

Discursive Frameworks of Arctic Art

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The historical colonialist approach has stigmatized the exchange of thoughts and artistic and aesthetic practices between the Central-European and the peripheral regions of Europe. In recent years, cultural operators and decision-making have identified and recognized this tradition of exoticification and cultural appropriation in the Arctic. A discussion on the definition of Arctic art is needed to differentiate the concept from, for example, Northern art, which only refers to context to orientation or location. Arctic art as a term should illustrate the methods and the goals of art and art-related practices specific to Arctic areas, the actions aimed at increasing well-being and competitiveness in Arctic areas, and the international character of practices defining it across national borders, to connect the phenomenon with Arctic discourse in other fields. This article examines the possible frameworks for Arctic art by reviewing the scientific discourse around the theme. The research exposed six most significant discourses on the concept of Arctic art in the peer-reviewed articles from the past two decades. They were further analyzed around ten arguments, that embody various meanings and are partly interlinked and overlapping. This article aims to stimulate the discussion on whether art should be reviewed more in relation to the context where it was created, when for example assessed in cultural politics or for curatorial and art critical processes. The concept of Arctic art does not have an established and unambiguous meaning, and various cultural communities and interest groups define the term differently. In geographical, political, and environmental discourse, some of the terms are well enough defined, but when transferred into cultural or eco-social discourse without further research, terms reveal an overlap of definitions that both intersect themselves with and distinguish themselves from each other and are sometimes used without discernment.

Introduction

This article focuses on the concept and terminology of *Arctic art*: the concept of art does not have an established and unambiguous meaning, and various cultural communities and interest groups define the term differently (i.e. Chartier, 2019). The Arctic itself is a politicized term and in the discourse, the term *Arctic* always contains an agenda. In this article, I use the term Arctic art – yet without more articulated definition – to refer to multicultural artistic and art-like practices of cultural Arctic in Northern Scandinavia, Scotland, Northern Canada, Alaska, Greenland, Faroe Islands, Northern Russia, and Northern Iceland, including both Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous traditions. Arctic areas mentioned are connected through similar topical geographic-specific environmental and sociocultural challenges such as severe effects of climate change, long

distances, ageing populations, isolation and peripherality, effects of colonialization, unemployment, and population drift (Kuure et al. 2017).

My article is a continuation to previous research done in the University of Lapland's Northern Art, Community and Environment Research Group (NACER) led by professors Timo Jokela, Mirja Hiltunen, Maria Huhmarniemi and Glen Coutts, and my research rests essentially on the knowledge on the Arctic art previously produced by the NACER Research Group. The starting point of my article is the defining of the term *Arctic design*, by Jokela and Tahkokallio in 2015. Jokela and Tahkokallio (2015) defined Arctic design as understanding the uniqueness of Arctic circumstances, custom, livelihood, culture, and megatrends, and applying expertise to solve challenges specific to Northern areas following the principles of ecologically, economically, socially, and culturally sustainable development (Jokela & Tahkokallio, 2015). A similar discussion on the definition of Arctic art is needed to differentiate the concept from, for example, Northern art, which only refers to context to orientation or location. Arctic art as a term should illustrate the methods and the goals of art and art-related practices specific to Arctic area, the actions aimed at increasing well-being and competitiveness in Arctic areas, the international character of practices defining it across national borders, and to recognize the multi-ethnicity of art professionals working in the Arctic, to connect the phenomenon with Arctic discourse in other fields (i.e. Jokela & Tahkokallio, 2015; Beulé & Evans, 2020).

Different discourses define *Northern* and *Arctic* differently according to the context. Both terms are often understood in relation to perspective and can overlap in meaning. In this article I adopt the discursive differentiation from the University of Lapland's NACER research group's perspective, where Northern is understood as a geographical orientation within the Arctic region. This perspective is characteristic to Scandinavia, where the North-South-axis is understood in relation to the Arctic. Southern as an adjective in this article thus refers to the perspective of Arctic administrative capitals, and Northern as the peripheral and identity-related perspective of the Arctic North. This differentiation is indicative rather than comprehensive, and within the Arctic region the definitions of Northern and Arctic vary according to perspective and agenda. Analyzing these differences in definitions could benefit from further research.

