Greenland IPY Project

ARCTIC SETTLEMENT PATTERNS FROM THE PAST TO THE PRESENT (PRE-WWII).

The project will analyze settlement-patterns in a High Arctic and a Low Arctic setting through 4,500 years by using archaeological and archival information including palaeo-climate, place names, living resources, local ecological and historical knowledge, local topography etc. The project will concentrate on a few periods within the suggested time-frame: during the Palaeoeskimo period, the neo-eskimo period, the Norse period (in the south), the early colonial period and one later period yet to be chosen. Within these culturally defined periods focus will especially concentrate on variations and local response climate change. Previous studies into prehistorical settlement patterns have mainly focused on synchronic aspects or been restricted to one region or one culture/episode. The project will look into differences and similarities in the strategies applied by groups with same the cultural background but living in two different regions West Greenland regions. The research must establish synchronic episodes and analyze the data in a diachronic aspect in order to elucidate the dynamics in the strategies applied throughout history in two regions in West Greenland which differ in climate and in resource-availability: a High Arctic and a Low Arctic environment. The project is planned to be part of a multi-year, multi-disciplinary research effort (The Upernavik Project) into one well-defined region in Northwest Greenland: Upernavik municipality.

Prime investigators: Greenland National Museum & Archives, Upernavik Museum, Qaqortoq Museum, and Ilisimatusarfik (Greenland University).