

INUIT ETHICS AND THE PRIORITY OF THE FUTURE GENERATION

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Colin J. Irwin

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the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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Abstract

As a result of ten years of travel in Arctic Alaska, Canada and Greenland the author found himself confronted with the question "Could Inuit ethics and virtuous morality be explained in functional environmental terms?"

Along with a holistic view of Inuit culture, that came from many years of participant observation, cognitive anthropological techniques were employed to describe Inuit ethics. This work focused on life histories, mythology, interviews and linguistic analysis that sought to give emic meanings to Inuit ethical terms by emic standards of truth.

Inuit religious ethics was shown to have only an incidental relationship to shamanism which concentrates on the power of helping spirits rather than the ideas of good or evil. The metaphysics in mythology was shown to be of traditional importance but belief in the name/soul and reincarnation was and is the central Inuit metaphysical concept in Inuit ethics. Naming rules are enumerated along with some modern examples of Inuit names. It is concluded that the Inuit Summum Bonum is the priority of the future generation as demonstrated by the strength and extent of the beliefs in reincarnation.

Inuit philosophic ethics is approached from an analysis of Inuit ethical terms. Firstly a description of the Inuit language is given that points out its agglutinative nature and the important relationship of symbol to form in which symbol can create form. Secondly the synonymy of the concept of human nature and wisdom in the Inuit concept of the good person is explained. This leads to the conclusion that Inuit philosophic ethics is not mere blunt pragmatism but rather a well-refined form of consequentialism.

Some related questions of Inuit ethics are examined that are distinctly concerned with survival, namely, authority, distribution of resources, suicide,

invalidicide, senilicide, and female infanticide. This examination demonstrates the functional necessity of Inuit morality in these examples and the associated rationality of Inuit religious and philosophic ethics.

It is suggested that relativism does not offer an adequate explanation for the divergent nature of ethics described here. Further the giving of priority to the future generation is more in keeping with the necessities of survival and an evolutionary explanation.

## Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. Introduction	1
2. Methodology	6
3. Inuit Religious Ethics	12
3.1 Shamanism and Ethics	12
3.2 Metaphysics and Ethics	16
3.3 The Name-Soul	26
3.4 Some Inuit Names	36
3.5 Summum Bonum	39
4. Inuit Philosophic Ethics	42
4.1 The Nature of Inuktitut	42
4.2 Concepts of Human Good	46
4.3 Concepts of Mind and Wisdom	52
4.4 Inuit Consequentialism	58
5. Some Questions of Inuit Ethics	61
5.1 Authority	61
5.2 Distribution of Resources	66
5.3 Suicide, Invalidicide and Senilicide	71
5.4 Female Infanticide	78
6. Conclusion	85
Appendix I The Autobiography of Aupudluk	89
Appendix II Six Inuit Myths by Kako and Aupudluk	192
Bibliography	214

## 1. Introduction

I first went to the Arctic from England in 1970 to sail through the North-West Passage in my yacht "Endeavour". I was then twenty-four years old. As a young romantic explorer I found the Inuit to be a courageous, dignified and above all kind and generous people. From the perspective of my scientific background it seemed to me that it should be possible to explain the appearance of this virtue in a whole society in environmental terms. I also came to the conclusion that understanding the dynamics of the relationship between virtue and environment as demonstrated by the Inuit could add significantly to a similar understanding of what seemed to be a comparative lack of virtue in contemporary western man.

With this thesis in mind I began undergraduate work at the University of Manitoba in 1978 majoring in Philosophy. This course of study was later expanded to include Anthropology and Religion so that the descriptive and comparative aspects of ethics could be introduced into my work. Thus this Masters Thesis is an Interdisciplinary attempt to provide an answer to the question that brought about my giving up travelling and writing in exchange for academic pursuits.

Of course my romantic concept of primitive man as a noble savage was not new. It was born out of the expanding consciousness of Renaissance Europe and elevated to an ideal of philosophic importance by Rousseau. In more recent times western philosophers have tended to keep away from defining human nature as a means to framing an ethics except for realistically surmising that man needs to be understood as self-interested. It may be useful to formulate a sense of justice and legal philosophy from such a premise in an institutionalized society, but is it reasonable to anchor all morality to such a pessimistic view of humankind?

There may be an inherent danger in such a perspective for like the people who elect the leaders they deserve we may precipitate an indifferent moral code upon ourselves where the active moral agent is only required to follow the law of the land in a society that takes its neighbours' selfishness for granted. The prospect of such a thesis exists among those who embrace the spirit of the rat race as an integral part of a free enterprise economy where selfishness may even be valued and seen as a good.

Perhaps we should not be surprised then when a girl can be murdered over a period of half an hour while 38 separate witnesses failed to help or even report the crime to the police in New York in 1964<sup>1</sup>. During the Second World War inmates of concentration camps sometimes rationalized the behaviour of the Gestapo as good<sup>2</sup> and virtuous thereby increasing their own chances for survival as trustees. They did this although it required internalizing a reversal of their beliefs and values. The Ik described by Turnbull<sup>3</sup> exhibit similar behaviour where thievery and lies are the accepted social norms. This was in a culture that had broken down at every level and was fast on the road to extinction.

If there is some natural virtue in man it surely needs to be understood lest inadvertently we create an environment in which it has little chance to flourish. The indifference of the New Yorkers referred to above seems only removed from the negative values of the Ik and concentration camp trustees by a margin of degree. Yet virtue does exist as a cultural norm among the Arapesh as described by Margaret Mead<sup>4</sup> and the Inuit as described by Jean Briggs<sup>5</sup> so perhaps it need not only be considered the quality of an idealized noble savage.

Rousseau considered the invention of property to be largely responsible for the evils that befall mankind. Many primitive people including the Inuit hold to communalistic property rights and Rousseau might have

thought this would explain virtue amongst the Inuit but what about the Ik who are starving and who are considered evil incarnate? The difference is that they are not surviving, they are on the path to self extermination whilst the Inuit, in spite of an actively hostile environment, spread their culture from North East Asia across Arctic North America to the East Coast of Greenland.

However, if these conjectures and speculations are to be of any practical value, they must be expressed in more precise and concrete terms that speak of the functionalism of ethics. Understanding the dynamics and defining the relationship between societies and their codes of behaviour has for the most part been undertaken by social scientists in recent times. Aberle, Cohen, Davis, Levy and Sutton<sup>6</sup>, for example, consider a society to be "a group of human beings showing a self-sufficient system of action which is capable of existing longer than the life-span of an individual, the group being recruited at least in part by the sexual reproduction of the members". However, "a society need not provide equally for the physiological needs of all its members. Infanticide, geronticide, limitation of marriage, and birth control may be necessary to maintain certain societies."

Malinowsky, in his conclusion to The Foundation of Faith and Morals,<sup>7</sup> suggests that "The rationalist and agnostic must admit at least recognize them as indispensable pragmatic figments without which civilization cannot exist".