The data for this research consists of peer-reviewed scientific articles. The challenge with the chosen data is that research articles analyzed may continue to reproduce unintended colonialization of Indigenous knowledge in this article, as in the academic context western methodologies are preconceptions of the nature of knowledge. The majority of the articles studied were written from an other-than-Indigenous position and perspective. Coming from Finnish Lapland, my experience of Arctic is a shared Northern culture, and this atheoretical praxis positions me in a certain way as a researcher. I acknowledge that there are also agendas advocating the view that the definition of Arctic should inclusively translate as Indigenous cultures of the North. In this research, terms *Northern* and *Arctic* refer to a shared Northern culture, including both Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous traditions. This article is the first in a collection of research articles, which seek to open and explain the concept of Arctic art, and the experienced and real quality criteria used in evaluative processes concerning art in the Circumpolar Arctic.

Method and data

A thematic literature review was used as the research method to sketch the outlines of the definition of the term Arctic Art, to assess the current state of knowledge on a topic and to inform the directions of my future research on assessment of evaluative processes concerning art in the Circumpolar Arctic. The aim is to describe the concept of Arctic art through a discursive approach. It is not analyzed as a separate linguistic phenomenon but in relation to the context in which it was produced.

The data for this analysis consists of peer-reviewed scientific articles, and for this study focuses on scientific discourse, not policy discourse. A preliminary review of the data was conducted in 2021. The core material of the data are the publications of the Relate North Publication Series from years 2015 to 2020 and complemented with other research articles acquired via a more thorough literature search conducted at the University of Lapland based upon electronic science databases in the fall of 2023. The literature review began by searching five databases (finna.fi, arcticportal.org, Ebsco, ProQuest and Scopus). The search query was adapted to the specific syntactical requirements of each search engine and was restricted to *Title* and *Keywords* to ensure the return of the most relevant papers. This search returned over 700 records, which were then screened in two stages. The first stage removed duplicate entries and articles in a language other than Finnish or English. The titles and abstracts were then assessed for relevance based on the following criteria: The articles chosen as the final data for the research were restricted to articles written during the last two decades. The articles that focused only on historical or archeological phenomena were also omitted, as this article researched Arctic art as a contemporary practice. The restriction was made also to exclude articles concerning art educational aspects alone, without a connection to the profession as an artist. The final analysis comprised of 88 articles published during the years 2003–2023. The concept of Arctic art was used in the data articles in different ways. In most articles, it was not mentioned in this particular term, or as a defined concept. Most articles didn't discuss it more thoroughly or aim to define it. In addition, authors who used the term Northern art without any attempt to make a distinction between the idea of Arctic art as a complex collection of discourses and Northern as mere context to orientation were excluded from exploring how Arctic art as a concept is constructed independently of the context of orientation.

In the first phase of the analysis, the data were organized according to the terminology used. Original expressions were collected from the articles, which dealt with Arctic art, the operating environments of Arctic artists, the identities and roles of artists in the Arctic regions, and the goals and aspirations of artistic activity from the perspective of the well-being of the Arctic. The original expressions were reduced and listed according to their similarities and differences. The contexts that most of the terminology could be hierarchically located into after reduction were ethnicity, cultural heritage, place-specificity, materiality, activism, and dialogicity. The found discourses were further analyzed around ten arguments, that embody various meanings, and are partly interlinked and overlapping: (1) Indigenous – Other-than-Indigenous Knowledge and Tradition; (2) Heritage as Speaking for a People – Independence of Authorship; (3) Counter-narrative: New Northern Paradigm – Arctic Art as a Laboratory for Global Futures; (4) Crafts as Arts – Crafts as Medium and Method; (5) Artivism – Participatory Art Methods; (6) Exotification – Cultural Pride, Cultural Rights, and Northern Knowledge; (7) Place-making: Place-research – Spatial Knowledge; (8) Dialogicity – Art as Communication; (9) Appropriation – Cultural Sustainability as Living Heritage;

and (10) Process-based art – Object-based art. In this article, I will address in more detail the five most topical discourses which are central when informing the directions of future research on defining the term of Arctic art.

