they are recognized as indigenes. And to be recognized as such, indigenous peoples must select the appropriate mode of representing their indigeneity themselves and this by no means ad libitum. In other words, it is only through the reproduction of preconceived and projected images of representation accepted in Euro-American societies that indigenous peoples and the identity politics they engage in find international recognition (Sowa, 2013b). But these images of representation are frozen in time and space. They give rise to what I call a museumification of indigeneity that excludes social transformation and change (Sowa, 2013b).

By accepting these images of representative, indigenous peoples must succumb to the existing power constellations. In Judith Butler's words, this subjugation does not signify submission to the will of another but a process in which an individual or a collective actor becomes a specific subject by means of performative 'recognition' (subjectivation) of specific relations of power and domination (Butler, 1997). This thereby requires that the actors take an active part and perform accordingly by adopting the projected images of otherness as their own. In the context of an assumed collective cultural identity of those suppressed in hegemonic discourse, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak speaks of a strategic essentialism as the ticket required for entering the game played in the global arena, "a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" (Spivak, 1988: 205).

The focus of this article is the question of how indigenous peoples are affected by the existing relations of power and domination in a *world polity*. In my view the uneven distribution of power is becoming visible in the identity politics of indigenous peoples. Taking the continued permission to hunt whales of the Greenlandic Inuit as an example (section 2) I will demonstrate that Greenlanders adopt the projected images of otherness as their own because of the fear of losing the rights exclusively reserved for indigenous peoples. I will illustrate in the following that the cultural self-images in Greenland are currently the subject of debate. To do this I will take a look at the historic example of an early and later version of an internal working paper by an international group of experts and intellectuals commissioned by the Greenlandic self-government (section 3). The analysis will show the authority of global models, since, in my view, the categories of *world polity* dominate discourses on the cultural collective identity of the Greenlandic Inuit and ultimately form it (section 4). So far, a simultaneous recognition of

indigeneity and nation-state status might have a negative effect on the continuation of whaling. Therefore the article will conclude by focusing on the construction of global models of *world polity* in order to explain the (self-)representation of the Greenlanders (section 5).

The Case of *Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling* of the Greenlandic Inuit

The Greenlandic Inuit, as an indigenous people, have one of the most extensive systems of self-government in the world (Dahl, 1993) and are seen as a 'role model' for other indigenous peoples (Thomsen, 2013: 254). The introduction of Greenlandic self-rule on June 21, 2009 through the ratification of the *Self Rule Act* represents a further step in founding a nation-state (Kleist, 2010; Nuttall, 2008). From 1721, Greenland was first a Danish-Norwegian, and after 1814 a Danish colony (concerning the Greenlandic history see Caulfield, 1997; Gad, 1984; Nuttall, 1994; Petersen, 1995). After the official end of colonial rule in 1953, the Greenlanders were made equal to Danish citizens by law. In the following years, a Danish welfare state was established in Greenland and led to massive changes, which were described as the 'Danification' of Greenland (H. Kleivan, 1984: 706; Stern, 2010: 87). Because it was too expensive to supply the small and widely scattered settlements with running water and electricity, many of them were closed in the course of the centralization and urbanization policy. Traditional ties were severed and the former small communities had to first adjust themselves to living in newly created 'cities' (Nuttall, 1992). Many Greenlanders increasingly felt that they were "Northern Danes" (Caulfield, 1997: 36; Dorais, 1996: 29). With the Greenlandic elite, a new post-colonial social class gained strength in the 1970s. This elite had studied at Danish universities and now demanded a 'more Greenlandic Greenland' or a Greenlandization (Breinholt-Larsen, 1992: 216; Nuttall, 1992: 1) as well as an own Greenlandic collective identity of the Kalaallit to distinguish them apart from the Danish collective identity (H. Kleivan, 1969/70; 1984) visualized by own symbols (I. Kleivan, 1991). Their efforts met with great success: with the *Greenland Home Rule Act* being passed on May 1, 1979, the Greenlandic home-rule government (*Hjemmestyre*) was founded. At the same time Greenland remains economically dependent on the Danish State. The 300th anniversary of the colonization of the island will be in 2021. According to Hans Enoksen, who served as Prime Minister from 2002 to 2009, this would be a good point in time for Greenland's declaration of independence (Nuttall, 2008).

