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## Life and Problems of Urban Inuit in Montreal : Report of 1997 Research

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# Life and Problems of Urban Inuit in Montreal: Report of 1997 Research

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## (1) Introduction

The Inuit have lived in arctic tundra regions of Canada and Greenland, and spoken Inuktitut as their mother tongue. Till their close contact with Euro-Canadian societies, their subsistence activities were primarily hunting and fishing. In the 1980s, many Inuit born in arctic Canada started to move down to southern cities.

According to Aboriginal Peoples Survey conducted in 1991 in Canada, there are 8,305 Inuit in Canadian cities each of which the population is beyond 100,000 (the Centre for International statistics at the Canadian Council on Social Development 1996 table 1). In the survey, Inuit means persons who have full or partial Inuit identity. By that research, it is found that more than one fifth of the total population of Canadian Inuit now live in southern cities.

In terms of Inuit population in the cities of Canada, there are 1,895 in Toronto, 840 in Edmonton, 775 in Montreal, 725 in Ottawa-Hall, 630 in Calgary, 570 in Vancouver, 515 in Winnipeg, 360 in Halifax, 345 in St. Johns, and 260 in Victoria. It is unknown why so many Inuit have moved and stayed in the cities. However, some social workers in Montreal and Ottawa recognized that many Inuit women encountered homelessness, alcoholism and drug problems in the cities in the 1980s. The general investigation on ways of life and social problems of urban Inuit is considered urgent and necessary by Inuit leaders and government officials of Canada. I conducted interview research with urban Inuit of Montreal in summers of 1996 and 1997. This is a descriptive report of the research. In this account, I will describe the following

matters of urban Inuit in Montreal: features of the Inuit, reasons and ways to settle down in the city, length of stay and moving patterns, income and housing, residential areas, meals and health, social networks of the Inuit and their relationships to their native places, Inuktitut, ethnic culture and identity, future, differences between Montreal and the north, social problems in the city. Then, I hope to give some recommendations to improve quality of life of the urban Inuit.

## (2) Field Research and Research Method

### 2-1. Preliminary Research

In the summer of 1996, I visited three cities such as Ottawa, Montreal and Fredericton to obtain general information on urban Inuit and other natives, and determine field place for the next year, in addition to the purpose of consultation with Inuit organizations and universities, regarding my planned research.

In Ottawa, I visited the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, Pauktuukit (Inuit Women's Association), Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Inuit House of Ottawa(Tunngasuvvingat Inuit), and Carlton University to consult with them about my research project and collect general information about urban Inuit of Canada. Then, I moved to Montreal to visit Makivik Corporation, Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, Chez Doris( women's shelter in Montreal), Kativik School Board for the purpose of explaining my research project and obtaining their cooperation. In the last week of July, I conducted a preliminary research with 10 Inuit (Kishigami 1997). After Montreal, I moved to Fredericton, New Brunswick to visit St. Mary's Reserve within the city.

After the first research trip, I decided to engage in my research in Montreal due to two reasons. Firstly, Montreal is a doorway for Inuit of Nunavik and the eastern part of Nunavut. A lot of Inuit are sent to the city for education and medication. Secondly, I carried out a series of field researches among Inuit of Nunavik in the 1980s while I was studying anthropology in Montreal. Therefore, I am very familiar with not only Inuit culture of Nunavik but also the situation of Montreal itself.

### 2-2. Research in Montreal

## Life and Problems of Urban Inuit in Montreal: Report of 1997 Research

Montreal is the second largest city in Canada next to Toronto. The total population of the Greater Montreal District is about 3.1 millions. According to 1991 Census, the population is made up of approximately 1.8 millions (59%) French Canadians, 206,000 (6.7%) English ones, 166,000 (5.4%) Italian ones, 77,000(2.5%) Jewish ones, and others from various ethnic groups. One characteristics of Montreal is that as French Canadians politically and culturally dominate the city as a majority, French is the first language of the city.

Regarding the indigenous population in the Montreal district in 1991, there are 39,105 of First Nations (including natives with USA citizenship), 5,820 Metis and 775 Inuit.

During a period from 17th of June to 8th of August, 1997, I carried out interview research about ways of life of urban Inuit in Montreal. During the period, I interviewed 55 Inuit in total, that is, 7 persons at Chez Doris, 14 at Makivik Corporation, 11 at Kativik School Board and 23 at Native Friendship Centre of Montreal (note 1).

I interviewed Inuit who willingly participated in my research as many as available during the summer period. Although the informants were not intentionally chosen for the research, they were not randomly selected in terms of statistics. Because of being an off-school season, many Inuit students in universities and cegeps ( junior colleges of Quebec Province) were away from Montreal so that I was not able to interview many Inuit students from the arctic villages for education. Also, I could not directly contact any young Inuit under 17 years in Montreal. In this sense, my research population may have some problems in terms of representation of the total urban Inuit population of Montreal district. In this paper, I will call Inuit who live or stay in Montreal "Montreal Inuit" for convenience' sake.

### (3) Features of Urban Inuit of Montreal

#### 3-1. Age

I interviewed 55 Inuit in Montreal in the summer of 1997. The Table 1 shows age distribution of Inuit who participated in the research.

Table 1. Age Distribution of Informants

17 years old	1 person
19 years old	2 persons
21 years old	2 persons
22 years old	1 person
24 years old	2 persons
25 years old	1 person
26 years old	1 person
28 years old	3 persons
29 years old	1 person
30 years old	5 persons
31 years old	3 persons
32 years old	4 persons
33 years old	3 persons
34 years old	1 person
35 years old	3 persons
36 years old	3 persons
37 years old	3 persons
38 years old	4 persons
39 years old	1 person
40 years old	3 persons
42 years old	2 persons
43 years old	1 person
44 years old	1 person
46 years old	2 persons
58 years old	1 person
total	55 persons

The average age of the 55 informants is 33.2 years old. As my research was carried out during school holidays, there were fewer student participants than expected. Thus, I can infer that the average age of urban Inuit in Montreal is a little bit lower than 33.2 years in other seasons of year. According to the data, the population distribution is concentrated around an age category from late 20 to early 40 years old. There is only one person

whose age is above 50 years old. The urban Inuit population is composed of relatively younger people than the general population of Montreal.