Indigenous – Other-than-Indigenous knowledge and tradition

The concept of hybrid culture is an ambiguous and yet determining discourse in the context of Arctic studies. Hybrid culture refers to heterogenous, multicultural, and multiethnic co-existence of Indigenous and other locals, long-term residents, and newcomers, residing in Arctic areas (Usenyuk-Kravchuk, 2020). The predominant discourse in the context of hybrid culture concerns the inclusion of other-than-Indigenous art in the definition of Arctic art. Discourse in the Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous art in the North focuses on the question of if a knowledge system in the context of art in the Arctic, common for both Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous locals, exists. In the data, there are discourses advocating the view that the definition of Arctic art should include both practices and discourses advocating the term of Arctic art, which is translated inclusively as Indigenous art of the Arctic. As globalization has become the dominant context in today's Arctic also, alongside hybrid culture hybrid identities have become default positions, especially among the younger generations in the area (Burnett, 2017). Pluralistic and assimilated culture and cultural heritage change the generational traditions and historical identities of new generations' mental landscape (Ivey, 2017). Arntzen (2021) suggests that there has been a postcolonial need to create new identities in the Arctic, which has resulted in shared Northern culture becoming a premise for decolonization (Arntzen, 2021). Is it the traditional Indigenous knowledge that impacts the ethnic canonization of artists in the Arctic, or is it shared Northern knowledge mutual to both Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous local artists alike, that sets the foundation for defining Arctic art? Northern knowledge is understood in this article as thinking systems, vocabularies, intercultural know-how, arts and humanities sensibilities, expressions of opinions, and applications in territorial, political, and economic fields, that forms in situated learning in relation to local ecocultures (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020).

At least two arguments can be found from the data supporting more clear distinction between Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous art practices in the Arctic: (1) The question of emphasis on the spiritual in the context of Northern knowledge, and (2) the question of language as principal device for transmission of Northern traditions and knowledge. According to academic Gunvor Guttorm (2015), the distinction between traditional local knowledge and traditional Indigenous knowledge is a question of emphasis on the spiritual knowledge in Indigenous tradition (Guttorm, 2015: 64). In most Indigenous worldviews the presence of the spiritual, such as ancestral recognition, elemental relationships and fostering connections with the natural world, is inseparable from everyday life. Indigenous contemporary artists realize the spiritual in ceremonial practices such as site-specific ritualism and repetition (Gismondi, 2022). Meaning-making through storytelling and ritualistic processes of grounding and creating form the body of Indigenous knowledge and practice to transmit tradition. The challenges with addressing Indigenous knowledge with Western methodologies as described by Tuhiwai Smith (2010) are preconceptions of the nature of knowledge: in contrast to Western understanding of discipline, Indigenous knowledge doesn't necessarily combine into a coherent whole, form a universal history with one chronology working towards modernization and development or adapt into a binary manner of classification.

The importance of understanding language as culture and culture as language is fundamental for transmission of tradition according to Ivey (2017). They find the renewal of culture being dependent on learning in a social context and the process of reconnecting with one's socio-cultural identity: exclusion of language and social contextual particularities related to language maintain and reproduce colonization of culture. When not having parallels in one's own cultural experience, assumptions about values, expressions, and aesthetics should not be made. If we lack the cultural and linguistic knowledge necessary to appreciate another culture's symbolic, metaphoric, and religious imports, we cannot make assumptions on their significance or values they hold (Ivey, 2017; Davies, 2016). Junka-Aikio (2018) suggests that pictorial messages alike address audiences very differently depending on their cultural literacy and background knowledge. Although most images can be read in more general terms, certain interpretations suggest themselves only to those who understand particular languages and share strong local knowledge with cultural and political backgrounds. Emphasizing language as the transmitter of traditions and cultural knowledge results in embracing parallel knowledge systems existing in the Arctic.