In terms of whaling, the Greenlandic Inuit continue to be allowed to hunt whales under international law. Following the end of international commercial whaling in 1986 (Sowa, 2013c) the international forum of the *International Whaling Commission* (IWC), which deals with the management of bigger whales, permitted indigenous peoples in Alaska, Siberia and Greenland to continue whaling for subsistence purposes. The recognition of cultural differences of indigenous peoples shapes the basis for legitimation because the only form of legitimate whaling is called *Aboriginal subsistence whaling* (Donovan, 1982a; Gambell, 1993, 1997). *Aboriginal subsistence whaling* means:

> whaling, for purposes of local Aboriginal consumption carried out by or on behalf of Aboriginal, indigenous or native peoples who share strong community, familial, social, and cultural ties related to a continuing traditional dependence on whaling and on the use of whales. Local Aboriginal consumption means the traditional uses of whale products by local aboriginal, indigenous, or native communities in meeting their nutritional, subsistence and cultural requirements (Donovan, 1982b: 83).

Hence, the perception of indigenousness is probably in no other area more relevant than in the area of international whaling (Sowa, 2013a).

The example of the indigenous people of Greenland chosen for this article is especially informative from a research perspective because on the largest island in the world with its almost 57,000 inhabitants, one can currently observe a nation-building process in which the Greenlandic elite is discussing whether Greenland is an indigenous people and/or a small Nordic nation. The degree to which they have obtained autonomy has progressed to the extent that it is possible for Greenland's intellectuals and politicians to pursue identity politics themselves (Sowa, 2012). Over the centuries it was always the cultural others who defined the Greenlandic people in relation to their own respective European society. Now, however, Greenland is working on presenting its own cultural representation or its own cultural self-image in world society. This concerns the production of we-images that are both socially accepted by the people in Greenland and considered legitimate from the outside by world society. The following section deals with two different we-images emerging in two versions of an internal working paper which will be analyzed in the cultural sociology perspective.

Between Indigeneity and Nation: Two Working Papers of the Greenlandic Self-Government

The target of independence and the status of Greenlanders as an indigenous people have been repeatedly discussed since the early 1990s by expert groups[1] comprising Greenlandic and foreign intellectuals. The essence of the problem is whether Greenland represents an indigenous people or a small Nordic nation. This problem can be witnessed in two different versions of the same working paper[2] of one expert group of the Greenlandic self-government. Analyzing them proves very informative in regard to the debated images of representation of the Greenlandic Inuit. First we shall take a look at the early version (document A) in order to gain insights into the changes that were made for the later version (document B), and discuss those later.

The initial document A has 16 pages and begins with the definition of indigenous peoples, following the wording of the convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) (chapter 1), in order to then find reasons that speak for the status of Greenlanders as an indigenous people (chapter 2) as well as those that speak against it (chapter 3). Subsequently, the arguments for and against are considered (chapter 4), followed by a conclusion (chapter 5). In the working paper the authors assert that what supports the argument of Greenlanders being an indigenous people is that Greenland is home to three tribes of indigenous peoples: the West Greenlanders (*Kalaallit)*, the Thule people (*Inughuit)*, and the East Greenlanders (*Iivit*), all of which call themselves *Kalaallit* today. An official court ruling against the Danish Government and to the benefit of the Thule tribe verifies the status of the Thule tribe as an indigenous people, so that this status is also understood to be valid for the other two groups. The emphasis of the role of the Greenlanders as an indigenous people in the Arctic was successfully represented at the environmental conferences of the United Nations or within the framework of the activities of the *International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources* (IUCN) and also in the *Arctic Council*, the *Inuit Circumpolar Conference*[3] (ICC), as well as in the *International Whaling Commission* (IWC). The last body has a special relevance because Greenland, due to its being recognized as an indigenous people, is allocated quotas for whale kills.