### 3-2. Sex

Of the total 55 Inuit, 19 Inuit are male (34.5%) and 36 are female (65.5%). In Montreal, the total population of Inuit women is far bigger than that of Inuit men.

### 3-3. Native Places

Concerning native locations of the 55 Inuit, 36 Inuit (65.5%) are from Province of Quebec, 13 Inuit (23.6%) from Nunavut and 6 Inuit (11%) from other regions of Canada. Native villages and towns of the Inuit is listed in the Table 2.

Table 2. Native Villages and Towns

Quebec Province			
Kuujuaraapik	11 persons	Inukjuak	1 person
Kuujuuaq	5 persons	Chisasibi	1 person
Quaqtaq	5 persons	Ivujivik	1 person
Salluit	3 persons	Montreal	1 person
Puv irnitug	3 persons	Quebec City	1 person
Kangiqsujuaq	2 persons		
Kangirsuk	2 persons		

Nunavut			
Iqaluit	5 persons	Broughton Island	1 person
Cape Dorset	3 persons	Rankin Inlet	1 person
Lake Harbour	1 person	Bay Chimo	1 person
Igloolik	1 person		

Other Regions			
Goose Bay/ Happy Valley (Labrador)		3 persons	
St. John's (Newfoundland)		1 person	
Fort Smith (NWT)		1 person(adopted)	
Queen Charlotte Island (BC)		1 person	

From this Table, I can point out several characteristics of the native places of Inuit residing in Montreal. As this diagram shows, a majority of Montreal Inuit come from eastern arctic of Canada.

As Montreal lies in the Province of Quebec, 65.5% of Montreal Inuit are from the Province. They come from almost all of the villages of the Nunavik (arctic Quebec). However, Nunvaik Inuit tend to move in Montreal from large Inuit villages such as Kuujjuaq, Salluit, Puvirnituaq, all of which the population is over 900. Also, transportation services between the north and the south have some influence upon geographical mobility of the Inuit. There are direct flights between Kuujjuaraapik and Montreal, and between Kuujjuaq and Montreal.

23.6 % of Montreal Inuit come from eastern Nunavut. Montreal is a doorway from Eastern Arctic of Canada because there is a direct flight from Iqaluit to the city. A lot of Inuit from eastern Nunavut tend to be sent to Montreal for education and medication by governmental agencies. Montreal is a much more familiar city than others to Inuit of the eastern Nunavut.

There are several Inuit of Montreal from other places than Nunavik and the Province of Quebec. This shows high geographical mobility of the contemporary Inuit.

### 3-4. Categories of Montreal Inuit

Usually, aboriginal city-dwellers are classified into four categories: transient, migrants, commuters and residents (Frideres 1998:243). Although I agree that this classification is useful in some studies, I hope to use other categories to describe life and social practices of Montreal Inuit.

Through my research, I came to an idea that it is much more useful for us to employ three categories of Montreal Inuit such as persons with jobs, jobless persons and students to describe their differences of ways of life than other categories.

In my research, there are 22 persons with jobs (including part time jobs but excluding summer student jobs). 7 Inuit are working at Makivik Corporation, 11 at Kativik School Board, 2 at Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, and 2 (as a part time) Inuktitut interpreters at public hospitals.

There are 25 jobless Inuit in this research. Jobless persons are divided into two sub-categories: social welfare recipients and homeless persons. In the research, there are 22 recipients of the welfare and 3 homeless Inuit.

There are 4 university students and 4 cegep students in the research. Three of the university students and four cegep students are recipients of Kativik School Board Sponsorship. One university student receives indigenous scholarship from Department of Indian Affairs of Federal Government.

#### (4) Reasons to Move and Ways to Settle Down in Montreal

I will show reasons that the Inuit came to Montreal, and their ways to settle down in the city in terms of three categories. Before describing the matters, I like to note that an Inuk does not always have only one reason to come to Montreal and that many Inuit experienced moving several times before settling down in Montreal.

##### 4-1. Students

5 of the 8 students point out that they came in Montreal from their native villages to go to schools. 2 cegep students tell that they had been with their parents in Montreal before entering cegeps. One university student whose natal mother is Inuvialuit in Fort Smith had been adopted through social service by non-indigenous parents in Montreal in her infancy.

Three of them had lived in Montreal with their parents before they entered their schools. They had no difficulty to live in the city for schooling without any help. Regarding their travel to Montreal, finding residences, living costs and any other problems of urban life, the other five students have been assisted and supported by the Kativik School Board workers.

##### 4-2. Persons with Jobs

Twelve of 22 Inuit with jobs left northern villages for Montreal because they got jobs in the city. The other 10 found their current occupations after they had moved in the city for other purposes than finding employment. The latter came to Montreal in the following reasons: Going to school, 3 persons; Following her husband or boyfriend coming to Montreal, 2 persons; Following one's parents, 1 person; Running away from a husband who used violence against her, 1 person; Seeking for personal freedom, 1 person; Coming with sick mother, but not going back to the north, 1 person; For medical reason, but not going back to the north after treatment, 1

person.

Some of the Inuit who came to Montreal for jobs also added other reasons to their primary ones. One person pointed out that there was no jobs in the north and that the cost of living in the north was very high. Another person told that she was tired of local politics in her northern village. Also, one Inuk who had originally come to Montreal for schooling expressed that she wanted to run away from alcohol and drug problems in her native place.

Considering those reasons of their moving in Montreal, we suspect that there are structural casual factors in the arctic regions, which make the Inuit leave their native villages for the south.

In the case that the Inuit came to Montreal for employment, workers of organizations which would hire them, such as Makivik Corporation, Kativik School Board, Baffin House and Northern Quebec Module, helped them to find their residences and their moving. The Inuit who got jobs after moving in Montreal employ the same ways to settle down in Montreal as Inuit students and jobless Inuit did.