According to Burnett's (2017) research on the adopted definitions of 'Scottish art', identity should be interrogated more fully as something 'made, not born'. They criticize choosing any canons of artists as an act of ethnicity, but rather see the cultural expressions of community identity as the place being a constellation of processes, not all participating required to answer to a certain (ethnic) identity. They recognize however, that even this perspective does not eliminate the risk of exclusion of marginal voices; who speaks for margins and how remains a valid question even when canonization of art is broadened beyond ethnicity. It also poses a risk of forming a new hegemonic iconography of art-making within a margin, that leads to exclusion of some less fashionable practices (Burnett, 2017). Huhmarniemi and Jokela (2020) point out that even without taking a stand to various conflicting ways of defining who counts as Indigenous in the Arctic, there are still other cultural minorities with relevant heritages in the Arctic in addition to Indigenous tradition. Huhmarniemi and Jokela suggest the emphasis of the discourse on Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous traditions should be shifted towards the two-way integration of cultures and focus on collaboration to promote joint interests in Arctic sustainability (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020: 8). While the difficulties of Indigenous cultures are different from those of other-than-Indigenous cultures in the Arctic, multicultural and intercultural communities in the area are also connected via common challenges. Huhmarniemi and Jokela (2020) promote the concept of Arctic pride as tool for empowering culturally diverse communities in the Arctic. The concept of Arctic pride stresses the shared Northern knowledge mutual to Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous local artists as a framework for Arctic art. Phillips (2022) points out that in the Arctic, the shared legacies are inhabited together by all locals of today alike, and the only way to transfer power is co-create the representational modes of the new era.

Heritage as speaking for a People – Independence of authorship

Artists working in the periphery adopt a mentality where they become a participant observer amongst the marginalized community speaking for the people rather than an individuality-driven artist speaking for oneself alone. Blair (2018) describes this in their research article about the art of Will Maclean with the concept of hybridity or heteroglossia: the presence of more than one viewpoint in an artistic work. For Maclean this meant the presence of marginal voices of his Scottish Highland fishing community heritage that were not embraced in the 'grand narrative'

when addressing the canonization of British anthropological history (Blair, 2018). Artistry, as a profession in the sense of how it is understood in the Western world, is relatively new in the Arctic. In Northern and Arctic cultures, art is impossible to separate from social. A key to understanding Arctic cultures is that they are holistic in the sense that culture cannot be separated from human social life or the organization of the universe (Ryynänen, 2020: 54). During the 19th century, European artists began to establish their independence, and leading to a cult of authorship, as opposed to anonymous works. It emphasized originality, and artist's inspiration and creativity different to crafts-maker's (Davies, 2016). This centrality of innovation and authorship to artistic production translates into tradition being a constraining factor in contemporary mainstream art, whereas artists from Arctic areas understand tradition as an enabling attribute. Blair (2018) describes this as an anthropological perspective.

Building a collaborative body of place-based knowledge is characteristic for artists working in small communities in the North; Working together with the locals shifts the single-author role of the artist towards an idea of distributed authorship (Ross-Smith & Walker, 2019: 177). Unruh (2015) concludes that the concept of artist-as-genius should be surrendered and replaced with roles of facilitator and collaborator. In the Arctic, artworks reflect more than perceptions of an individual (Blair, 2018; Beulé & De Conick, 2018). Within Inuit *Qaujimaqatuqangit*, a collection of principles guiding Inuit ontologies and social relations, collective decision-making, focus on benefitting the community before an individual and working together for the common good are emphasized. Success and leadership in Inuit communities are translated as contributions for the community and sharing with others rather than highlighting individual achievements (Igloliorte, 2017: 103). When speaking for a People, artists working in the Arctic should pay attention to self-representation-rights of Indigenous communities. In efforts to de-colonize the Arctic, it is vital to ensure that Indigenous communities have the ability to speak for themselves rather than be spoken for (Unruh, 2015).