Campbell<sup>8</sup> takes this sentiment to its logical conclusion when he suggests that

I believe the case for sociocultural evolution is strong enough so that psychologists and other social scientists, when considering an apparently bizarre, incomprehensible feature of their own social tradition, or that of another culture, should approach it with a similar awe, expecting that when eventually understood, when our theories have caught up with it, that seemingly bizarre superstition will turn out to make an adaptive sense.

It is in the functional vein of these authors that the ethics of the Inuit can be seen as being tailored to the needs of survival under the most hostile of circumstances. Although modern man has ventured into space he has not as yet maintained a society and culture in that environment. The culture of the Inuit contains a moral code which is successful in maintaining a society under some of the most adverse conditions in which man as a species has survived. As such Inuit ethics represent one of the best examples of a moral system tested to the limits of self destruction in which the necessity and sufficiency of certain ethical prescriptions will be seen to be imperative.

My thesis is therefore primarily descriptive, relating Inuit religious and philosophic beliefs to their ethical prescriptions and the environmental factors that determine their necessity. As to the implication of the work for the ethics of contemporary man, that is more problematic. I am of the opinion that the evolutionary ethics described by Campbell<sup>9</sup> provides one of the best working theories for a naturalistic ethics. But it is far beyond the scope of this thesis to prove that point, although I would hope that it provides empirical support for his position which he sums up as follows:

My own interests, and those of most evolutionary ethicists, are properly called *descriptive*, and in these two ways: descriptive of the moral and ethical standards that various cultures past and present have exhorted their members to live up to; and hypothetically descriptive of laws of social organization, including optimal modes of individual behaviour for optimizing collective goals. The second meaning could be translated as a *science* of ethics, were the term not pretentious considering the state of the field. If perfected, the science could produce derivative normative ethics or mediational ethics. It could never prove that continued human existence in large cooperative groups was a desirable goal, nor provide any other ultimate goal, and thus would fail to provide the "normative basis" for ethics which philosophers have sought. But for persons who had already made such a value choice (however logically unjustified), a science of ethics once developed could provide sets of derived, mediational values which if adhered to would further the achievements of the chosen ultimate values. A descriptive ethics, using biological and social evolution, should also be able to predict which ultimate values animals such as social humankind are likely to choose, even though it would not thereby philosophically justify such normative values.

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## 2. Methodology

The original objective of this work was to document, describe and analyze the metaphysics and the ethics of the Netsilingmiut Inuit in order to establish the relationship of their traditional beliefs to their morals. Particular reference was made to those values needed to preserve social and ecological harmony in a hostile environment. However, it became clear during the course of collecting and interpreting data that it was far easier to show a functional relationship to be operating in cases of survival as opposed to mere harmony. Thus in practice the objective was modified to read "those values needed for survival in a hostile environment". This modified form of the original question naturally led the study into questions of "life-boat" ethics such that descriptive ethnographic research would have to include real examples of "life-boat" situations alongside the beliefs that formed the basis for these moral decisions.

With regard to such examples the literature on Inuit ethnography is full of life and death situations. But they often lack the motivation and state of conscience of the individuals involved. It is not sufficient to merely know when and under what circumstances A killed B or A refused to share his food with B. From an ethical point of view it is necessary to know if A thought he was acting rightly or wrongly and how he felt about the moral predicament he was in. This important but subjective aspect of the research is dependent on the honesty and openness of the informant. Fortunately I am able to offer, on this point, the autobiography of Aupudluk in Appendix 1.

It is a common practice in works that are principally ethnographic to begin with a brief description of the environment of the group under examination. In this case where the emic perspective of the Inuit is all important, an insight into their world view and the forces that shape it can best be obtained by first reading

Appendix 1. Aupudluk is my mother-in-law and the life history given here is her telling of that story to her daughter, my wife. Aupudluk is by nature a very open person, such that in this mother-daughter situation she laid bare all her values, hopes and fears as she was confronted with the difficult situations of her life. Her husband Kako, who has a more reserved personality, gave a more factual account of his life. It too is a remarkable story but it does not provide a holistic perspective of the paradigm that shapes Inuit ethics. Kako however did provide more than fifty myths that deal nearly exclusively with questions of morality and cosmology. For him they are historical stories of a distant past, a "Golden Era" of superlative events. A few of these are included in Appendix 2.

If an Inuit Moral System is seen as an interdependent set of working beliefs the interlocking descriptions of events, action, thought and values must be emic at the ethnographic descriptive level. Therefore all descriptions need to be understood with Inuit meaning. This requires firstly a holistic perspective of their culture so far as that is possible and secondly a precise understanding of at least the central Inuit terms for values, virtues, moral and ethical principles. These objectives can be met through participant observation and interviews.

Participant observation is largely a matter of the expenditure of time and patience amongst the culture under study. Fortunately, I have spent nearly a decade in the Arctic, travelling, hunting and living as extensively as is now possible a traditional life<sup>1</sup>. Without this experience I do not think I could have meaningfully formulated the correct questions at the beginning of this work, let alone suggest means towards their answer. Therefore along with Appendix 1 I consider the holistic aspect of the research to be done.

The other data required is oral, descriptive and linguistic and the means

open to acquiring this data are principally interviews. Participant observation is not sufficiently systematic to produce precise results with an economy of effort whilst questionnaires are too structural and must necessarily partly pre-judge answers by forming a precisely focused finite series of questions. As emic description is wanted here the methods of Cognitive Anthropology seem most appropriate.

Initially I used various cognitive techniques such as taxonomics, domain analysis, ranking and componential analysis with my bilingual wife as informant. This work satisfactorily identified a number of key moral concepts but could not provide adequate descriptive meaning. I was trying the phenomenological approach of R. C. Solomon<sup>2</sup> with moderate success when Christopher Boehm<sup>3</sup> published his paper "Exposing the Moral Self in Montenegro: The Use of Natural Definitions to Keep Ethnography Descriptive". His techniques of using folk definitions worked extremely well as might be expected from his epistemology and methodology given in his summary as follows:

Special epistemological problems arise when exotic systems of ideas and affects are studied by a foreigner. Difficulties in knowing "the native view" are discussed, and a partial solution for this epistemological problem is proposed. Exemplification through substantive semantic analysis of a key morality term used by Montenegrin tribesmen results in a descriptive portrait of the moral self. In contrast to certain trends in ethnographic semantics, which are antiseptically formal, overstructured, unduly self-contained, or static, emphasis here is placed upon open-ended semantic inquiry and fuller articulation with the general ethnographic context by taking native decisions and social processes into direct account.

Although my wife helped considerably with the early linguistic work, the collection of data and the almost endless translation of stories and myths she could not, as a bilingual informant, be relied upon for folk definitions. In fact when I asked for these from bilingual informants, I always ended up with a straight translation which turned out to be far removed from the traditional emic understanding. However I did not completely follow Boehm's methodology

of numerically tabulating the occurrence of themes in a large sample of definitions either.

