Greenlandic Archives
From colony to self-government - and beyond

ICA, Adelaide, October 2019
Greenland – Denmark

• 1721-1953 - Danish colony
• 1953 to 1979 – Status as a Danish county/region
• 1979 – 2009 - Home Rule (within the Danish Realm)
• 2009 – present - Self Government (within the Danish Realm)

• Greenlandic law on archives passed in 1982
Shared colonial collections (Ca.1730-1953)

- 1960’s – shipped to Denmark
- 1980’s – returned to Greenland
- Divided by principle of provenance
- Relatively well organized/registered
- Important collections in Greenland
- Online access (mainly Greenland)
- Loss /lacunas
- Unresolved questions about provenance
Shared post-colonial collections (Ca. 1953-present)

- Split collections
- Reflecting rapid change
- Inadequate registration
- Loss/lacunas
- Two types of legislation
- Archives of Danish state offices in Greenland
- Private collections
NEXT STEPS

• RENEGOTIATE PRINCIPLES OF DIVISION/SHARING
• FORMAL AGREEMENT ON APPRAISAL, STORAGE AND ACCESS (DANISH STATE ARCHIVES)
• JOINT REGISTRATION/RESEARCH PROJECTS
• JOINT DIGITIZATION PROJECTS
• ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH HOLDERS OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS
Qujanaq – thank you!

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