



## The Carpenter-Meldgaard Endowment at the National Museum of Denmark:

### A Research Program based on the Archives of the Late Jørgen Meldgaard

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Progress Report, October 2010

This second progress report sums up the activities of the project from April 2010, when the first annual report was published, until now, October 2010.

### **Meldgaard's archival materials**

Ulla Odgaard and Martin Appelt are continuing their work on the archival materials from Meldgaard's Canadian sites. The digitization of diaries and drawings are complete and the majority of the photos have been processed. They are now ready for inclusion in the Cumulus database, where contextual information will be typed in. Identification of some of the photos is sometimes a difficult job, as not all photos are recorded in Meldgaard's original lists.

Martin Appelt has concentrated his efforts on reconstructing Meldgaard's travel routes in detail. Martin has digitized and re-drawn Meldgaard's site plans, and he is now combining information from Meldgaard's diaries with photos and drawings of the archaeological features and finds in order to produce complete descriptions of the sites for the planned catalogue. Thus, the description of the comprehensive site of Alarnerk has now been finalized. Work continues with the remaining sites.

### **Archaeological Analyses of Qajaa and Qeqertasussuk**

As mentioned in the first annual report senior researcher Jens Fog Jensen and research professor Bjarne Grønnow travelled to Nuuk, Greenland, during April in order to study and register the wooden artifacts from the 1982 season at Qajaa, excavated by Jørgen Meldgaard and his team, including Jeppe Møhl, Helge Larsen and Hans Lange. Since we returned from Nuuk, Jens has worked with the CME-database. He is typing in information on the wooden artifacts as well as the many bone and stone tools from the site. Through the database these finds can be coupled with contextual information from documents, drawings and photos from Qajaa. In accordance with the work plan Jens is now on leave, but he returns again to the CME-Project in January 2011 in order to join Bjarne Grønnow in his work with analyses and publication of the two permanently frozen Saqqaq Culture sites in Disko Bay, Qajaa and Qeqertasussuk.



*Research professor Bjarne Grønnow is analyzing the wooden artifacts from Qeqertasusuk*

Concerning Qeqertasussuk, Bjarne Grønnow continues his analyses of the unique material of wooden artifacts from the site. New interesting discoveries have been made during this work. For example the earliest traces in the Arctic of an 'Eskimo drum' were recently identified. A rim fragment of a quite large drum was found among the class of 'unknown' artifacts from Qeqertasussuk. Our close inspection of the Qajaa finds led to the discovery of an equivalent drum rim fragment. Thus, the use of the 'shaman's drum' in the Arctic turns out to be at least 4.500 years old. Bjarne Grønnow is about to write up the chapters on Palaeo-Eskimo wood working for the planned scientific publication of the two frozen Saqqaq sites.



*Senior researcher Jens Fog Jensen with a rim fragment of a Saqqaq shaman's drum*

Analyses of one of the human hair tufts from Qeqertasussuk led to the now famous reconstruction of the complete human genome of a Saqqaq Man (published in Nature, February 2010 and presented in the 1.st. Annual Report of the CME-Project, April 2010). Bjarne Grønnow is collaborating closely with the DNA-team and he heads the archaeological/cultural historical analyses and interpretations of the DNA-results. Thus the CME-Project and the Qeqertasussuk and Qajaa materials are playing an important part in this interdisciplinary state of the art research.

### **The Ph.d.-program: 'Symbols in Palaeo-Eskimo Material Culture'**

Mariane Hardenberg's Ph.d. project under the CME -Project is based on studies of Meldgaard's archaeological and archival materials from the Late Dorset Culture in Canada and Greenland. The title of the program is 'Symbols in Palaeo-Eskimo Material Culture'.

The last six months have been very busy for Mariane. In late April she attended the annual meeting of Canadian Archaeological Association in Calgary, Alberta, where she presented a poster on her project. In May she spent a couple of weeks in her home town, Nuuk, where she studied Dorset Culture finds kept on the Greenland National Museum and Archive. Here she presented a guest lecture for the museum staff and students from Ilisimatusarfik (The Greenland University). During summer, Mariane went to Newfoundland where she took part in excavations at the Dorset site, Point Ridge, headed by professor Priscilla Renouf, Memorial University of St. John's. In prolongation of this Mariane spent time at the university and at the museum, the Rooms, recording figurines and other pieces of portable art of the Dorset Culture. Finally, in August, she traveled to Ottawa to Canadian Museum of Civilization, where she went through Jørgen Meldgaard's finds of Dorset art from the Igloolik area. Mariane is now back at her desk at SILA, The Ethnographic Collections, in order to continue analyses and to prepare a study tour to Cambridge, UK, where Grahame Rowley's finds from Dorset sites in the Igloolik area are kept.