In the Inuit culture, authority, knowledge and wisdom rest with the oldest generation such that if I asked a younger person what a certain ethical term meant they sometimes ventured an answer but more generally expressed their lack of expertise in the matter and referred me to one of the elders of the community. Fortunately my mother and father in law were two of half a dozen such people in the settlement of Chesterfield Inlet on the west coast of Hudson's Bay. Thus in collecting the definitions of those considered to be the "sages" of the village, both the consensus and the authority of the community was taken into account. As it turned out these few venerated informants, who took time to teach me in a student/professor relationship, were most consistent in their responses. This perhaps reveals a flaw in Boehm's methodology as it uses an etic epistemology of consensus by numeration. Of course this may have been valid amongst the Montenegrins but amongst the Inuit an appeal to the authority of the elder is the correct epistemology. In short I not only use emic folk definitions but discern the truth of those definitions by emic standards of truth.

On this question of sources it is interesting to note that my principal informant, my father-in-law Kako, met Rasmussen or "Kunoo" as he is known to the Inuit, in 1922 when he was about nine years old. However, Kako's name does not appear in Rasmussen's census<sup>4</sup> nor for that matter many of his relatives, with the exception of Padluk, his mother's cousin. Aupudluk did not meet the explorer and her family was also left out of the census, which all suggests that the population of the Netsilikmiut was very likely more than twice Rasmussen's estimate of 259.

Lastly it is worth noting why my father-in-law so patiently instructed me in Inuit ethics. I might have thought it was to preserve a body of knowledge

before it was lost with the passing of his generation, or because the Government provided me with the funds to bring my family including his daughter to visit him at his home. However he carefully explained to me that he was giving me all the help he could because I was now providing for his daughter and grandchildren and that by contributing to my success at University he was advancing the well-being of his progeny. Although I didn't realise it at the time, this was my first lesson in Inuit ethics.

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### 3. Inuit Religious Ethics

#### 3.1. Shamanism and Ethics

The Inuit term for Shaman is Angakok, and as Rasmussen<sup>1</sup> defines him he is someone who is

possessed of special gifts that can bring them in communication with the spirits of the earth, the air and the sea. By means of these preternatural beings they can see "the things that to others are hidden", and they can help their fellow men who have got into danger, either on account of sickness or on account of continuous misfortune on their hunts, or if, attacked by an enemy, they have become possessed of an evil spirit.

Kako<sup>2</sup> adds further precision to the definition of an Angakok by stating that they must always have a helping spirit and that they must use this helping spirit. Rasmussen<sup>3</sup> was led to believe that there were no longer any great shamans practising their craft. This is certainly not the case as Aupudluk's father was a great shaman and was contemporary with Rasmussen's travels.

As the helping spirit was central to being an Angakok becoming a shaman involved acquiring such a helper. Although training, apprenticeship, isolation, meditation, visions<sup>4</sup> and dramatic personal experiences are all possible means towards an individual becoming a shaman, they must culminate in the production of a helping spirit. Obtaining the services of a spirit could be brought about by either a shaman teaching a novice, by a person privately pursuing such an objective, or, as is the case with Aupudluk's father, the spirit coming to him.

Kako explained that "the shaman used to be able to find out anything, past and future, through his helper. If someone has a secret he will use his helper to discover it." In this way the Angakok was able to perform a social function that involved the sanctioning of those who stole, lied or broke taboos. However, the latter is not so much concerned with human ethics as offences against the natural forces and elements of the environment. As Weyer<sup>5</sup> points out:

Strictly social crimes scarcely come within the scope of the Eskimo religion. Its regulative influence operates chiefly through an elaborate system of taboos concerned with the propitiation of the spirits, especially the spirits believed to control the food supply.

He goes on to explain that the system of duties and taboos is quite separate from the code of justice and further that actions involving worldly morality are rarely specified as entailing punishment in the afterworld.<sup>6</sup> This lack of involvement extended to transitional social functions such as officiating over marriage and funeral rites<sup>7</sup>. Here an Angakok's intervention was only required when things went wrong, such as when the evil spirit of a dead person came to a camp with harmful intentions.

An Angakok is someone who controls spirits through the use of his helping spirits, to assist, or in some cases to do harm, to others. As such his skills and abilities are not distinctly ethical and certainly do not assist him in being or becoming a virtuous person. As Balikci<sup>8</sup> notes,

The most striking characteristic of Netsilik shamanism and associated beliefs was the fusion of good and evil elements. Although the Netsilik distinguished clearly an evil shamanistic act from its positive counterpart, it was the same shaman who was capable of both. Thus, although most shamans were good, at some time in their career they committed aggressive acts; and the very few reputedly evil shamans were considered bad only during a limited period.

This neutrality of Inuit religion vis-a-vis good and bad persons is further explained by Aupudluk. She pointed out that magic words and amulets could be used for protection from wild animals, other people and the elements but could not help a person become good. "There were good Angakoks and bad Angakoks. The bad ones could kill someone who they hated or were jealous of. But if they wanted to help someone they could really give them a lot of help. My father was a great Angakok. If someone was sick they would give him something. They would place a gift close to where he slept. But he would only use the gift for a while and then he would give it away. He made himself an Angakok as a boy so he couldn't lose his power. In the old days an Angakok's thoughts would come true. His

father's father's spirit used to help him because his mother wished it." On this question of thought Kako offered the following specific observations. "I have met quite a few Angakoks. They were the only doctors in those days. Angakoks would not think casually of other people as that was dangerous. He had to control his thoughts because his spirit helper would carry them out even if they were good or bad. To stop themselves from thinking bad things the Angakoks would play games with other Angakoks or concentrate on good thoughts only."

In conclusion, therefore, it can be stated that practising shamanism as it is defined by the Inuit does not enhance the Angakok's virtue. Nor can it enhance the virtues of others. Being a good person has no direct relationship to being an Angakok, that is having one or more helping spirits. These spirits are controlled by the good or bad thoughts of the Angakok and these in turn are dependent on Inuit concepts of good, bad and thought, not spirits or the ability to control them.

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### 3.2 Metaphysics and Ethics

When the Christian Missionaries came to the Arctic and translated the Bible into Inuktitut they had to coin many new words including a term for God. They settled on Nanaliukti, which translates as "The one who made the Earth"; but prior to the invention of this word the Inuit had no cosmological need of a maker as the earth (Nuna) and sky (Sila) were animated and were the a priori given. The earth as a living entity gave rise to animals and men and the words, thoughts and actions of these sentient beings generated the other phenomena to be found in the universe (Silukuak)..