#### 4-3. Jobless Inuit

25 Inuit without jobs answered several reasons that they came in Montreal. 6 Inuit came to Montreal because they wanted to run away from social problems related to alcohol, drugs, physical and sexual violence and from personal troubles concerning family problems. 5 women moved in Montreal because their husbands or boyfriends moved there. Three moved for finding jobs, two for going to school and two for going to hospitals in Montreal. Also, there are other cases. One person accompanied her sick mother on a trip to a hospital in Montreal from the native village. After finishing medical treatment of the mother and sending her off to the village, that person decided to stay in the city. One lady came to Montreal to nurse her sick sister who had lived in the city. After her sister's recovery, she decided to remain in Montreal. One lady came to Montreal to see her children in town and decided to live in the city. As one person being tired of village life in arctic, he left the settlement for Montreal. One person who had been sent to be imprisoned in the south was released and decided to stay in Montreal. One person replied that there was no particular reason to come down in Montreal. One person was temporarily staying in Montreal because he was with his wife who was going to give birth in a hospital of Montreal.

Through examining the cases, it is found that many Inuit, especially women in the 20s to 30s were pushed out from their native villages due to several combining factors such as alcohol and drug problems, sexual and physical violence originating from the former problems, difficulties of human relations in a small village, lack of housing, shortage of jobs. It seems to me that they came to Montreal not because there were many merits and resources available to them in the city but because they wanted to run away from their problems which they encountered in northern villages.

There are generally two types of processes that a newcomer without money and a job, being homeless find his/her residence in Montreal. The first type is a case that a newcomer has his/her relatives or friends in Montreal before his/her arrival at the city. The second one is the case that there is no his/her kinsmen and friends in the city.

In the former case, a newcomer stays at a place of his/her kinsman or friend, or wanders from one person's place to another for a while. During this period, he/she will apply for welfare assistance with help of a social worker at Native Friendship Centre of Montreal or Chez Doris. After a month, he or she will receive his/her first welfare check at front desk of either of the organizations. With that check, he/she rents an apartment. From the next month, the welfare check will be sent to his/her new residence. The welfare money is not generally enough for him/her to live well in Montreal. After paying for the rent, they hardly have some money left. Thus, they have to obtain their food for lunches and suppers from charitable organizations or other service centers such as Welcome Hall Mission, Old Brewery Mission Inc, Maison du Pere, Salvation Army (Women's Emergency Shelter, Women's Residence, Men's Residence and Hostel), Chez Doris, Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, etc.

In the latter case, I will give an example of one Inuk from Labrador. Soon after his arriving at Montreal, he asked somebody on a street to find out locations of charitable shelters where he can sleep at night, and went there to find a place to stay. The next day, he went to see a social worker at the Native Friendship Centre to apply for the welfare assistance. He spent all his free time at the center as long as the center was open. After a few days, he got acquainted with an Inuk man from central arctic at the centre and moved in his apartment until he would receive the first welfare check. With his first check, he rented his own apartment and started to receive his welfare

money at his place from the next month. As well as persons of the first type, he got his food from the charitable organizations or service centres. In a case of women, she can stay at Native Women's Shelter or women's shelter of Salvation Army till she can find her place to stay. In this way, any newcomer in Montreal can get out of being homeless by using public institutions. The problem is that some Inuit from the arctic villages simply do not know where they should go to apply for welfare assistance in Montreal.

(5) Length of Stay in Montreal and Migration Patterns

There are considerable variation in length of stay in Montreal among 55 Inuit of the interview research. The longest person spent more than 25 years in Montreal and the shortest did about a week (Table 3).

Table 3. Length of Stay in Montreal

length of stay	Man	woman	Total
less than 1 year	5 (26.3%)	4 (11.1%)	9 (16.4%)
1 to 5 years	9 (47.4%)	9 (25.0%)	18 (32.7%)
6 to 10 years	2 (10.5%)	11 (30.6%)	13 (23.6%)
11 to 15 years	3 (15.8%)	5 (13.9%)	8 (14.5%)
16 to 20 years	0 (0%)	5 (13.9%)	5 (9.1%)
21 to 25 years	0 (0%)	5 (13.9%)	5 (9.1%)
	19 (100%)	36 (100%)	55 (100%)

There is a clear difference in the length of stay in Montreal between men and women. 73.4% of Inuit men stay in Montreal less than 5 years. On the other hand, 63.9% of Inuit women live in the city more than 6 years. Furthermore, no Inuit man lives there more than 16 years but 18.2% of Inuit women remain in the city more than 16 years. Inuit women tend to stay in Montreal longer than Inuit men.

The Montreal Inuit experienced a lot of migrations between their native villages and other places. There are 19 Inuit (34.5%) who moved and stayed in Montreal directly from their native villages. Inuit from arctic towns such as Iqaluit, Kuujuaq employed this migration pattern. The other 36 Inuit

(65.5%) had moved more than once to other places from their native villages before they moved to live in Montreal at latest.

(6) Income, Rent and Housing Conditions

55 Inuit can be classified into three categories such as Inuit without jobs (homeless Inuit and welfare dependents), students and Inuit with jobs (wage workers). There are 3 homeless Inuit, 22 welfare recipients, 8 students and 22 Inuit with jobs (including part-time ones).

Homeless Inuit wander and spend nights at their friends' apartments or public shelters. Several Inuit sleep on streets or parks at night in summer. However, very few remain as homeless a few months after entering Montreal. Usually, soon after an Inuk arrives at the city, he or she goes to see a social worker at Native Friendship Centre of Montreal or one of the public shelters such as Chez Doris to apply for social welfare. Once he or she gets the first welfare check from the provincial government, she or he will rent her/his apartment. She or he is no more homeless. However, there are always homeless Inuit in Montreal because some are ejected from their apartment due to arrears of the rents, drinking and other problems. Also, there are always Inuit newcomers without money or jobs in the city from arctic villages. They will be homeless even for a temporary period.