Counter-narrative: New Northern paradigm – Arctic Art as a laboratory for global futures

Globalization increases the pressure to standardize culture, and challenges defining the locality (Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018). In a globalized context, the Northern is still defined *against* something; the Northern paradigm is in constant fight with the Southern paradigm. This fosters the idea of Southern as 'normal' and Northern as deviation from normal (Beulé & De Conick, 2018: 13). In Arctic art, a need for a paradigm shift is recognized; when taking local context into account, it should translate into a deeper understanding than just global comprising the Northern specificities like climate, environment, and the cultural framework. North as a context extends also to complex entities such as values, well-being, ethics, social responsibility, and decision-making (Beulé & De Conick, 2018; Häkkinen & Johansson, 2018). Challenging the western Eurocentric mindset and reconfiguring our historical ontologies requires dismantling of administrative, cultural, linguistic, and psychological colonialism, and shedding the realm of otherness (Blair, 2018; Jokela & Coutts, 2018; Burnett, 2017). According to Beulé and De Conick (2018) it is possible to have conflicting paradigms within the same community (2018: 17). 'South' as the frame of reference that is presumed to be the norm has produced a need for a counter-narrative among Arctic communities. The grand narrative is the idea of a universal presentation of a culture, where the dominant ideology of the regime is to control knowledge. Socially constructed reality means

that we produce the structures and shape the world's perception as we interact with others. These structures often are subordinate to the grand narrative created by the mainstream majority culture. Thus, it can neglect the cultural values or climate particularities of an area or create products, services, infrastructures etc., that are contextually inappropriate for the marginal people in the community. Counter-narrative is told from the perspective of the dispossessed and provides a presentation of local culture as a complex phenomenon and distinct. In the Arctic, artworks reflect more than perceptions of an individual and can thus be seen as telling the counter-narrative (Blair, 2018; Beaulé & De Conick, 2018).

Jokela and Coutts (2018) propose a new perspective to Arctic art as a laboratory for designing more sustainable methods for the environmentally, socially, economically, and culturally challenged global futures. The Arctic region is sparsely populated, culturally diverse, of socio-economically differing conditions, of long distances, and suffering from urbanization-borne migration, which makes sustainable development and resilience-building inherent in Arctic communities. Global warming, together with environmental stress, brings another threat to the Arctic as interest towards the area increases as a potential resource for new oil and gas deposits, the building of new shipping routes, the building of new undersea telecommunications constructions, and the military interests arising from frontier thinking. The melting of the permafrost will seriously affect human-assisted systems. The Northern areas have good experiences on how contemporary art methods and techniques can act as an intercultural platform where artists explore their multi-ethnic backgrounds and environmental knowledge in the benefit of building more environmentally and culturally sustainable future. Similarly, also in other aspects of society, the North as a context could function as a laboratory where a new kind of sustainability-thinking would be developed and tested (Jokela & Coutts, 2018). Usenyuk-Kravchuk et al. (2018) propose that a new paradigm transition in the Arctic strategy from conquest mentality into developing the ways of living within Arctic regions should transpire: the Arctic cannot be seen as an abnormality, but a completely different and independent phenomenon (Usenyuk-Kravchuk et al. 2018: 57). Arctic in this framework can illustrate the global future in the miniature – a natural laboratory and a real testing ground with an appropriate toolkit for developing new sustainable solutions (Usenyuk-Kravchuk et al., 2020). As climate change has made the Arctic trendy again, even the scientific gaze and an interest to study the perceived periphery for the global good might lead to a new colonization; Decker (2020) uses the metaphor of today's canary, when describing the North as an image for what may come to other (Southern) places in the future (2020: 640). As Arctic cultures' technologies pose relevant questions and solutions for today's visionaries and futurists, values, attitudes towards sustainability, and critical awareness rooted in Northern cultures should also be taken in consideration when adopting knowledge from the Arctic. 'The Arctic laboratory' should be less about *what*, and more about *how*.

Exotification – Cultural pride, cultural rights and Northern knowledge

As cultural operators and decision-makers have begun to identify and to recognize the tradition of exotification and cultural appropriation in the Arctic, the positive impact on the collaboration between the local professionals in the Northern areas and operators from the outside of the culture has been established. However, Arctic, and other non-Western cultures or peripheral areas are still seen as something that is *outside*. It continues the tradition, where people who are insiders in the legitimate system, in some sense, still think they are on a higher plane (Ryynänen, 2020: 6). The