Kako explained that "The first Inuit used to say that they came from mud, that is their maker and that is what they turn back into." This mother earth perspective is repeated slightly differently by Rasmussen<sup>1</sup>:

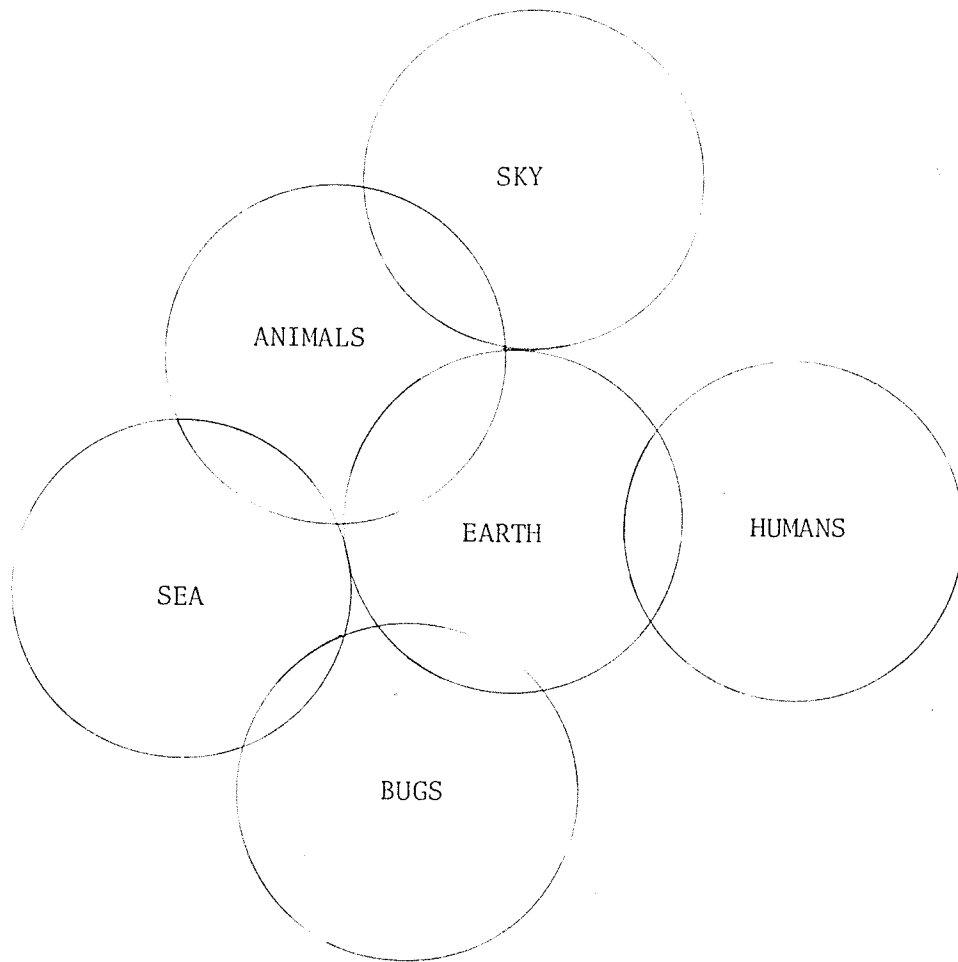
In the earth there are large eggs, far down inside the earth, eggs that are called silagsat: "Something that will become Sila". It is said that some of these earth eggs were turned into musk oxen.

Rasmussen's informant Nalungiaq<sup>2</sup> repeats the same theme when she says:

I have also heard that the earth was here before the people, and that the very first people came out of the ground from tussocks.

By asking the kind of question "What kind of x is y?" and "What other kinds of x are there?" it is possible to build up folk taxonomies that attempt to portray emic domains, concepts, and fields of meaning. Several interesting points come out of such an analysis. The division of the universe into Earth, Sea and Sky. Animate forms are divided into those that have "intelligence" (animals) and those that do not possess this essence (bugs). However, animate forms can equally well be divided up into "Those of the Sea" and "Those of the Land". In order to integrate these two concepts ("Animals vs. Bugs" and "Sea vs. Land") I found a conventional taxonomic tree misleading and adopted the overlapping circle concept in Figure 1. This clearly shows that the Sky, Sea and Earth are separate

Figure 1



UNIVERSE

(do not overlap) whilst Animals are part of the Earth, Sea and Sky (do overlap). Bugs are only part of the Sea and Earth whilst Humans are part of the Earth only. Furthermore, Earth occupies its central mythological position as the mother of life. This point is further enforced by the fact that fresh water, rivers, plants and flowers turn out to be as much a component of Earth as the rocks and mountains.

For the Inuit words are not simply symbols of reality or perhaps mirrors of reality but are considered to be the forms of reality. Consequently, according to Inuit metaphysics, phenomenon can come into existence by the conceptualization and articulation of that phenomenon. Appreciating this point is critical to understanding Inuit mythology, in which thoughts and utterances precipitate actions, creation and events. For the same reasons Inuit are traditionally economic in their use of language and careful not to think or speak casually or wrongly of others. This quality of language as form will be found repeatedly in the myths in Appendix 2 but to illustrate the point here I quote from Rasmussen's<sup>3</sup> informant Nalungaq with her rendition of the myth concerning the creation of night and day.

The hare makes the earth to be light

In the very first times there was no light on earth. Everything was in darkness, the lands could not be seen, the animals could not be seen. And still, both people and animals lived on the earth, but there was no difference between them. They lived promiscuously: A person could become an animal, and an animal could become a human being. There were wolves, bears and foxes but as soon as they turned into humans they were all the same. They may have had different habits, but all spoke the same tongue, lived in the same kind of house, and spoke and hunted in the same way.

That is the way they lived here on earth in the very earliest times, times that no-one can understand now. That was the time when magic words were made. A word spoken by chance would suddenly become powerful, and what people wanted to happen could happen, and nobody could explain how it was.

From those times, when everybody lived promiscuously, when sometimes there were people and other times animals, and there was no difference, a talk between a fox and a hare has been remembered:

"Taq-taq-taq! Darkness, darkness, darkness!" said the fox; it liked

the dark when it was going out to steal from the caches of the humans.

"Ublaq-ublaq-ublaq: Day, day, day," said the hare; it wanted the light of day so that it could find a place to feed.

And suddenly it became as the hare wished it to be; its words were the most powerful. Day came and replaced night, and when night had gone day came again. And light and dark took turns with each other.

In the Inuit world where all that is natural is animated it is probably misleading to speak of the supernatural. However, superbeings that have control over the elements and game on which the Inuit are dependent for their lives came into existence by the wrongdoings of the people. Nuliajuk<sup>4</sup> who controls the sea mammals gained her powers as a result of her father's uncontrollable anger. An orphaned brother and sister<sup>5</sup> who were abandoned by their tribe turned into thunder and lightning. Another pair of unwanted children became the sun and moon<sup>6</sup> and an abandoned infant boy ascended into the sky to rule over the wind, rain and snow<sup>7</sup>. Weyer<sup>8</sup> is drawn to the conclusion that

Punishment for noncompliance with taboos does not take the abstract form of indemnity: it comes in the most direct form imaginable, through the depletion of the very necessities of life. All supplies, such as food, furs, and fuel, are supposed to be dispensed by the spirits. Privation and ultimately death may be inflicted upon the living at any time as punishment for some, to us, trivial offense.

However, it should be remembered that none of the offenses that brought these natural misfortunes into existence were ever trivial. The relinquishing of self-control to anger and the abandonment of orphans are recurring themes in Inuit mythology as they represent real threats to the survival of the group. For a starving hunter, anger could quickly turn to murder and cannibalism while healthy orphans offer better prospects for survival than unweaned infants amongst whom there is a higher mortality rate.

In the myth "The hare makes the earth to be light", it is stated that there was no difference between men and animals in ancient times. This lack of distinction extends to Inuit metaphysics as both men and animals have souls.