There are 22 welfare recipients of the 55 Inuit. An Inuk with the highest welfare money gets CA\$900 a month and one with the lowest CA\$240. The average welfare amount of the Inuit is CA\$508. 8.

Regarding house/apartment rent, there are some variation from CA\$128 to CA\$395 a month. A single person can rent a small apartment costing about CA\$250 a month. A person or couple with several children need to have a residence with more than two bed rooms and have to pay more than CA\$300 a month for a rent. If he/she lives in a low-rent house found through the Native Friendship Centre, he/she pays CA\$128 to 200 a month for the rent. However, any welfare recipients hardly have some money in their pockets after paying for their house rents, electricity fee, and telephone fee. Thus, they have to get their food without charge from charitable organizations and service centres.

University and cegep students of Inuit who benefit from "James Bay

and Northern Quebec Agreement" or awarded a scholarship from Department of Indian Affairs of the Federal Government, have been paid considerably well. There are 8 students in my interview research. Two of them live with their parents. The other two stay with his/her mother and brothers. One boy lives with his girl friend. One young lady resides with her husband and son and another lady with her two kids. One person dwells by himself. As they receive financial assistance concerning residence, school expenses and cost of living, they can study during semesters under good economic conditions. For example, one lady university student with two kids is allowed CA\$1,000 a month, in addition to her tuition, apartment and day care fees during her semesters.

There are 22 Inuit with jobs in my interview research. Their monthly incomes range considerably from CA\$600 to CA\$ 6,667. A person whose income is CA\$600 a month is also seen among welfare recipients. There is an Inuit large income-earner who makes more than CA\$6,500 a month just like a senior university professor. Average income of Inuit wage laborers is about CA\$28,600 a year in Montreal. As an average income of a Montreal wage laborer is about CA\$30,000 a year in 1992 (Clombo 1996:228), the Montreal Inuit with jobs are not very much inferior to general Montreal workers in terms of income.

Inuit with jobs pay CA\$200 to 950 a month for their rent of a house or an apartment. A rent of a low-cost house run by the municipal government costs CA\$200 a month and that of one house in the suburbs of Montreal CA\$950. Usually, an apartment with 4.5 rooms will cost CA\$450 or more and a house CA\$700 or more.

Inuit with high income or those whose spouses are also working have purchased their own houses. Inuit whose monthly income is CA\$2,500 or more keep a good standard of living as good as other residents in Montreal.

As far as our research is concerned, there are considerable differences among Inuit with jobs, those without jobs and Inuit students in terms of income. While the Inuit with jobs and students live without any serious difficulties in terms of food, clothing and housing, the Inuit without jobs manage to live by making use of existing charitable institutions. It is noted that almost all of the urban Inuit are satisfied with housing conditions in Montreal.

(7) Residential Place and Co-residents

In this section, I hope to point out where and with whom Inuit live in Montreal. When the Kativik School Board was in Dorval city, it was said that a lot of Inuit lived in the city. In my research, it is found that there was no concentrated area of Inuit or community in Greater Montreal District, in spite a fact that there are many Inuit living in Dorval, Lachine and western part of downtown Montreal. Furthermore it is found that three categories of urban Inuit such as Inuit without jobs, those with jobs and Inuit students live in different areas to some degree (Table 3)

Regarding residential places of the Inuit without jobs, a majority of them live in the city of Montreal. But they dispersedly live all over the city except a fact that 7 Inuit reside in eastern downtown area near the Native

Table 3. Living Areas of Inuit in Montreal.

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	Students	Total
eastern part of downtown of Montreal	7	3	0	10
southwestern part of Montreal	3	1	0	4
eastern end of Montreal	2	3	0	5
central eastern of Montreal	1	0	0	1
western end of Montreal	1	1	1	3
western part of Montreal	1	0	0	1
Lachine city	1	4	3	8
Dorval city	0	4	3	7
West Island of Montreal	0	4	1	5
no fixed abode	3	0	0	3
no answer	3	0	0	3

Friendship Centre of Montreal.

As this Table shows, many Inuit with jobs live in suburbs of the city of Montreal. Single persons tend to reside in downtown and other parts of Montreal. Persons with families are inclined to inhabit outside Montreal. Inuit of the Kativik School Board have a tendency to dwell in Dorval and Inuit of the Makivik Cooperation tend to live in Lachine and West Island of Montreal.

As to residential district of the Inuit students, they tend to live in areas to the west of Montreal.

In sum, although a lot of Inuit live in eastern part of downtown Montreal, Dorval and Lachine, they did not live together in a corner or form a distinct community. The Inuit of Montreal live dispersedly among other people. There is a clear difference of residential areas between the Inuit with jobs and those without ones. This feature probably comes from class differences. The former Inuit like to live in the suburbs of Montreal as well as other middle class persons.

How do the Inuit live in Montreal? Again, there is a distinction between the Inuit welfare recipients and Inuit with jobs in term of their composition of households. While the former Inuit tend to live alone, the latter are inclined to live with their families.

Concerning 22 Inuit without jobs, 11 of them, 50% live alone. 5 Inuit women without jobs reside with their boyfriends. There are two persons living with their friends, one with his girlfriend, one with her brother and one with her son. In the cases of the women with their boyfriends, all of the friends are French or English Canadians. The ladies happened to get acquainted with the men in bars or parks. Their relationships are very temporary and fragile.

In the cases of 21 Inuit with jobs, 7 Inuit, 33.3% live with their families. 6 Inuit, 28.6% live alone. 5 women dwell in with their boyfriends who are not Inuit. There are 3 single mothers. Young persons tend to live alone and others are inclined to live with their families, boyfriends or children.

Among the 8 Inuit students, 4 persons live with their families. There is one who lives alone, one boy with his girl friend, and a woman with her two children. A majority of Inuit students who visit their families in their native villages in the north during the summer usually live alone in the school dormitory rooms or apartments.