What speaks against the Greenlanders being an indigenous people – so the text argues – is that Greenland strives to be seen as a small Nordic nation in accordance with its own laws, to have an internationally recognized independent government, and have its own flag to use for shipping and sporting events. The group of experts points out that international acceptance is endangered:

> With increasing autonomy the difficulties in preserving recognition as an indigenous people according to ILO and UN understanding grow, because one of the conditions is that indigenous peoples must be subject to heteronomous authority. Regardless of how unacceptable this may appear from the Greenlanders' point of view, the fact is that the more power given to Greenland's *Landsting* [parliament] and *Landsstyre* [state government], the more reluctant the surrounding world can be expected to regard Greenlanders as an indigenous people" (document A: 6).

The concluding discussion describes the political dilemma of Greenlanders understanding themselves as an indigenous people and also "wishing to be the masters in their own home" (document A: 7). The simultaneity of indigeneity and national independence has not been foreseen and is not recognized internationally, leading the expert group to call the term 'indigenous people' a tacit racial policy of the international community. They literally wrote: "[i]n reality the term 'indigenous people' is a euphemism for ethnic groups who are not of the 'European race' and were, at the time of colonization, slaves or people who were economically exploited or exotic – and dark-skinned – extras playing minor roles in colonial exploits" (document A: 8).

The authors of document A share the opinion that in Greenland itself the term 'indigenous people' did not take hold because the people there always saw themselves as independent communities:

> [v]iewed in a modern context we could say that the Greenlanders whom the Norwegian and Danish missionaries met in the 18th century made up an independent community, which was not, however, recognized by the Danish king…Viewed against this historical background we can understand that, overall, the term 'indigenous people' is having difficulties in finding acceptance in Greenlandic society; for example it is not mentioned in the *Landsting*'s legislation. The people of Greenland generally consider themselves to be Greenlanders, *Kalaallit*, and that they belong to the island in the same way the Icelanders belong to Iceland or the Faroese to the Faroe Islands. The key issue is that the land belongs to them and to no one else…Where they live, the Icelanders and the Faroese are, strictly speaking, an 'indigenous people' too and merely do not want to be called thus. And they are not called so because the international community desires to respect the self-identification of every people (document A: 9).

In the concluding section of the working paper, the experts recommend that the Greenlanders continue to define themselves internationally as an indigenous people in order to have a claim to whaling quotas from the *International Whaling Commission* (IWC):

> [w]e are forced to do this by necessity in order to politically secure our provision with food and other necessities of life. As far as whaling is concerned, the general public does not accept the Brundtland[3] principles of sustainability but is guided by subjective emotions. Thus Greenland is forced to play by the rules, which – in no way justified by the nature of the subject matter – are dictated by a tacit racism of an overpowering negotiating partner that is often not recognized as such and in the present instance lead to positive discrimination (document A: 15).

The same is the case for Japan, whose representatives are fighting for cultural reasons to be able to continue whaling after the whaling moratorium of 1986 (Sowa, 2013a). The expert commission is of the opinion that up until now it has not yet been possible in the IWC to establish a system for managing the whale population according to sustainability criteria. In contrast to the Japanese coastal whalers, the Greenlandic whalers are allowed to hunt whales because whaling in Greenland is legitimate as *Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling* (Donovan, 1982a; Gambell, 1993, 1997), and it is assigned annual quotas for strikes of large whales. Hence the experts speak of "positive discrimination" (document A: 15) against those who have been granted the status of 'indigenous people.' As long as the Greenlandic self-government system is based on a national community with Denmark or exists in some sort of partnership with Denmark, the *Kalaallit* can keep their international status as an indigenous people. Therefore the early version of the working paper argues in a reflected, realistic and dialectical way. In weighing the pros and cons, the experts understand indigeneity as a political strategy but not as a social reality. It is a necessary strategy so that the Greenlanders do not lose the rights they currently enjoy. But at the same time this version of the working paper presents a revolt against the existing categories of world society.