It is even possible for a human to live as an animal by having his soul enter its body. This belief as noted by Weyer<sup>9</sup> is common to most Inuit groups.

A tale from Angmagsalik also tells how the "name", in the period between its existence in two human beings, wanders through a number of animals. Eskimo mythology is, indeed, replete with instances of transformation from man to animal and vice versa.

With many religions the metaphysical belief in a soul provides for the rational foundation of a sanctity of life. Consequently, for the Inuit, as noted by Rasmussen's informants Nakasuk, Qamssuaq, Qaqortingeq and Nanelaq<sup>10</sup>:

what makes life so difficult for people is not merely that they themselves have a soul in which lies all the vulnerability of their lives, but also that all the food they have to live on can only be procured by depriving animal-souls from their bodies.

In many cultures, including contemporary western, killing associated with hunting is often considered an act of prowess on the part of the hunter. The opposite is true among the Inuit, who traditionally viewed animals as giving themselves to humans as a gift in return for respect and kindness. The following extracts from Rasmussen illustrate this spirit of benevolence in regard to the souls of seals, caribou and the polar bear.

The careful hunter will always dip a piece of snow into the waterpail and let the water drip down into the seal's mouth. It is said that seals are always thirsty, and that they often let themselves be killed just to get a drink of water. For the thrust of the harpoon that kills it does not hurt and simply feels like a slight smarting. It is the belief that all seals know where killed animals are usually treated well, and therefore they always make their way to such people.<sup>11</sup>

First of all the father and mother of the young hunter must hasten to eat of the seal, and as a matter of fact as many of the villagers as possible must do the same. In this way the soul of the seal feels that it is desired and welcome among men and will soon let itself be caught again.<sup>12</sup>

Nor must hay be used for kindling a fire over which caribou meat is to be cooked. For caribou live on grass, and it would shock the soul if the fire over which its flesh was to be cooked were to be lighted with something that is the caribou's own food.<sup>13</sup>

As long as this death taboo for the soul of the bear is being observed, no man's or woman's work must be done, nor may fuel be gathered or peat be cut for shoeing the sledge. There must be no sewing of new

garments, only the most necessary repairs being allowed.

The skin is hung up in the house with the hair-side out. Inside must be hung the animal's bladder, spleen, tongue and genitals, together with those presents that are made to the soul of the bear.<sup>14</sup>

So if a camp is left just after a kill has been made, it means that one has not much pleasure in the catch. And it offends the souls to give them the impression that their flesh was not enough to keep people at the old camp.<sup>15</sup>

On the whole, nothing is so detrimental to hunting luck as indifference towards a catch; one must shout aloud with joy and one must give others pleasure.<sup>16</sup>

Many of the metaphysical beliefs that support Inuit ethics have become weakened in recent times such that Aupudluk is of the opinion that "The weather is on its own although angakoks could control it in the past, but I never experienced that myself." Kako explained that "The weather does not have a mind but sometimes I feel it does stop me from going hunting." On the question of the sanctity of man, the animals and their environment Kako explained that "There's a tremendous difference between killing animals and people. Animals are killed for food. Killing humans is done through jealousy or madness. If a blameless or innocent person was killed they would be revenged. There was never any wasteful killing of animals. Life and death was a serious matter so everything was used or saved. But now people have many bullets so they just kill; it's wrong. They should only kill when they need to. We give the seal a drink of water but that is all, there is nothing for the other animals. If people keep killing animals the way they do the animals will be hard to find. With regard to the land it is all right to use heavy equipment in the settlement but not where people hunt. We used to live by travelling from camp to camp so all the land was used for hunting. Before the nickel mine came to Rankin Inlet I never used to stay in one place. But the mine tied me down and changed my life."

The Inuit metaphysical concept of man is not along simple dualistic lines but into a body (Timi) and three types of soul. Mind (Isuma) is part of the

Spirit (Tanak). The Name (Atak) of a human is a second element in the soul whilst the third is Breath (Anaksak). These terms were given by Kako and similar equivalents are to be found in Rasmussen<sup>17</sup>, Williamson<sup>18</sup>, and Weyer<sup>19</sup>, who provides the following accurate description.

In general, the Eskimos distinguish three sorts of human souls. One of them is the immortal spirit which leaves a person's body at death and goes to live in the future world; a second, which is conceived as the vital breath and warmth of the body, ceases to exist at death; and a third sort of soul is thought to abide in the person's name. Though the name-soul is not exactly a soul in the usual connotation of the word, it is thought to possess abstract traits of the person to whom it refers and to persist after his death.... The name-soul is chiefly a thing of this world, perpetuated, however, through the custom of naming children after relatives who have recently died.

Kako provided further explanation by adding that "If the Spirit (Tanak) leaves a body then that person dies as the Spirit lets the breath work and the heart beat. This is true of all living animals as they also have Spirit. As Mind (Isuma) is a part of the spirit then likewise all animals have mind. However humans hunt and can kill. Therefore because the animals are prey to the humans the animals have smaller minds. Even fish have minds because they swim away very fast when they are approached. Bugs do not have mind but animals that look out for hunters have quite large minds. All mind is the same in nature. Humans are curious through their minds and their eyes. People who have strong minds are even able to know things of other people when nothing has been said."

The importance of mind in ethics will be dealt with in the section on Philosophic Ethics but in this section, Religious Ethics, the name soul is of the greatest importance. Just as words provided form in cosmology so here too the name is the person as eloquently understood by Williamson<sup>20</sup>:

The name, in Eskimo belief, is the soul, and the soul is the name. The Eskimo believed that the emitting of a word evoked an image, which was an actual reality. No one could say that an image once evoked, by being spoken, was not a reality, though a mental one. The language is a complex of mental images, but both the physical objects, and the words used to evoke them--are, in Eskimo thinking, equally real. The name of an individual is more than a label, it is the means whereby a person's separate

social existence is evoked, it is the symbolization of his personality, it is his very essence, and the spiritual and functional means whereby he is identified and related with the rest of his society and his physical and metaphysical environment.

Again bearing in mind these same metaphysical qualities that unite thought, word, form and reality it is easy to understand why the Inuit believe in a life after death. As Rasmussen's informant Nalungiaq pointed out,

We believe in dreams, and we believe that people can live a life apart from real life, a life they can go through in their sleep....that is why we believe that dead people whom we see so vividly in dreams really are alive.

However, a dead person does not spend his future existence in some heaven, hell, underworld, happy hunting ground or purgatory. For the Inuit, in spite of the harshness of their existence, temporal life is their greatest pleasure and is realised through re-birth. Many of the metaphysical beliefs to be found in Inuit mythology are fast dying out. However, the belief in reincarnation through the name is, so far as I am aware, universally held and still universally practised along with Christian beliefs. Therefore it seems most appropriate to give detailed emphasis to the name and the naming rules of the Inuit and how they support their ethics.

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vid Uppsala Universitet, 1974, p. 23.
19. Weyer, op. cit., p. 284.