Arctic and its environmental challenges – especially since the struggle against climate change has become a global problem – have become a trendy subject and an interesting theme for many international artists as well. This raises another relevant question for decision-making: is all art done in the Arctic area *Arctic art*? When international artists from outside of the culture create a community art project with the locals in the Northern or peripheral areas, the tradition of one-way cultural exchange is a topical problem. The risk is that the Arctic community will be viewed degradingly: The high-art community from outside of the culture will teach locals what art is, and in the community art project the aim is to ‘fix’ or ‘school’ the broken and uneducated community. This could be seen as a modern exotification of the Arctic areas. Rynnänen (2020) hopes that community artists will be so well-educated from a post-colonial perspective, that presentations with the feeling of “white savior attitude” no longer dominate the visits to the Arctic. Present community artists should be aware of their own position when approaching ‘the others’.

Karlsson Häikiö (2018) describes how the images featured in the media have made locals look at their home region from a tourist perspective; in the imagery by the schoolchildren in Northern Finland elements foreign to the local culture, such as mountains, were repeated (Karlsson Häikiö, 2018: 63). The need for a more versatile and updated view on the Arctic has been recognized by artists working in the area. The depiction of the Arctic is still dominated by the romantic imagery of remoteness and wildness belonging to former generations when lived experience is of pivotal and conflicted ‘next North’ (Manninen & Hiltunen, 2017; Burnett, 2017; Lehtimäki et al., 2021). The tradition of seeing the Arctic through a conquering gaze stigmatized the North as *terra nullius*, an empty waste land separate from civilization, free to be harnessed in service of well-being industry and tourism (Newman, 2019). Outsider views as the author and extracted knowledge advocate a centuries-old tradition in the exchange of thoughts in the Arctic; the local vernacular is not perceived as possessing authorship, but knowledge is somehow applied from the outside (Decker, 2020). Although the most visible disadvantage of exotification is the peripheralization of people living in Arctic regions, the romanticizing gaze should be recognized first and foremost as a political narrative, whose goal is to maintain the inequity of land ownership. Who represents marginals to themselves and to others remains a key debate (Burnett, 2017). Authentic representations of the Arctic depict neither hardship nor voyeurism, but reciprocal realism with the environment, popular culture and multicultural everyday. Northern knowledge is understood as the tacit knowledge of the locality and their ability to find fluid and sustainable co-existence with the challenging and harsh Arctic environment.

Appropriation – Cultural sustainability as living heritage

The common challenges in building knowledge within or connected to the marginal, for example within the Indigenous paradigm, are the questions of ownership and power (Guttorm, 2015). In the Northern areas a tradition of exploitation is still a topical issue, especially in the tourism industry, where stereotypical representations and exotification of Indigenous cultures for promotion and consumption purposes prosper. The challenge is to adopt existing local knowledge and develop from it, while respecting the intellectual properties of Indigenous people in particular (Usenyuk-Kravchuk et al., 2020). The discourse of appropriation in the data revolves around the questions of (1) artistic intertextuality and salvation as cultural appropriation and (2) cultural sustainability as a promotor for living heritage.

Postmodernist intertextuality in this context can appear as appropriation or even sabotage when it turns into parody or pastiche. In the multicultural Arctic, appropriation is usually seen more as an act of salvage, where traditional elements are creatively re-interpreted to show the individuality of the artist (Blair, 2018; Zemtsova & Sharapov, 2017). Protecting, preserving, and salvaging the past is too narrow a perspective as cultural sustainability. Cultural heritage is a continual process of remaking, constructed in social interaction. Understanding how identities and social relationships are built is central. The discourse of sabotage and salvage emphasizes the interpretation of heritage as something static that fixates on the historical. This also raises the question of appropriation and authorship; who determines what should be salvaged? Cultural sustainability builds on the idea of local communities themselves determining their heritage values (Jokela & Coutts, 2018; Härkönen & Vuontisjärvi, 2018). Genuine collaboration between operators from different cultural and linguistic communities is still a difficult question: how to encounter otherness in art without succumbing to stereotypes or desiring exotics?