It is noted that 10 of Inuit women live with non-Inuit boyfriends and that there are not many Inuit couples living together in Montreal.

(8) Meals and Health Condition

Almost of all the Inuit in Montreal inform me that they prefer their native food to Euro-Canadian food. Many Inuit say that once they eat seal or caribou meat, they do not get hungry for a long period. They point out that southern foods are very spicy and that some are polluted by waste liquids and smoke from factories.

There are clear differences between Inuit with jobs and those without ones in terms of meals content and eating places. By this research, it is found that the Inuit with jobs eat frozen meat of caribou and seals, and arctic char more regularly and frequently than those without jobs.

Homeless Inuit as well as other Inuit without jobs depends on almost all of meals from several missions, the Salvation Army, a women's shelter "Chez Doris" and the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. For example, a homeless Inuit has his suppers at the Salvation Army and lunches at a church near Atwater Park from Monday to Friday. He sometimes has nothing to eat or drink except water on Saturday and Sunday when many charitable organizations are closed.

Regarding native foods, the Inuit without jobs sometimes get the food when they visit Inuit friends or relatives in hospitals or boarding houses in Montreal or Dorval. Although it is not so often, they sometimes make phone calls to their parents, siblings, relatives or friends to ask to send native foods to them in Montreal by air cargo or mail. Sometimes, their friends bring some foods with them to Montreal. In those occasions, the Inuit without jobs in Montreal can acquire the country foods. Also, at Chez Doris, on two Wednesdays of a month Inuit dishes are served to Inuit visitors.

The Inuit with jobs have most of all of their meals at home. In Montreal, they have much more opportunities to eat native foods than the Inuit without jobs and students. Although some Inuit with jobs eat the foods almost every day, some others taste those foods only few times a month. There are some variations of food preference among the Inuit with jobs. But most of them regularly obtain the country foods from the north and eat

them at least once a week. When they want to have the native foods, they make telephone calls to their parents, siblings, relatives or friends to ask to send the foods to them by air cargo flight. Also, the latter Inuit voluntarily send the foods to the former Inuit or bring those with the latter to the former in Montreal. The Inuit in Montreal keep the seal and caribou meat or fish in small freezers at home and eat the foods little by little. Also, some of them eat caribou meat and arctic char at lunch in offices of Makivik and Kativik School Board several times a month. Most of the Inuit prefer native foods to other ones in Montreal. However, non-Inuit spouses and their children tend not to eat the native foods in Inuit ways.

In sum, Most of all the Inuit in Montreal who were not born there have a tendency to prefer the native foods to other ones. But the Inuit with jobs regularly enjoy the foods and the Inuit without jobs seldom do so in the city.

Regarding health conditions of the urban Inuit in Montreal, most of them replied that they have not suffered from serious illness or injuries in Montreal. However, some of them report some health problems noted in the Table 4.

**Table 4 Health Problems of Montreal Inuit**

injury by an accident caused by heavy drinking	2 cases
mental problems caused by Separation from one's children, divorce or discord with a boyfriend	3 cases
liver problems caused by heavy drinking	2 cases
backaches caused by office works of a long time	1 case
stomach aches caused by mentally ill-adaptation to city life	2 cases
hypoglycemia	1 case
fatigue	2 cases
home sickness	2 cases
cancer and high blood pressure	1 case

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Although I do not think that all the reported health problems were caused by city dwelling of the Inuit, some of them are closely related to their living in the city.

### (9) Social Networks and Relationships of Urban Inuit to Their Native Places

Inuit of Montreal have not formed their own community in the city. They also do not have any voluntary associations of their own there. The Inuit has a variety of friends including French, English Canadians, First Nations and others, in addition to Inuit. He/she can see them at his/her working places, The Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, Chez Doris, colleges, universities, pubs and parks in the city. The urban Inuit have only ego-centric social networks of each of them.

As to relationships between Inuit of Montreal and those of the native places, Inuit of Montreal maintain their relationships to their family, kinsmen or/and friends in their homes by making a telephone call or visiting each other (Table 5).

**Table 5. Frequency of Telephone Calls To One's Native Places**

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	students	total
2 or more a week	4 (16.6%)	5 (22.7%)	3 (37.5%)	12 (22.2%)
once a week	6 (25%)	4 (18.1%)	3 (37.5%)	13 (24.0%)
a few times a month	4 (16.6%)	4 (18.1%)	0 (0%)	8 (14.8%)
once a month	1 (4.2%)	7 (31.8%)	0 (0%)	8 (14.8%)
sometimes	4 (16.6%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (12.5%)	7 (13.0%)
no phone call	5 (20.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (12.5%)	6 (11.1%)
	24 (100%)	22(100%)	8 (100%)	54 (100%)

75% or more Inuit make telephone calls to their home towns once a month or more. There are only some differences of frequency of telephone calls between Inuit without jobs, Inuit with jobs and students in Montreal. While about 21% of the Inuit without jobs do not make any telephone calls to the home villages from Montreal, others of them do contact their family,

kinsmen or friends by phone. As the latter people usually do not have some money with them, they use a free telephone of The Native Friendship Centre or make a collect call.

In terms of frequency of visiting one's native places, there are clear differences between the Inuit without jobs, Inuit with jobs and students (Table 6).

Table 6. Frequency of Visiting One's Native Villages

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	Students	Total
very frequently	1 (4.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.9%)
twice or more a year	0 (0%)	11 (50%)	6 (75%)	17 (31.5%)
once a year	1 (4.2%)	5 (22.8%)	1 (12.5%)	7 (13%)
occasionally	6 (25%)	5 (22.8%)	0 (0%)	11 (20.4%)
no visiting	16 (66.7%)	1 (4.5%)	1 (12.5%)	18 (33.3%)
	24 (100%)	22 (100%)	8 (100%)	54 (100%)

Regarding cases of the Inuit with jobs, about 50% of them visit their home villages with a frequency with 2 or more times a year. Those people can make the trips to the north because the Makivik and Kativik School Board provide them a special bonus for travel to the north during holidays.