20. Williamson, op. cit., p. 23-24.

21. Rasmussen, op. cit., p. 213.

### 3.3 The Name-Soul

As my field work for this thesis was principally done with the Netsilingmiut, I tend to refer to authors who worked with the same group of people. These are notably Rasmussen in the 1920s and Williamson and Balikci in more recent times. However, if the thesis is to be about Inuit Ethics as opposed to merely Netsilingmiut Ethics then it is important to cross-reference data with ethnographic work from other Inuit groups. Fortunately this work was done quite exhaustively by Weyer and so all references to his work lead to a host of supportive data. It would seem unnecessary to continually repeat the sources so well catalogued by Weyer. However, as the concept of the Name-Soul is central to the religious ethics of the Inuit, it would seem worthwhile, by way of an example, to quote Weyer<sup>1</sup> on this subject with his references in full. At least this one time anyway.

Personal names, according to the Eskimo belief, are endowed with intangible attributes such as wisdom, skill, and power, and so in one sense must be regarded as souls. They are not to be confused, however, with the souls that journey at death to a future world, there to enter upon the after life. For name souls are almost entirely of this earth, though, strangely, they are immortal in the sense that they do not perish with death, but are perpetuated through the custom of naming children after persons who have recently died. The implications of this naming custom differ widely among the various groups of Eskimos. In some the practice carries very little suggestion of a transfer of the soul, while in others this idea is so strong that the namesake is treated as though he were actually the dead person, living again on earth. With various shades of meaning, however, the custom of passing personal names on from the dead to the living is practiced generally by all groups of Eskimos.

Weyer's<sup>2</sup> references on this one point are as follows:

Nelson: 1899, 376 f. (Yukon Delta); Nelson: 1899, 219, 289 (Bering Sea and Bering Strait); Weyer: Field Notes (Diomed Islands and Cape Prince of Wales); Nelson: 1899, 433 (Kotzebue Sound); Stefansson: 1914, 161 (Colville Eskimos and Kogmollik Eskimos); Stefansson: 1914, 202 (near Point Barrow); Stefansson: 1914, 158, 384 f. (Mackenzie Delta region); Stefansson: 1913, 395 ff. (Mackenzie Delta region); Jenness: 1922, 167 f. (Copper Eskimos); Birket-Smith: 1929, I, 282 (Caribou Eskimos); Rasmussen: 1929, I, 58 f. (Iglulik Eskimos); Rasmussen: 1927, 130 (Iglulik Eskimos); Mathiassen: 1928, I, 212 (Iglulik

Eskimos); Boas: 1888, 612 (Davis Strait, Baffin Island); Boas: 1907; 130, 132 f., 145 (Cumberland Sound); Bilby: 1928, 144 (Baffin Island, "The children are named after some place or object, and many of the names descend from father to son."); Hawkes: 1916, 112 f. (Labrador); Rasmussen: 1908, 116 (Polar Eskimos); Rasmussen: 1921, 32 (Polar Eskimos); Kroeber: 1899, 309 (Polar Eskimos); Birket-Smith: 1924, 412 f. (West Greenland); Crantz: 1767, I, 161 (West Greenland); Thalbitzer: 1923, 184 (No. 1), 188 (No. 5), 191 (No. 6), and 500 (No. 244) (East Greenland).

Given the wide belief in and importance of the name-soul it is possible to detail the rules governing its use and the associated ethics supported by this metaphysical concept as follows.

### 3.3.1. Descriptive Value

Name-souls are value-neutral with regard to any meaning they may have. To a westerner "Piss-Pöt" seems degrading, whilst "Light of the Moon" is flattering and "The Only Man Around" is sexist. All these names are real and can equally apply to a virtuous or bad man or woman with equal neutrality.

As Kako pointed out "Names do not have meaning: I am not used to giving meaning to names. People don't think of the meaning, they think of the person when the name is used."

### 3.3.2. Sex

The name-soul is often given to a baby when a woman becomes pregnant. Consequently a male may be reincarnated in a male or female body so that the distinction "him" or "her" or "she" or "he" is not made in Inuktitut. Also, as a result of this lack of sexism in naming, a reborn person may be both male and female at the same time. This is the case with my own wife who is named after her father's aunt Kunga. One of her nephews is also named after the same Kunga and so far as sex is concerned this raises no problem or difficulty.

Weyer is able to confirm this fact as being fairly universal<sup>3</sup>.

Generally, there is no differentiation in Eskimo names with regard to sex. In view of this the child can be, and sometimes is, named before it is born.

As before Weyer's cross-referencing is extensive, ranging from the Bering Straits to Baffin Island and Northern Quebec.

Thus, as is the case with the descriptive meaning of the name, the name-

soul is sexually neutral. Of course a person is known to be a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, and they may express their preferences in these matters, but being male or female is of little metaphysical or ethical importance.

### 3.3.3. Death

Aupudluk explained that "when someone died they had to be very quiet and not work too hard so that the dead person could settle down. Before they died some people used to leave special instructions for their relatives, others would leave none. Things returned to normal after four days for a man and five days for a woman, because she menstruates. The body would be dressed in new clothes with the best boots and mitts, etc. The corpse was then covered with rocks separated from the rough covering with flat split rocks. All the cracks were filled so that animals would not come and eat the body. My father told me that people used to wait a year before the dead person could be named. Some people said they would help their relatives after their death so we knew they had spirits. My father, the shaman, knew the spirit was spherical and had a delicate surface and could be held in the hands as he did it."

As noted by Weyer<sup>4</sup> there is considerable reluctance to mention the name of the recently dead. During the one-year waiting period the soul associated with the name is considered to be wandering and is very possibly making efforts to come back into full temporal existence. Consequently it is necessary for a widow or widower to wait a year before considering remarriage. If they fail to observe this rule, they are likely to become *abease*. After death a soul will often visit relatives at which time the manifestation should not be scared or shocked by any fast movement and the soul should be offered a drink of water. As with the seal, the giving of water to quench thirst is a common symbol of greeting, friendship and kindness, and through such acts the deceased may come back into existence. An account of persons living again is given in Appendix 1.

#### 3.3.4. Authority

Rasmussen understood the central importance of the name when he wrote<sup>5</sup>:

There are also those who believe that all who have died have a strong desire to go on living on earth and therefore make their own choice of newborn people in whom they wish to live again. And in gratitude to those who satisfy their desire to live on in a new body they give special power and a special protection....The giving of names is an affair of the greatest importance, for of course it is essential to find out what "dead soul" it is that wants to reside in the body of a new-born person.

Authority in naming as with nearly all things in the Inuit culture rests with the oldest living generation. Consequently when a woman becomes pregnant, she asks her parents, who might in turn ask the grandparents if they are living, what the child should be called. This is of course synonymous with whom should the unborn fetus be. The parent or grandparent may then dream of a certain relative, or someone else, including the mother, may have such dreams, and report them to her parents, who will then decide if this is a wish on the part of the person dreamt of to return to a temporal existence. Having decided the matter, the baby is named and is now that human. However, if there is difficulty with the birth, the name may then be changed as the problem delivery would be interpreted as an error with the original naming process. It would be hoped, in such circumstances, that the gift of giving life to some other soul would be rewarded with a successful conclusion to the pregnancy, a healthy child and healthy mother.

