
A Qassi revisited: Workshops and Dumps in front of a Mens' House at the Early Thule Site, Nuulliit (NW Greenland).

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Résumé

Erik Holtved's excavations (1947) of House 30 at the early 14th century Nuulliit site uncovered the architectural remains of a large, round turf house situated at a distance behind the 'normal' single family houses at the site. Holtved interpreted this as representing the qassi or mens' house of the Early Thule Culture Nuulliit settlement. Recent excavations by the archaeological team of the NOW Project of an area in front of the structure add important new information on the multiple activities connected to the house. Due to excellent preservation conditions, it is possible through spatial and technological analyses to identify different dumps as well as workshop areas where bone, ivory, baleen, meteoric iron and soap stone were processed and where tool kits including walrus and seal hunting gear as well as hand tools were curated and repaired. A flow of raw materials through the site and different processing techniques are documented. Notably, analyses of preforms and waste of soap stone, whale bone and ivory indicate that unskilled individuals worked in front of the mens' house and thus that it also served as a teaching area for apprentices.

Mots-Clés: Arctic archaeology, Thule culture, Greenland, technology, apprenticeship

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