

A PATCHY GLACIER HOLOBIONT GROUP ARCHIVE READER

[archivist's note: many of the original glacier holobiont group files have become corrupted due to permafrost melt floods, sinkholes, and the ongoing data wars. hence patchiness and fragmentation. all available material has been re-physicalised and is exhibited here.]

GLACIER HOLOBIONT GROUP ~ OVERVIEW: PARTICIPANTS & SYSTEMS i.

i. group participants

- * mollusc
- * zinc
- * candida
- * salt
- * cod
- * kelp
- * lynx
- * spruce
- * mite
- * isopod
- * lapwing
- * proton
- * juniper
- * phosphate
- * lichen
- * hare
- * rotifer
- * caribou
- * eocyte
- * cloudberry
- + all their symbionts

ii. roles: interchangeable at will

- electronics engineer
- therapist (talking)
- therapist (somatics)
- librarian/archivist
- oral historian
- inuit qaujimajatuqangit (iq) method scientist
- terrain specialist
- atmospheric scientist
- geologist
- glaciologist
- bryologist
- microbiologist
- forager
- botanist
- marine biologist
- peer-to-peer teacher-learner
- infrastructure tech
- inuktitut translator
- acoustician
- all group members are invariably chefs and artists

[archivist's note: holobiont = a whole being, made up of a collection of interdependent, symbiotic beings. a human or an earth can be considered a holobiont, for example.]

> all major decisions within the group are made using a consensus-based agreement system. there are no hierarchies within the group.

> all such decisions may be overruled by the Inuit Council of Tikirarjuaq / Whale Cove ↓ (of whom some are also members of the Glacier Holobiont Group) and by whose permission we work and reside in Tikirarjuaq / Whale Cove. 62.1734° N, 92.5790° W



*EXCERPT FROM “GLACIER HOLOBIONT GROUP HTML,” experimentally written as a short story by **phosphate** in the early stages of the group’s formation:*

[archivist’s note: video version also available in the archive.]

the arctic science-workers named themselves the *glacier holobiont group*, even though there were no more glaciers, only remnants of melted ones. they also renamed themselves individually, giving themselves names like lynx, proton, isopod, mite, candida, spruce, cod, salt, rotifer, algae etc. they did so in the hopes of using names to create channels for probing in a way that they could not probe if they had a human-tended name. they attempted to research in the way that e.g. a yeast colony would. what would a single celled organism want to research? how would it lead field expeditions, given that it was unicellular but lived out its time in multicellular groupings? how does a yeast share information? how would a yeast record findings? possibly by inscribing it into their own cell walls, like cave paintings?

the group move across the tundra. they cast each other orange looks, but only make noises with their boots as they wade through the inundated ground. the water level is high, and vascular plants more numerous than before. a green sky descends on the crustose lichens below. one of the group points at a bulbous rock and makes some tearing motions; the others peer forward and a few nod. they approach the rock to strip it of moss and put the moss in their pockets and rucksacks or mouths. it takes them a long time to chew and swallow, and a rusty stain remains on their lips after. moss is a bryophyte i.e. not too great of a risk, a slow changer. creeper across eons. they are cautious, since recent mutations and elevated temperatures have aged the methods of safe identification and eating that they have accrued from mentors, books, tasting, youtube videos, and phonecalls with their other communities. they are researchers, and have already learnt with flexible, mourning brains that preserved knowledges are strong but not rotproof, and that rot relays the news.

phosphate

LAB BOOK, eventcycle of the terns

28. may 2036, early spring

i.

transcribed discussion between lynx and salt, entered into the lab book:

[lynx]: ok, another nightraid. i suspect imperial oil's private militia this time.

[salt]: yeah that looks about right. honestly i'm never sure whether they are instructed to do this or if it just depends on their testosterone fluctuations — their "official" orders are to 'protect' the oil rigs, but anyone who actually encounters them knows that's not true.

[lynx]: yeah. either way, there won't be any backlash, unless from the ICLDG [*inuit community and land defence group*].

[salt]: when cloudberry came back from the ICLDG meeting last week they said the group are stretched very thin right now.

[lynx]: hm. we received word yesterday that the militias are receiving not only arms, but also specialised training from the Canadian, Norwegian, Russian and US military bases collected around the pipelines on the arctic rim. there's even worry about new prisons being opened in the subarctic specifically for anti-oil and gas activists, climatologists, environmental workers, dissident artists and Indigenous leaders.

[salt]: that is troubling. and deadly.

note: the wider glacier holobiont group should take another community defence lesson with ICLDG in town. check when is next scheduled.

the raid got through because kelp fell asleep on nightwatch. they apologised and are of course forgiven. the body under duress does not offend.....

maintenance:

- our floating wind turbine disabled by raiders —fixed, candida 29. may
- the arctic tern bird nesting patch (viii.) we built has been destroyed. as far as we can see the terns and ternlings fled unharmed. a few of us gathered some moss, lichens, and errant feathers to begin the nest reconstruction. we stood a while and remembered all the displaced, including many of those present. isopod offered a dead crab they found on the shore.