Most of the Inuit students spend their holidays in their homes. Thus, 75% students answer that they make a return trip between Montreal and the north more than once a year.

As air fares between Montreal and northern villages in Nunavik or Nunavut are very expensive, the people without jobs seldom pay for their fees. Only in special occasions such as attending one's family funeral, they can make it with a special assistance of the Native Friendship Centre and Air Inuit. 25% of the Inuit without jobs had an experience to visit their home villages to attend their kinsmen's funerals with the assistance. In sum, Inuit with jobs and students regularly visit their homes in the north. On the other hand, the Inuit without jobs hardly see their kinsmen and friends in their home villages.

(10) Inuktitut, Inuit Ways of Life and Ethnic Identity

Inuit ways of life are not seen among the Inuit in Montreal. However, they speak with their friends in Inuktitut, sometimes share some Inuit food which is sent from the North or brought with somebody, with other Inuit or invite those to their meals. As there are very limited quantity of the country food in the city, food sharing and invitation to meals are occasionally occurred. Also, some Inuit make soap stone carvings and other handicrafts in Montreal. But excepting those cases, there are no ethnic distinctions between ways of life of the urban Inuit and those of others in Montreal. The Inuit use existing urban institutions rather than bring and keep their northern way of life in the city.

I hope to report regarding how often the Inuit speak in their mother tongue and how the language use is related to their ethnic identity as Inuit in Montreal. I interviewed 55 Inuit in the city, one of whom does not speak English and nine of whom do not speak Inuktitut. Those nine are from Labrador or eastern arctic region, or have grown up in Montreal.

37 of 54 Inuit reply that they speak Inuktitut every day in Montreal. Especially, almost all of the Inuit without jobs meet some of their friends at Native Friendship Centre of Montreal, Chez Doris, Atwater park, pubs in downtown, several shopping centers in Montreal, Dorval and Lachine. The Inuit with jobs see and speak with other Inuit in their working places such as Makivik, Kativik School Board, and hospitals.

It is very interesting to note some cases in that Inuit marrying or living with non-Inuit partners raise their children in Montreal. In a case of the Inuk woman, she intentionally speaks to her children in Inuktitut. But she talks with her husband or boyfriend in English or French. Between her partner and their children, or among their children, English or French is spoken. Generally, the Inuit children can understand Inuktitut but are not able to speak it. Through my interview research, it turns out that Inuktitut gradually has been falling into disuse among Inuit-non Inuit families in the city. I will show four examples concerning the phenomena.

An Inuit lady who had married a French Canadian man in Iqaluit moved to Montreal with him. After several years' stay in the city she was divorced from him. Four children were taken by her ex-husband and have lived with him. In 1997, there are three sons each of whose age is 19, 15 and

12 years old and one 13 year old daughter in Montreal. Once a week, she goes to see them at ex-husband's house. 12 year old son speaks only French and looks like just a French Canadian. He hardly has an Inuit identity. Other three children of hers can understand Inuktitut but are not able to speak it. Those three also seem to be French Canadian to all appearances. But they express their half- Inuit identity.

An Inuit woman married an English Canadian and had five children between them. Her husband speaks only English and does not understand Inuktitut at all. In her home, she speaks in English in 60% of her time and in Inuktitut in 40 % of her time. As her two daughters who are 10 and 12 years old were raised in Toronto, they do not speak in Inuktitut. But other three daughters at age of 2, 5, and 6 years old, can speak in Inuktitut. All her children have two ethnic identities from their parents. But they have much stronger adherence to Inuit identity than another. According to the lady, whether children speak Inuktitut or not depends on number of Inuktitut speakers around them.

An Inuit man who married to a Montanais woman had three children between them. He speaks in Inuktitut in his office but in English with his wife at their home. He speaks to their children in Inuktitut or English and his children reply to him in English. His wife talk to their children in Montanais or French and the children answer to her in French. At their home, children speak English and French to each other.

There is an Inuit couple in Montreal, whose daughter does not speak Inuktitut. The couple speak in Inuktitut at their home. But when they speak to their daughter, they use English for 60% and Inuktitut for 40%. When they speak to the daughter in Inuktitut, the latter replies to the former in English. The Inuit couple think that as long as their daughter lives in southern cities of Canada, she does not necessarily speak Inuktitut.

As far as my research in Montreal is concerned, as children living in Montreal are taught an Inuit identity by their parents, not all but most of them are very aware that they are ethnically originated from Inuit ancestry in spite the fact that they do not speak Inuktitut well or at all. Several generations from now on, their descendants may keep a part of their Inuit identity but without cultural contents of Inuit ways. I think that as long as they live in a cosmopolitan city whose populations are composed of various ethnic groups, they do not make use of an Inuit identity as a reference of their

actions.

A majority of children raised in Montreal or descendants from Inuit ancestry do not speak Inuktitut but the number of Inuktitut speakers never decreases in Montreal. This is because new comers whose mother tongue is Inuktitut are always arriving at the city from Canadian arctic.

(11) Future Residence of Urban Inuit

I raised a question to 54 Inuit concerning where they like to live in the future. Their replies are summarized in the Table 7.

Table 7. Future Residence

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	Students	total
I want to go back in the north	7 (29.2%)	8 (36.4%)	4 (50.0%)	19 (35.2%)
I may go back in the north	2 (8.3%)	2 (9.1%)	1 (12.5%)	5 (9.3%)
I hope to go and back forth between the north and south	2 (8.3%)	0 ( 0%)	0 ( 0%)	2 ( 3.7%)
I may remain in the south	1 ( 4.2%)	1 (4.5%)	0 ( 0%)	2 (3.7%)
I want to stay in the south	12 (50%)	11 (50.0%)	3 (37.5%)	26 (48.1%)
total	24 (100%)	22(100%)	8 (100%)	54 (100%)

As far as I read this Table, there are not clear differences among the Inuit without jobs, those with jobs and students, regarding residence in the

future. But there are several differences among them concerning their reasons.