Juuso (2021) suggests, that even if it is – due to deficiencies in culturally-dependent knowledge – impossible to interpret and appreciate the artworks of other cultures to perfection, mainstream operators should strive to increase inclusion through wider collaboration. Fear of being misunderstood and stigmatized as racist and the burden of colonialist history curbs the willingness of the mainstream Western artworld to co-operate with artists from the Arctic areas. Lack of collaboration leads to making false assumptions on how Arctic art should be encountered. Compartmentalizing something as marginal art is harmful prejudice, if it is done without collaboration, from outside. Compartmentalization produces otherness and exclusion, and non-Western artists should own their integrity to decide how their art is to be labelled, if at all (Juuso, 2021).

Stöckell (2015) suggests that artistic action should create a new language to challenge the prevailing discourses, to enable the development of narratives that renew and transmit more sustainable cultural heritage (Stöckell, 2015: 53). Guttorm (2015) also describes the Indigenous knowledge of duodji as a living culture; according to them, tradition should be regarded as a standpoint and basis for conceptual expression, where individual experiences and influences are equally crucial. Usenuyk-Kravchuk et al. (2020) introduced the term context-sensitivity as a practical framework for cultural heritages and questions of appropriation within a hybrid culture. Context-sensitivity emphasizes the protection of not just the historical cultural resources, but also those generated in today's hybrid communities. Ethically equally relevant as to *how*, it is to examine *why* something is borrowed from another culture. (Usenuyk-Kravchuk et al., 2020: 25–26.) Decker (2017) proposes a shift from preserving objects to preserving narratives and perspectives.

Discussions and results

Globalization as the dominant context, pluralism and assimilation in the Arctic will inevitably result in shared Northern culture (Burnett, 2017; Arntzen, 2021). While it is apparent that Arctic as heterogenous, multicultural, and multiethnic co-existence of Indigenous and other locals, long-term residents, and visitors alike is not without challenges, especially due to the historical colonialist burden the area holds, the two-way integration of cultures and focus on collaboration to promote joint interests on Arctic sustainability should be actively and consciously chosen as the practice on pursuing the new shared Northern culture (Huhmarniemi & Jokela, 2020). Even the

context of the art itself is not without problems; the art system – having its centennial historical strength and with the aid of its strong institutional presence – affects our thinking, making it hard to achieve artistic or aesthetic democracy, even when it is consciously pursued (Ryynänen, 2020). A wider definition of what qualifies as art might have the potential to bridge the divide between marginal and mainstream and include those narratives that are currently absent in the global discourse – within the institutional artworld and within global geopolitics alike.

The term Arctic art fails to serve as an unambiguous definition but appears rather a complex phenomenon requiring a combination of discourses to gather the components that together succeed in outlining the concept. The research indicates that several arguments appear through which Arctic art is represented in scientific literature, indicating that it is at an evolutive stage in its conceptualization. To identify and to recognize that art can have regional idiosyncrasies challenges the definition of art perceived as universal. This article aims to stimulate the discussion on whether art should be reviewed more in relation to the context where it was created, when for example assessed in cultural politics or curatorial and art critical processes. It is topical to identify and recognize the unique features of the art in the Arctic: expanding the institutional art world's definition of art to include the methods, practices and contexts that are relevant for the art of the Arctic region is crucial in the current geopolitical situation, where artists of the region can be a significant actor when better communication is needed between different interest groups and locals to build more sustainable futures.

Jokela et al. (2021) have introduced a concept of new genre Arctic art to differentiate the phenomenon from all regional art from the North and from the Nordic style concerning only the aesthetic (Jokela et al., 2021). New genre Arctic art actively connects artistic practice with land, local community, and tradition to promote Arctic cultural continuity, Northern pride, and revitalization of Northern knowledge. Jokela et al. (2021) have recognized the coherence with Suzanne Lacy's (1995) concept of new genre public art with chosen terminology, but this research is consistent with the concept itself of new genre Arctic art. The terminological positioning of the results of this research in relation to previous research on Arctic art by Jokela et al. (2021) is visually outlined in Figure 3.