In the later version of the working paper, document B, the dialectical structure has disappeared. The argumentation in the second text is shorter (11 pages) and linear, and it has a different structure.[4] In the expert commission's representation of the Greenlanders here, we are confronted with the Western notion of the Greenlanders as an indigenous people possessing traditional knowledge and recognized as such in numerous international arenas. The first sentence of the text reads: "[t]he Greenlanders inhabit the largest island in the world lying 3-4,000 km from the *rigsmyndighederne i Danmark* [Danish government administration]" (document B: 4). Already this infers Denmark's hegemony. The later version too holds on to the principle of Greenland representing a people of its own and a self-understanding of Greenlanders as an indigenous people, albeit in a watered-down version to the first. However, it no longer addresses any reasons why the indigenous status should be questioned. Even the irrelevance of calling the people 'indigenous' is no longer mentioned. Rather, the authors emphasize that the Greenlandic people have "an ancestry over many thousands of years in Siberia and Arctic North America and (…) [are] internationally renowned for their outstanding culture, which still finds expression in, for example, its time-honored language" (document B: 4). Thus the later version of the working paper underscores Greenland's indigenous status as well as solidarity with other indigenous peoples. The later version refrains from mentioning the word 'autonomy' at all.

The debate about the image of representation shows that the articulation of a collective identity is influenced by international categories. Whereas the earlier working paper emphasized the formation of a nation-state for all the people inhabiting the country, the later version focuses on the status of the Inuit as an indigenous people as a strategic articulation to keep the status of hunting whales. Based on the fact that the discourses on the collective cultural identity of the Greenlandic Inuit are to be determined by their indigenous status, the following section will explain the genesis of this category in *world polity*.

The Distinction between 'Primitive' and Civilized Peoples: On the Global Models of *World Polity*

In the past, former colonized communities were often defined by the dominant societies as 'primitive peoples.' Following World War II, the notion took foot that all people should have equal claim to basic [human] rights. Therefore it was agreed in the *UN Charter* of 1945 and in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948 that all UN member states pledge to promote respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The member states committed themselves to guaranteeing all people the same and inalienable rights and liberties independent of race, language, or religion. Not only the populations of the member states were to profit from universal human rights but likewise those who lived in territories under the sovereignty of the member states. Even though in both international declarations the terms 'primitive peoples' or 'indigenous peoples' did not crop up at all, the consequence was that the individual members of the indigenous groups had the same rights and the same claim to the protection of the law as the members of all other groups within a state (Wolfrum, 1999: 370f.). Furthermore, in the Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories of the *UN Charter*, Article 73 sanctioned a decolonization mandate for former colonies of all the member states. These were obliged to protect and respect the peoples who had not yet obtained self-government and promote their aspirations to the same. Finally the establishment of the UN system fostered the recognition of indigenous peoples. For the present context it is relevant that in this system social groups without nation-state unity acquired a voice. Thus fora and working groups were created so that highly diversified problems and concerns could be discussed. The changes in the general framework – the Declaration of Universal Human Rights, the decolonization mandate for UN member states, the UN system giving non-nation-states the possibility of being heard – led many former colonized communities that did not achieve the status of a nation-state to fight for recognition through the UN system. This was not a process that happened from one day to the next, but it ultimately resulted in the recognition of indigenous peoples in treaties through the UN. 'Primitive peoples' were made into 'indigenous peoples' with specific rights (Sowa, 2013b).

The milestones for the recognition of indigenous peoples in treaties within the UN system were the report *Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations* by the special rapporteur Jose R. Martinez Cobo (Cobo, 1983), the two ILO conventions No. 107 *Indigenous and Tribal Populations* (International Labour Organisation, 1957) and No. 169 *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples* (International Labour Organisation, 1989), as well as the foundation of the *Working Group on Indigenous Populations*. The result was the recognition of indigenous peoples having the right to self-identification as 'indigenous.'

> Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems (Cobo, 1983: 50, paragraph 379).

They were granted the permanent right to exist, which was to make it possible for them to live according to their way of life and pursue independent economic development, use the land they occupied, as well as preserve their identity, language, and culture. Still today the attribute of indigenous peoples having a special affiliation to their land is paramount (Daes, 2001).