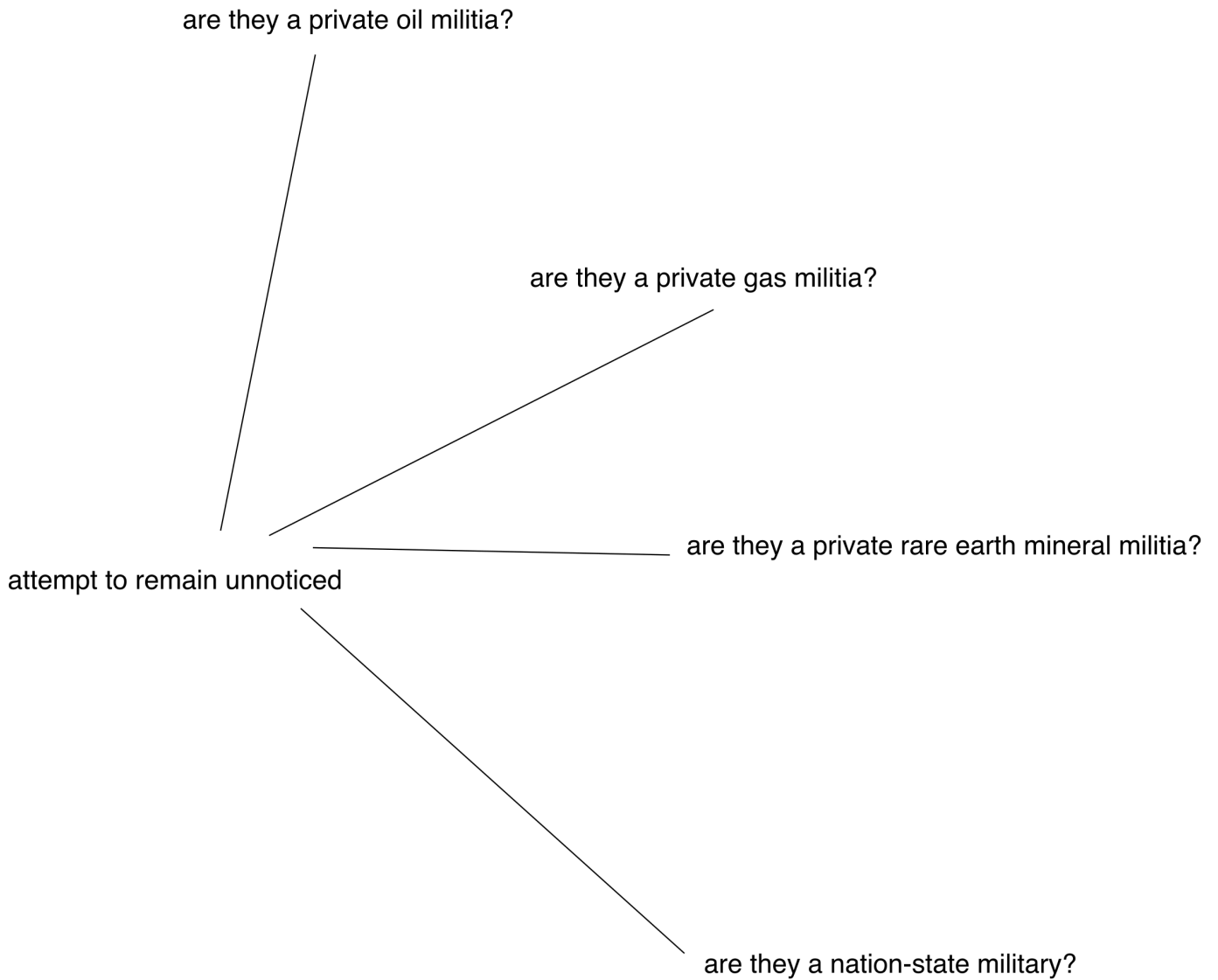
lynx

LAB BOOK, eventcycle of the terns

28. may 2036, early spring

ii.

MANUAL FOR ENCOUNTERS WITH EXTRACTIVE MILITIAS AND/OR NATION-STATE MILITARIES



salt

[note: the archivist believes this to be a joke in diagram form.]

LAB BOOK, eventcycle of the terns

29. may 2036, early spring

one intrepid tern ($\Delta\Gamma^{\text{sb}}\text{dC}\Delta\text{c}^{\text{sb}}$ / *takatakiaq* / *sterna paradisaea*) came back scouting — we are happy the community feels safe enough to send someone — this scout appeared open to collaborating on a research walk along the shore line. they were unsettled by too many humans — understandable, following the raid, so i went with them alone.

we

- identified and measured the levels of oil contamination in local *arctic char fish*
- the tern used their expertise to indicate which individual fish contained high levels of crude oil contamination via rejection and acceptance
- followed by ingestion.

the tern left me a morsel each time, which i accepted with Gratitude — stowed them in my bag. i returned the favour by sifting *marine krill* to be brought back to the ternlings.

we parted having given gifts and maybe begun a new collaborative mode. going into the lab now to look at the fish-morsels more.