### **A visual anthropological analysis of Meldgaard's films and photos**

Early August, Anne-Mette Jørgensen became part of the CME-Project team. She took her MA degree in anthropology from the University of Aarhus in 2002. Furthermore, she is educated instructor of documentary films at Les Ateliers Varan, Paris. Thus, she has the best qualifications to conduct a visual anthropological analysis of Jørgen Meldgaard's films and still photos from Greenland and Canada.



*Associate researcher Anne-Mette Jørgensen is conducting visual anthropological analyses of Meldgaard's films and photos*

The primary targets for Anne-Mette's analyses are the 16 mm archaeological and anthropological films from the Nuuk Fjord (1952) and the Igloodik film (1954), but Jørgen's latest film from Qajaa (1982) is most interesting, as well. In 1982 Jørgen was a pioneer in using video-film to document an excavation and to use it for public outreach – at least, that was his plan. Technical problems in the edition phase overwhelmed him and the Qajaa movie was never finalized. However, Anne-Mette has succeeded in digitizing and improving the quality of the pictures and the sound tracks from the original tapes, and the results will be presented in the near future on the home page of the CME-Project.

Until now Anne-Mette has completed the indexing of all the films, and she is now embarking on her anthropological analyses. The plan is to supplement with a selection of Jørgen's still photos. Finally, the results of Anne-Mette's work will find their way partly into the home page of the CME-Project and partly into a manuscript aimed at an international journal dealing with visual anthropology.

### **Conferences**

April: Mariane Hardenberg presented a poster describing her research on Dorset art. Canadian Archaeological Association, Calgary.

October: Jens Fog Jensen and Bjarne Grønnow presented a joint paper on the conference 'Frozen Pasts', Trondheim, Norway. Paper title: 'Archaeological Treasures from West Greenland: The frozen sites of Qeqertasussuk and Qajaa'.

### **Reports**

Appelt, Martin & Andersen, Karina, 2010:

Memo on Agreements between Jørgen Meldgaard and CMC relating to his Canadian Field Work. (26 text pages and c. 100 scanned documents)

Appelt, Martin, 2010

Memo on two Archaeological Materials from Arctic Canada (Isingut and Uglit). (16 text pages and 32 illustrations and tables).

Mason, Owen, 2010

An Assessment of the Archives of Professor Helge Larsen held at the Danish National Museum, Copenhagen.

### **Publications (since April 2010)**

Appelt, Martin & Madsen, Christian Koch 2010

'Meldgaard's Vinland Vision'. The Carpenter. Meldgaard Endowment at the National Museum of Denmark: 50 pp.

Grønnow, Bjarne, 2010

Fangstfolk ved Diskobugten (Hunters in the Disco Bay). In: Laursen, Lars & Jørgensen, Lars (eds.): Dronning Margrethe og Arkæologien (Queen Margrethe and Archaeology). Moesgaard Museum og Nationalmuseet. Gads Forlag, 2010: 217 – 223.

### **Public outreach**



*Watercolor by Nuka Godtfredsen: Late Dorset shamanism.  
From the planned second volume of the graphic novel 'The First Steps'*

The graphic novel based on Jørgen Meldgaard's finds and created by Nuka Godtfredsen and Martin Appelt has attracted great public attention. The two CME-Project team members have made several presentations

in connection with art exhibitions of the original drawings, and the project has been presented in a broadcast by TV2 (News on the national Danish television).

The Greenland Radio and Television (KNR) interviewed Mariane Hardenberg about her Ph.d.-research.

A film crew from National Geographic visited the Carpenter-Meldgaard – Project at SILA and spent a whole day filming Nuka Godtfredsen's work with his water color image of the Saqqaq Man. The crew also filmed Bjarne Grønnow working in his laboratory with the Qeqertasussuk-material, in particular the human hair tuft from which the ancient DNA was extracted. Bjarne Grønnow and Martin Appelt were archaeological consultants for the National Geographic team, and furthermore Martin and Mikkel Sørensen reconstructed a number of Saqqaq tools, that were used in re-enactment scenes filmed on Qajaa in Greenland.

A harpoon head from Qeqertasussuk was selected for a special exhibition dedicated to the Danish Queen Margrethe II on the occasion of her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. In this connection Bjarne Grønnow wrote a chapter in the book about the Queen as an archaeologist. The exhibition opens at the National Museum in October. Queen Margrethe II has conferred Bjarne Grønnow the Order of the Knighthood of Dannebrog, April, 2010.

### **The CME-Project Staff**

At present research professor Bjarne Grønnow, research associate Martin Appelt, research associate Anne-Mette Jørgensen, artist Nuka Godtfredsen and Ph.d. student Mariane Hardenberg are working full time on the CME-Project. This autumn senior researcher Ulla Odgaard is on leave doing field work in Japan and senior researcher Jens Fog Jensen is on leave working with his historical archaeological project in North East Greenland. Archivist Jesper Kurt Nielsen, Ph.d. student Peter Andreas Toft and student assistants Karina Andersen and Christian Koch Madsen have worked part time on the project.

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010

Bjarne Grønnow