Up to this point in time the discourse on indigeneity targeted the cultural otherness of the groups concerned (in comparison to mainstream society upon which the nation-state is based) as well as the right to independent development and to land use. The 1980s brought a fundamental change. In 1980 the IUCN presented the study *World Conservation Strategy* together with the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the WWF (IUCN, UNEP, & WWF, 1980). In this strategy for global nature conservation, the authors pursued the goal of protecting natural resources to preserve essential ecological processes that were considered vital to human survival, ensure genetic diversity, and guarantee environmentally friendly and sustainable exploitation of species and ecological systems. The term *sustainable development* was put forward as the global solution formula to combine nature conservation and development. In a chapter of the *World Conservation Strategy* (IUCN et al., 1980) on rural development based on nature conservation, the problems of developing countries are discussed – countries that are forced to clear their forests, overfish, or hunt excessively because of their poverty. However, in the same chapter the term of 'traditional knowledge' can already be found, that is, a knowledge that is ascribed to rural communities. The term successfully gained international political significance in the following period (IUCN, 1985, 1986; IUCN et al., 1991), not least in the report *Our Common Future* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) or in conjunction with the *UN Convention of Biological Diversity* (United Nations, 1992) and the *Agenda 21*.

Consequently, a culture based on respect for animals (Søby, 1969/70; Sowa, 2013b) and the conception of animals as non-human persons (Fienup-Riordan, 1990), as was attributed to 'primitive peoples,' was thus transformed into the notion of knowledge specific to indigenous people, a knowledge that is equal to scientific and academic knowledge (Berkes, 1993, 1999; Hobson, 1992). In political discourse of sustainable development, the projection of the environmental saint evolved into the 'noble eco-savage' (Kaiser, 1987; Whelan, 1999) recognized in treaties, with a status between nature and culture. Former colonized and societies not formally constituted as nation-states were seen as not (yet) modern, not (yet) enlightened, and not (yet) developed. In my view, indigenous peoples are an expression of the global model of indigeneity in the *world polity* (Sowa, 2013b). The advocates of this theoretical approach assume that cultural and structural patterns based on the principles of rationalization will become established worldwide (Meyer, 1987; Meyer et al., 1997). They lend legitimacy to certain structural forms while rendering others illegitimate. With the help of the advisors of *world polity*, the global model of indigeneity has come to prevail as the counter-model to nation-state societies. The overtones of this model are a musealized conception of communities living in harmony with nature, an idea considered no longer applicable to industrialized societies. Once global models are recognized as legitimate they begin to function as *scripts*, which the actors of the *world polity* must adhere to if they seek recognition and wish to have a voice.

In this way indigenous peoples get the status of an acting subject. Judith Butler (1997) elaborates the idea in her book *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* that an individual becomes a subject through a process of subjection or subjectivation: "'Subjection' signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject" (Butler, 1997: 2). The subject "is the linguistic occasion for the individual to achieve and reproduce intelligibility, the linguistic condition of its existence and agency" (Butler, 1997: 11). This means that subordination is the condition of possibility for agency. This subjugation does not signify submission to the will of another but a process in which an individual or an actor becomes a

specific subject by means of performative 'recognition' of specific relations of power and domination.

> Bound to seek recognition of its own existence in categories, terms, and names that are not of its own making, the subject seeks the sign of its own existence outside itself, in a discourse that is at once dominant and indifferent. Social categories signify subordination and existence at once. In other words, within subjection the price of existence is subordination. Precisely at the moment in which choice is impossible, the subject pursues subordination as the promise of existence. This pursuit is not choice, but neither is it necessity. Subjection exploits the desire for existence, where existence is always conferred from elsewhere; it marks a primary vulnerability to the Other in order to be (Butler, 1997: 20-21).