Authority in naming gave power, in a very literal way, over life and death to the oldest generation. Weyer in quoting Boas remarks:

Also on the west coast of Hudson Bay it is believed that the souls of the dead, if they choose, may return and be born again. "An old man who died in 1896 said at his death that he would be borne again by a certain woman. Sometime after this the woman gave birth to a girl, who was believed to be the old man returned. Another man, who died in 1885, said that he would be born again as the child of his own daughter. The latter had a son; and soon another son was born, who was looked upon as the dead one returned.

### 3.3.5. Sickness

One of the most important aspects of illness is pointed to by Weyer when he notes:

Since death is characterized by the absence of the soul, sickness is sometimes interpreted as its temporary departure. Therefore, any tendency for the soul to take leave is regarded anxiously.... In Ponds Inlet and Davis Strait sickness is treated by changing the patient's name.

This form of treatment was provided to my wife Kunga when she was a child, as explained by Aupudluk her mother. "Once when Kunga was only a little girl and my husband Kako was away hunting I became very scared because she was so ill. I went to Inukshuk's house. He said I looked very pale and he suggested that if his dead daughter was alive she would play with Pesukti. Pesukti was my father's spirit helper, he was a pure white wolf born up out of the earth. From that thought about Pisukti the spirit wolf decided to help. We placed some white fur around the swollen neck of my daughter, she was now Pisukti and she became well."

In this way people can acquire additional names through the course of their lives. The new names become that person so that if they are subsequently reincarnated the complete group of names goes to the new baby. Consequently all Inuit have a number of names shared by various distant ancestors who through their gifts of strength in times of need have obtained additional opportunity for life.

### 3.3.6. Reincarnation

The strength of Inuit beliefs in reincarnation is supported by reports that children will sometimes behave like their soul-name relative. Children have been heard to speak in a dialect, make requests or posit knowledge that could only have been known to their common ancestor.

The extent to which reincarnation is a real aspect of the Inuit metaphysical world is illustrated by Weyer in his reference to Stefansson's experiences<sup>8</sup>:

Stefansson's curiosity was roused by the odd custom he noted, chiefly among Eskimos of the Mackenzie region, of one native's calling another 'mother' or 'father', etc., when such a relationship did not actually exist and even sounded ridiculous in view of age relation. Questioning two grown women as to why they called a child of eight 'mother' he received the answer, "Simply because she is our mother." Thus, he was led to discover the true import of the name-soul among these people.

### 3.3.7. Respect

The name-soul as such is very rarely used within an extended family group but rather the pertinent relative term, brother, cousin, aunt, father, etc. If a child is named after a grandfather then that child will be called grandfather by its parents and will further be treated with respect accorded the authoritative status of grandfather.

For example, one of my wife's sisters has a son named after my wife's mother. This boy is called "Little Mother" by both my wife and her sister and he is thoroughly indulged by his mother. "Little Mother" does not have to go to school like the other children because he does not want to, he also does not cut his hair and speaks only Inuktitut. If he wishes to speak to any white children he uses his brothers or sisters as interpreters, just as his mother's real mother would. This behaviour would be considered overly spoilt by Western standards but when child mortality accounted for the greater part of human deaths in the traditional culture the brief happiness of children was seen as one of the few great virtues of a harsh existence. Further, in a more pragmatic vein, if "Little Mother" does grow up to be an accomplished provider, he will presumably return the kindness of his mother by protecting her as a daughter.

A further insight into the rationality of this respect afforded to children is again provided by Weyer<sup>9</sup> quoting Stefansson:

If a child is scolded, it is not only the baby that one scolds, but also the soul of the one whose name it bears;

this will make the 'name' (soul-nappan) angry and it will make the child sick or cause it to die. If habitually scolded, the soul or souls received by name (the child's names) will (one, some or all of them) leave the child and go to a child that is not scolded. This will be to that child's advantage, and will not much hurt the child that loses them. Yet to lose the soul thus seems to be considered a misfortune. But if the souls have no child to which they can flee, they will make the child sick through their discontent at having to stay in a child so badly treated.

### 3.3.8 Integration

As Williamson<sup>10</sup> points out, Inuit who share a name share in a companionate soul such that the name of an individual relates him with the helping spirits of others who share his name. My wife Kunga shares her name with her nephew in Repulse Bay. Consequently, when we had occasion to be visiting that settlement he gave my wife a sealskin and she gave him a new jacket. This was by way of a friendly contest to win favour, through generosity, of the ancestral Kunga. However, the winner is only a temporary winner in this form of potlatch. This theme is picked up and cross-referenced by Weyer<sup>11</sup>:

With somewhat the same idea namesakes among the Iglulik Eskimos, upon meeting, must exchange gifts. This strengthens their souls and pleases all their dead name cousins. This group and the Polar Eskimos are stated to believe that the namesake receives the strength and skill of the person for whom he is named.

The social importance of the soul-name is well understood by Williamson in the following quotation<sup>12</sup> but the full importance of this metaphysical belief for ethics is perhaps even more significant.

Thus it can be shown that no individual Eskimo, even of the present young adult generation, feels himself to be entirely alone or isolated. The naming system itself engenders a very strong sense of integration, not only with the kin group, and the society in which it functions, but with the creatures and the forces of the entire natural environment.

### 3.3.9 Good and Evil

The consequences of living a good life in which one provides for others and given them strength is the reward of living life anew through

reincarnation. The consequences of bad and evil, however, is to be ignored. Sometimes a forgotten soul will take up existence in an animal body of if a bad person makes themselves known to a living relative through dreams that person's name may be given to a dog. This act is not meant as punishment but is done out of compassion, to allow the evil ancestor to live again without endangering the righteous life of a human child. For even life as a dog is better than no life and no life is to be forgotten. Kako once named his lead dog after such a relative and claimed that the dog was very good and obedient out of gratitude for the new life. He therefore treated the dog with unusual kindness, feeding it well when the circumstances allowed.

This point is elaborated on by Aupudluk. "If a person is good they will not get lonely after they die because they can wander on to other camps and visit and be happy. My father has met such spirits. If a person was bad people would make sure the grave was not pointing towards a camp or hunting ground and they would not be buried with any weapons. The mother of one of my great-grandparents was very bad. She stole, lied and cheated so her name was given to a dog first. After she had been a dog it was possible for her to be a human again. Her name was Kutekuark, she was Kako's lead dog but now she is Remie's daughter."

Kako added to this that Kutekuark was Aupudluk's grandmother on her mother's side and it was Aupudluk's mother who gave the name to his dog. As for Remie's daughter, Aupudluk named her. "No-one knew what to name the child and she thought of it right away so that was it."

In recent years, the Government of Canada has dispensed with the numbering or disk system for the Inuit and has imposed the Western practice of using a given name and a family name. This runs contrary to Inuit religious beliefs, but fortunately at the present time the Inuit

are able to joke about the new naming process and use it only for their dealings with Government institutions. This change has been encouraged by the missionaries in an effort to eradicate belief in reincarnation but to my knowledge all of the Inuit Christians I am acquainted with practice the traditional naming system and believe fully in its consequences. Unfortunately the changing of the naming system may weaken the Inuit culture in the long term as it contradicts one of the metaphysical beliefs that support their morality.