10 Inuit with jobs answer that they want to or may go back in the north. This is because their employer bodies such as Makivik or Kativik School Board may move to Kuujuaq or other places in Nunavik. However, they note some conditions for their moving to the north. Only if they can get houses and jobs, they will or may go up to the north again. In other words, if those conditions are not fulfilled, they won't go back to the north to live. The Inuit with jobs who hope to remain in the south point out several problems in the north: few good jobs in the north, difficulty to find residences, better education in the south than in the north, nothing to do in the north, depression and violence relating to drinking problem in the north, high cost of living in the north.

Primarily male Inuit without jobs who want or may go back in the north in the future, do so only if there are jobs for them or personal problems are solved by them in the north. Those who hope to remain in the south are primarily homosexual men, persons with mental problems and criminals in the north, and women in 20's. Also, they point out the shortage of houses and jobs in the north. As far as my research is concerned, they hope to remain in the south not because the southern life is much better than the northern one but because they cannot go home because of their own problems even though they want to go back in the north.

The students who want to go back in the north reply that they hope to help their people in the north as specialists such as a medical doctor, lawyer, or psychiatrist. Those who hope to stay in the south are primarily Inuit who have raised in the south or who have their families in the south or Inuit with prolonged and higher education.

About 50% of the Inuit hope to or may remain in the south in the future. Although about another 50% of the Inuit in the interview hope to or may go back in the north, I predict that considerable number of the Inuit of them will remain in the south. Furthermore, there are always newcomers of Inuit in Montreal from the north. I think that the population of urban Inuit will continuously grow in Montreal.

A lot of the Inuit have not been attracted to remain in the city by pleasant life of Montreal or useful resources of the city. Rather, they simply do not want to go back in the north because they have serious economic

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problems such as shortage of jobs and residences and social problems related to drug and alcohol, sexual and physical violence. The population of urban Inuit will grow in the future due to continuous population flow of Inuit born in the north into Montreal as long as life conditions in the northern regions are not improved.

(12) Environmental Cognition: contrast between Montreal and northern villages

I asked 55 Inuit about any differences between Montreal and their native villages in the arctic, in addition to good and bad points of Montreal. 52 Inuit gave me their replies to the questions.

The Inuit's evaluation of living environment in Montreal is classified in terms of three ranks: being better than those in northern villages, no difference, and being worse than in northern places. Their replies are summarized in the Table 8.

**Table 8. Living Environment in Montreal**

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	Students	total
being better than northern villages	9 (40.9%)	13 (59.1%)	4 (50%)	26 (50%)
no difference	6 (27.3%)	8 (36.4%)	3 (37.5%)	17 (32.7%)
being worse than northern villages	7 (31.8%)	1 (4.5%)	1 (12.5%)	9 (17.3%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 (100%)</b>	<b>22(100%)</b>	<b>8 (100%)</b>	<b>52 (100%)</b>

As a general trend, about 50% of the urban Inuit consider that the living environment in Montreal is better than that in their native villages in the arctic. In the other words, it is suggested that another 50% of the urban

Inuit live in Montreal not because living environment of the city is better than that of the northern native villages but because of other reasons.

There is no big difference between the Inuit with jobs and students regarding living environment of Montreal, but some differences between those two and the Inuit without jobs concerning the matter. It is very interesting to note that 31.8 % of the Inuit without jobs think that living environment in northern villages is better than that in Montreal.

Through my interview with the Montreal Inuit, it is found that the Inuit with jobs and Inuit students tend to regard a living environment of Montreal as better than that of northern villages because there are a lot of resources such as a variety of jobs, educational opportunities and information access available to them there. But the same persons negatively think that the city life is busy, rapid and full of stress. On the other hand, although the Inuit without jobs do not necessarily consider the city living environment as positive, many of them consider the city life as good because they feel much more free and are under less stress in Montreal than in their native places.

### (13) Social Problems in Montreal

There are several social problems that Inuit residing in Montreal may encounter. Those are unemployment, homelessness, prostitution, alcoholism, and drug problems. In this section, I will report about alcohol and drug problems in Montreal and point out that the problems are occurred not only in a southern city but also in the north.

Many people think that urban Inuit are generally addicted to drinking and spending most of their time in pubs. In reality, the urban Inuit themselves consider that they drink too much and make many troubles related to drinking. The stereotyped image of the urban Inuit is not always wrong but not true to all the urban Inuit.

52 of 55 Inuit replied to my questions about drinking. 19 of 52 Inuit, that is, 36.5% answer that they have not had drinking problems. 23 of the Inuit, 44.2% tell that they had drinking problem in the past but not now. And 10 Inuit, 19.2% say that they have the problem now. Over 60% of the urban Inuit were or are related to the alcohol problem. It should be noted that as the Table 9 shows, there are considerable differences between the Inuit with

jobs, Inuit without jobs and students.

Table 9. Drinking Problems of Urban Inuit

	Inuit without Jobs	Inuit with Jobs	Students	total
no drinking problem till now	4 (17.4%)	8 (38.1%)	7 (87.5%)	19 (36.5%)
had drinking problem in the past but not now	9 (39.1%)	13 (61.9%)	1 (12.5%)	23 (44.2%)
being having the problem	10 (43.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (19.2%)
total	23 (100%)	21 (100%)	8 (100%)	52 (100%)

According to the Kativik School Board, several Inuit workers and students quit their duties due to heavy drinking and leave their offices or schools every year. About 62% of the Inuit with jobs had drinking problems. In the interview research, it is found that many Inuit people recover themselves from heavy drinking problem with mental assistance of their partners and friends. When some ladies found to be pregnant or gave birth, they decided to quit drinking for their babies. Also, some other people participated in dialogue treatment meetings of AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) or went to treatment centers for alcoholics. The Inuit who had drinking problem have a tendency to avoid being in company with the Inuit with drinking problems in Montreal.