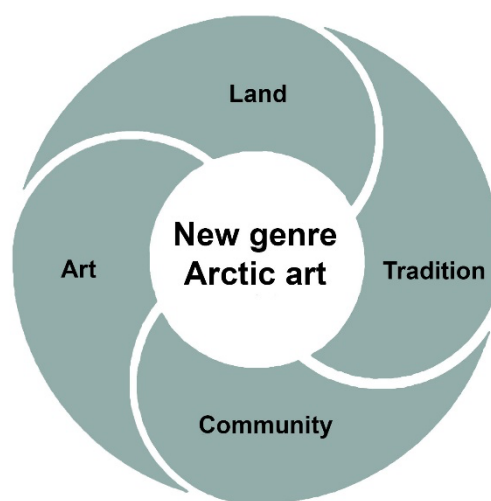


Figure 1. Visual demonstration of the construction of the term 'new genre Arctic art'.



Figure 2. Visual demonstration of the ten discursive frameworks of Arctic art according to this research.

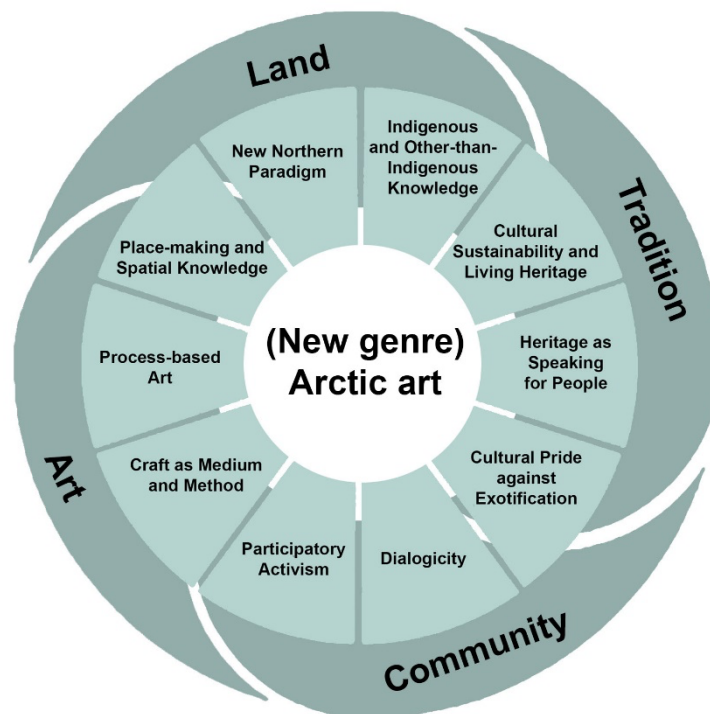


Figure 3. The terminological positioning of the results of this research in relation to previous research on Arctic art.

Conclusions

This article researched the possible frameworks for Arctic art by analyzing the scientific discourse around the theme. The research exposed the ten most significant discourses on the concept of Arctic art in the scientific peer-reviewed articles from the past two decades, that illustrate the distinctive characteristics of art from the Arctic. The five most topical discourses were discussed in more detail, for they are central when informing the directions of future research on defining the term Arctic art: the roles and relationship between Indigenous and other-than-Indigenous knowledge and tradition in the context of Arctic art; heritage understood as speaking for a people versus the independence of authorship; the presence of new Northern paradigm as counter-narrative, and Arctic art as a laboratory for global futures; cultural pride, cultural rights and Northern knowledge as objection to exoticification of the Arctic; and cultural sustainability as living heritage to protest appropriation.

As all the peer-reviewed articles on Arctic art are not included in this study, I recognize that another type of search would have yielded different data. Therefore, the data should be seen as a sample of the whole population of scientific articles on ‘Arctic art’. This research is thus not defining the concept of Arctic art as a definitive and unambiguous term, but rather making visible the international discourses sketching the outlines of the phenomenon in question. As illustrated in Figure 3., the discursive frameworks of Arctic art discussed in this research are consistent with previous research by Jokela et al. (2021). As the term Arctic art continues to fail to serve as an unequivocal definition and is still in an evolutive stage in its conceptualization, I find that the concept of new genre Arctic art can serve the future discourse and research as a less ambiguous term to describe the particularities and characteristics of Arctic art as analyzed in this article, and to distinguish the phenomenon as separate from all regional art from the Circumpolar Arctic and from the Nordic style concerning only the aesthetic.

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