feeling: moved by the generosity of the Terns' forgiveness, their resilient springback

mollusc

LAB BOOK, eventcycle of the terns

30. may 2036, early spring

the sky is greening
sometimes a polar chicklet
emerges, is still

haiku by cod



EMOTIONAL WEATHER BACKCAST — GROUP ORIGINS

a short emotional history of the glacier holobiont group formation

those of us who are from colonizer cultures (myself included, hence i author this report) were often seduced by the idea of *the remote*, at first. the ice said — impenetrability — at the time, before ‘unpicking’ had begun. it said — distance. seclusion and expanse.

the vira of the colonizers was reproducing, sequestered deep inside our bodies as we imagined the arctic expanses in the very same way that our “enemies” the oil and gas giants did. we thought that the scientific method was neutral, as that is what we were taught. we were unawares, as we looked into our university lab microscope, that the way we planned to make science merely reproduced extractivism in another form. *yet we were all still fetishizing the idea of an imaginary remote for our own ends.* and as scientists, we were not only fetishizing the geographical remote as an arena for experimentation, but also the conceptual remote. we revered the remoteness of ‘controlled’ information, of scientific data that made no reference to its necessary intertwinement with the ‘non-scientific’ and its interknottedness with everything beyond the bounds of ‘the study’. lone wolf knowledge....

to disconnect a subject of research from their network of interdependencies, environments, relationships — and particularly, *the scientists’ involvement with them* — and consider this to be good knowledge-making? seems laughable to us now. we regularly laugh about it together in group therapy. but, it took a long time for us to get to the laughing place, and we have a ways to go yet.

for those of us not raised in the arctic, children of colonizers or not, the force that propelled us to this place was a deep, grieving yearning to escape, coupled with a willingness to put our faith in a faulty hypothesis of order and solitude, away from the world. we wanted to escape the tangled clump of corporate nation-state politics, privatised land- and city-scapes, and the spectrum of relentless, disembodied extractivism: from the recluse, subterranean materials of the earth to the ephemeral harvests of our passing thoughts. but we came to the arctic and found it inescapable — geographically, at least.

as for those of the group arctic-raised, they were not under any illusions — the very fabric of their lives and the lives of their ancestors left no room for illusion.

slowly, we began to work together. our various griefs boiled over into a communal rage. as this evaporated, we were left with the *glacier holobiont group*.....

spruce

current glacier holobiont group & adjacent beings therapist + emotional historian

tundra harmonic —

[archivist's note: the original recording is displayed alongside this text]

recorded: 27 march 2033

location: in the proximity of tikirarjuaq / whale cove

duration: an arctic month

equipment: earthbound microphones & sound processing software

1. report: over the course of a month, we returned daily to the same place on the tundra inland of whale cove, with the intent being to record the spring thaw.

- we found that as we returned, the ice, plants, microbiome, geologic matter and larger fauna became accustomed to our presence. this was evidenced in our observations of a gradual decline in fear-responses, recoils and microbial panic.
- we also noted that the *glacier holobiont group* looked forward to these meetings of species at a gradual daily increase of 5% (measured using a yearn thermometer for large mammals).
- on the 23rd day of return, our microphones picked up faint tones and harmonics coming from the earth.
- 24th - 26th days these tones amplified in volume and grew denser in frequency.
- on the 27th day, the subterranean tones were very quietly audible to human ears via the flower of the purple saxifrage (*aupilaktunnguut/saxifraga oppositifolia*), which acted as an organic speaker cone, routing the sound from below ground through the stem. to listen, group members lay on the ground within an intimate radius of the saxifrage patch.

2. conclusion, post-further research and discussion:

this sonic whole could be considered the output of a “multispecies orchestra” which is permanently in residence at a “community radio station” (the tundra). each local species has a range of microtones which it continuously emits, with individual organisms often having favourite tonal repetitions. there is no audience, only listener-players.

as the participants in a tundric ecosystem came to know our presences (smells, hormonal emissions, footsteps, thoughts), we were allowed to listen in as guest-players. we conclude that we could never listen to the tundra *without ourselves*, since we inevitably contribute to the orchestral piece.

we liken this to a “community radio” due to the fact that the sounds are made by them/us, for them/us. biological/ecological function of this perpetual, live radio = enjoyment.

we have found that all species can pick up the *entirety of the sound* despite their differing aural capacities. the glacier holobiont group acoustician believes this to be evidence of a previously unknown organic radio wave, which all organisms have an aural ‘receiver’ for. by researching ourselves from the inside, we note that we also have this receiver, but it required practice to tune into, as well as the trusting consent of all the participant organisms *to be heard by us in the first place*.

our acoustician and microbiologists have been up questioning late at night, and have been softly touching the edges of a new theory: how are these disparate sonic emissions 'mixed' into a listenable whole, if the sounds are made in different places and at different frequencies? *there is a possibility that amongst the AEROPLANKTON that drifts across the tundra, there is what we have temporarily called a MICROBIAL SOUND TECHNICIAN who receives these varying frequencies, encodes them, and re-emits them via this organic communal radio wave.....*

i. diagram of multispecies sonic input to the microbial sound tech <— —> organic radio distribution on 27. march 2033