I will give one example of an Inuk who had overcome her drinking problem. One lady currently at age of 26 moved in Montreal for her job, 6 years ago. She came to know one man (non-Inuk) and fell in love with him. But because their relationship was not going very well, she was worried about it too much and indulged herself in drinking. Then, she was not able to go to work due to heavy drinking. As she wanted to quit drinking, she went to alcoholic treatment center in Laurentian every day for 6 weeks. After

finishing the treatment, she have kept attending to AA meeting on every Saturday or Sunday and given up drinking. Owing to her own efforts, she has come back in her office to work.

About 40 % of the Inuit without jobs have alcohol problems. It should be emphasized that nearly 40% of the jobless Inuit overcame their drinking problems with help of friends and partners or by going to AA meetings or alcoholic treatment centers. Furthermore, there are some jobless Inuit without drinking problems in Montreal. I will show a case of an Inuk with the problem. A man who has spent 12 years in Montreal. He is alcoholic. He drinks beer or whisky almost every other day. Although he has no money, he is given liquor by his neighbor (non-Inuk) of his apartment. He usually drinks 6 or 7 bottles of beer a time but sometimes up to 18 bottles. This is a case of an Inuit man without money. Jobless Inuit women can get alcohol drink much easier than the Inuit men. If they are in pubs without cash and ask other guests or friends there to buy some drinks to them, they can always get some drinks.

As far as my research is concerned, the Inuit students does not seem to be involved in drinking problems. However, it is also true that many young Inuit students in Montreal from the north leave Montreal back for their native villages because they drink too much to go to school in the city.

There are several reasons that a lot of urban Inuit are addicted to drinking in Montreal. Some Inuit started to drink alcohol because they wanted to forget grief originating from separation from their family members, spouses, or boy/girl friends. Some other did so because they suffered from isolation and being homesick in the city. Some Inuit told me that they began to drink because they had nothing to do (ex. jobs) in Montreal.

I think that drinking is one of the serious problems among urban Inuit. But I like to point out that the problem is not peculiar to the urban Inuit. The Inuit who currently have alcohol problems had also them in their native places in the arctic. There is an example that a man who started to drink at age of 15 in the north could not abstain from drinking for more than a week. When he was a kid, he drank or was indulged in drugs or sniffed gas with his friends because there was nothing to do in their village. During a recess time in school, he sometimes drank alcohol. Nobody except his mother cared about him at that time. When he was 15 years old, he participated in drug and alcohol programs for two years and solved the

problems. However, there was a serious alcohol problem in his home. Whenever his father got drunk, the father beat him. As he thought that being in a jail was much safer to him than staying with his father at his house. He intentionally broke into other persons' houses to be arrested. This kind of alcohol problem is still prevailing in arctic villages.

Not a few Inuit people indulged in drugs such as cocaine or hashish. To drink is legal if a person is beyond 18 years old. But no matter at what age a person is, to experience cocaine or hashish is illegal. I do not think that all the Inuit who were interviewed by me did always answer a question about drug abuse to me without hesitation or honestly. In my research, 8 of 52 Inuit told me that they had drug abuse problems in the past. Three of 52 Inuit answer that they now have the drug abuse problems in Montreal.

Drug abuse is not peculiar to urban Inuit. An Inuit man started to sniff thinner and gasoline at age of 9 or 10 years old, and to drink alcohol at age of 12 or 13 years old in his arctic village. According to him, one gram of hashish is sold at the price of \$60 to 70 there. When a lot of Inuit from teens to 40's do not have drugs with them in large arctic villages, they sniff gasoline or thinner. There are several Inuit who are addicted to dangerous drugs such as cocaine or heroin in Montreal as well as in arctic villages. They abuse the drugs in Montreal for the same reasons as the alcohol abuse. Again, I hope to stress that many Inuit have quitted abusing the drugs by their own efforts.

#### (14) Summary and Recommendations

As long as socio-economic situations will not be improved in the arctic regions, a lot of Inuit in eastern arctic regions will continuously move in Montreal. While Inuit with jobs or students can live well in Montreal in terms of standard of living, Inuit without jobs manage to make a living by use of charitable organizations and welfare money. Many of the jobless Inuit encounter socio-economic problems in Montreal. Generally, Inuit of Montreal cannot create and maintain urban Inuit culture and Inuit identity primarily because of lack of strong social solidarity of urban Inuit community or social networks.

I will recommend seven measures to improve quality of life of Inuit in Montreal.

1. I recommend to establish an Inuit information center in Montreal. The center should be a public place for all urban Inuit to share and exchange information on job training, education, jobs and housing. As it is a place for urban Inuit to meet each other, it can be a basis for forming an urban Inuit community. Existence and functioning of this kind of community may contribute to create and maintain Inuit language, culture and identity in Montreal.
2. To hire social workers specially for urban Inuit at the Native Friendship Centre of Montreal. As I reported in this paper, many urban Inuit people face serious socio-economic problems in Montreal. A special support system is needed for the Inuit.
3. Makivik or some other organizations should regularly provide country food to urban Inuit. Many urban Inuit miss their country food very much. In terms of physical and mental health, country food should be given to the urban Inuit through a monthly or weekly supper.
4. Inuit shelter should be established for newcomers from the north in order to reduce number of homeless Inuit.
5. Day care center for urban Inuit or urban natives in general should be established. There are a lot of single Inuit mothers in Montreal. To be financially independent of social welfare, single mothers have to work and need an organization to take care of their children during their working hours.
6. In order to maintain Inuit culture in Montreal, they should have a cultural event in public space and exchange their culture with other residents of Montreal.
7. A vocational or educational training center for the Inuit should be established in Montreal. In order to get good jobs in southern cities, Inuit should have good skills and knowledge for jobs.

Notes

(note 1) This research project was carried out by Nobuhiro Kishigami (of National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan) in summers of 1996 and 1997 in Montreal, PQ, Canada, as a part of a larger project "A Cultural Anthropological Study of Native Societies in Contemporary Cities" (International Research Project of the Japanese Ministry of Education,

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