In my view these ideas can be also transferred to collective actors. Indigenous people must succumb to the existing relations of power and domination in a *world polity*. This thereby requires that the actors take an active part and perform accordingly by adopting the projected images of otherness as their own. In the UN system indigenous peoples were given new options to articulate themselves if they adopted the roles allocated to them. In return, the social construction of the global model of indigeneity guaranteed rights to indigenous peoples such as the Greenlandic Inuit. Generally the rights are related to using the natural resources of their land, which in this case concerns the legitimate right to continue whaling and tied to the indigenous-people status: "[b]y adopting the role that was originally attributed to Greenlanders by Europeans, the former have attained recognition in the global power struggle. This is especially the case in the political arena where the Greenlandic elite connects the history of the Greenlandic Inuit with contemporary environmental discourses" (Sowa, 2013b) and which can be followed by many self-articulations of Greenlanders (Hammond, 2008; A. Lynge, 1993; F. Lynge, 1998) and Inuit (Inuit Circumpolar Conference, 1993, 1995, 1996). For their part in the self-image they articulate, the Greenlandic Inuit take up images established in Western societies at the level of political self-description, adopting ultimately the image of the 'noble eco-savage' and thereby the projected image of the Europeans and Americans. As a 'respecting primitive people' or 'bearers of a respect culture' (Sowa, 2013b) they represent a self-image that underscores their living in harmony with nature. In the context of an assumed collective cultural identity of those suppressed in hegemonic discourse, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak speaks of a "a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" (Spivak, 1988: 205). This strategic essentialism is necessary to enter the game played in the global arena. However, should there at any time be a deviation from this status between nature and culture and the Greenlandic Inuit become a modern society, they would then be considered a cultural nation for whom it is not or no longer appropriate to pursue the hunting of whales.

Conclusion

In the arenas of *world polity*, where the decisions are made on the distribution of funds and the granting of voice, the actual make-up of cultures is irrelevant. Instead there are legitimate and less legitimate forms of cultural representation. In Greenland, a traditional narrative of the own collective identity has asserted itself. In the we-images produced via discursive and symbolic practices, the Greenlanders present themselves as a culture of hunters living in harmony with their environment. The Greenlandic narrative adopts and modifies the images of otherness that originated in the dominating Western societies (Sowa, 2013b). These relational images of identity

created imaginary counter-conceptions to European collective identities. The Greenlandic form of representation of the modern 'primitive people' who protect their environment and have always done so has asserted itself in the end. This self-image is compatible with global indigeneity discourse and puts Greenland in the position of a legitimate actor in the struggle for a share of power and resources.

When an indigenous people wish to found a nation, then this is a novelty to begin with. As the global model of indigeneity was conceived in reference to societies formally constituted as nation-states, it is currently doubtful that the Greenlanders will be able to preserve the rights recognized for indigenous peoples e.g. the right to continue whaling in the frame of *Aboriginal subsistence whaling*. Once the Greenlandic Inuit have evolved into a modern society, they cannot return to some earlier position on the timeline of evolution, at least not as long as the global categories and models of *world polity* do not change. If the Greenlanders alter their identity discourse, then they face losing the label of being 'indigenous.' With the status of indigeneity as a mode of social inequality, Greenland at least secures its right to continue whaling. In the perspective of Euro-American societies the image of Greenlanders as enlightened moderns, possibly also as independent of Denmark, would make them a cultural nation for which the 'barbaric' hunting of whales would no longer be appropriate. Therefore the global model of indigeneity always likewise has a discriminating effect even though it is applied against discrimination. It was meant to counteract discrimination against indigenes, which is why conferment of the indigenous-people status granted them the right to determine their own development. But simultaneously the status of an indigenous people is a form of discrimination because it excludes them from modernization and from entering the capitalistic world, at least at the level of self-representation.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments, which helped improve the manuscript.

Notes

1. To guarantee the anonymity of the expert group, neither the grounds for appointing the group, nor the time when it was established, nor the composition of the group will be dealt with here.
2. This working paper was written in Danish and was drafted in several versions. I will call these two internal working papers "document A" and "document B".
3. The *Inuit Circumpolar Conference* changed the name to *Inuit Circumpolar Council* in 2005.
4. The report *Our Common Future* is often named after the commissions' chair, Gro Harlem Brundtland (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

5. Introduction (chapter 1), Traditional knowledge (chapter 2), ILO convention 169 (chapter 3), IUCN and the right to live directly from natural resources (chapter 4), Biodiversity convention (chapter 5), Inuit Circumpolar Conference and the Arctic Council (chapter 6), Whaling Commission (chapter 7), Property relations (chapter 8), The United Nations (chapter 9), Cooperation with Denmark (chapter 10), Greenland's rejection of racial criteria (chapter 11), Ethnicity and language (chapter 12), The profile of self-government (chapter 13), and Conclusions and recommendations (chapter 14).

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