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### 3.4 Some Inuit Names

By way of illustrating the previous section on naming rules all the names of my principal informants will now be given with their individual histories so far as they are known.

#### Aupudluk

Aupudluk is my wife's mother; she has seven names in all. These are:

1) Aupudluk. When she was a little girl, about a year old, she would continually ask for tunuk (caribou fat). However, the word came out as 'aupudluk' in her baby language and so her parents gave her that name as a nickname.

No-one had this name before Aupudluk and no-one else, as yet, has been given it.

2) Nuglekumeuya. This is the name of her mother's father's mother, i.e. a great-grandmother on her mother's side. It is not known who gave her the name but she received it when she was sick as a child.

3) Kudteutekuq. This name was also given to her as a child to help her live longer when she was sick. It is not known who this person was but the name was given to her by her father.

4) Kigniq. This name was given to her by a relative whose name was Analuktetak, again when she was sick. Kigniq was Analuktetak's mother and prior to that Kigniq was a dog. Kigniq means black.

5) Kelunek. She was given this name by her grandmother on her father's side when she was sick. Kelunek was the mother of Kudteutekuq (see (3) above) and was described as a little old lady.

6) Paleeaq. This is her first and original name given to her before she was born. Paleeaq was a great shaman from the Baffin region, being a member of the Okokmiutuk (People from the Sheltered Area). It is not known who gave her the name.

7) Keepaniq. This is another name belonging to Paleeq as in (6) above.

Aupudluk's name has been given to one of her granddaughters from her son Nimialik and also to one of her granddaughters from her daughter Ookpikuak. Her name Kudteutekuq was also given to one of the sons of her daughter Inouyk. But this was done by her cousin Pisuk who was Inouyk's husband's oldest brother and at the time Pisuk did not know Kudteutekuq was one of Aupudluk's names. So that child came to be "Little Mother" by way of a coincidence (see 3.3.7.).

### Kako

Kako is my wife's father and he only has two names.

1) Kako. He was given this name by his grandmother on his mother's side. Kako never met the man who previously had the name but apparently he was given the name because the ancestral Kako wished to be a son of Kako's mother.

2) Ookaliak. He was given this name by Komaksutisak's father when he was a baby but he doesn't know why.

There are two other Kakos. One is named after the ancestral Kako and is the daughter of Putulik in Repulse Bay. Putulik is the daughter of Kako's sister. The other Kako is his grandson by his son Nimialik but people generally know him by his other name Ookaliak. Nimialik asked Kako if the child could receive his name when his wife was pregnant. Kako dreamed about it in his sleep and so it was that way. He didn't want to be a girl and so the child was a boy when born.

### Tidlumaluk Ivaksat

These are the two names belonging to my daughter. They were given to her by her grandfather Kako. Tidlumaluk Ivaksat was previously a very old lady who was known to be kind and generous. She was a relative of his mother's and he chose her because no-one else had passed on the name.

### Kunga

Kunga is my wife, Aupudluk and Kako are her mother and father. She has

five names.

1) Kunga. She was given this name by her father Kako. It had previously been the name of her sister, Aupudluk and Kako's daughter who had died when she was six or seven years old. The deceased Kooga had been given the name by an old blind lady named Aknatouook at the Chesterfield Inlet hospital. Kunga had been her dead sister.

2, 3, 4) Tutatsiak, Kalumena and Qaq are three more names that all belonged to the ancestral Kooga sister of Aknatouook. When the deceased daughter of Kako, my wife's dead sister, was born she was not named as her grandfather did not wish to keep her as Aupudluk already had too many girls. However, the child was kept anyway (see Autobiography) but was not given sanctity of life and personhood until she received a name from the unrelated Aknatouook when the baby was already able to crawl.

5) Pesuktee. This name was given to her by her uncle Inukshuk (see 3.3.5) when she was very ill. Pesuktee was Aupudluk's father's spirit helper, a white wolf that came from the earth. Aupudluk's father, the great shaman (see Appendix 1) was named Kenmuksara.

The name Kooga is shared with a middle-aged woman in Baker Lake who was named after the same ancestral Kooga by her adopted father Taparti. He was the nephew of Aknatouook.

Pisuktee is also the name of Kooga's cousin in Repulse Bay (see 3.3.8). He was named after Kako's sister Pesuktee who in turn had received the name from Aupudluk's father, the shaman Kenmuksara.

### 3.5 Summum Bonum

An ethical system is generally considered to be a set of rules fashioned to guide human conduct towards a conceptualization of what is good. Such codes of behaviour must be viewed along with the end to which they are directed. This object, or good, or human good or Summum Bonum of life varies in its form of expression from culture to culture. In order to understand the rationality of Inuit ethics it is essential to know and understand the end to which they are directed. What is the purpose of life for the Inuit? What is their Summum Bonum?

The most important and obvious questions are often the most difficult to answer so that when I first asked Kako what was important about life he came back with the rhetorical answer that man came from mud and returned to mud. He further explained that "No-one knows how long they will live. I can't hunt now." He remarked, "Even priests don't know how long they will live. Doctors don't know either, they only know when they are sick."

However, in dealing with the question of suicide Kako suggested that "Only unthinking people commit suicide as they don't think of the future, only of the present. They don't consider their families and relatives. But those who do not have a family, relatives or friends have no future and therefore they might have a reason to die. The most important thing is a family so you can look forward to them growing up. Having children and grandchildren makes you want to live to see them grow up."

Thus, according to Kako, the purpose to be found in life is family, children and grandchildren. The converse of this proposition is that if these objectives are absent then life's purpose is removed and suicide could be the rational

alternative. However, if one's life were to be an impediment to the wellbeing of the object of life, family and children, then suicide should be perceived as good. This is indeed the case as Weyer<sup>1</sup> points out.

Life sometimes seems harder than death, and so is regarded as a little thing to give. Like the Stoic who argues, metaphorically, that if the chimney smokes one should get out of the house, the Eskimo justifies suicide, especially if age or infirmity renders one useless and a burden....On King William Island, old folks no longer able to provide for themselves generally hang themselves.

But in sacrificing their lives in this way for the object of their lives, their progeny, they are not metaphysically surrendering temporal existence. Grandparents who give themselves to death in an act of benevolence know full well that they will continue to live in their namesakes that are their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The future<sup>2</sup> generation give meaning and purpose to Inuit existence, they are the only object for which an individual would sacrifice his or her life. This priority of the future generation has such dominance in the Inuit culture it not only provides a foundation for their ethics but also for much of their metaphysics. It is articulated by Williamson<sup>3</sup> as follows:

The observer has heard it stated frequently by the more philosophically-inclined Eskimo in Keewatin (and indeed in other parts of the Arctic)-- that the purpose of human existence is for the individual to make the fullest, and richest possible investment of his intellect, his knowledge, and his personality, in his own children. This is, after all, indicative of respect for long-established souls, and if a soul can be further enriched in the process of each earthbound lifetime, the parent has succeeded in perpetuating something of value. In turn, the highly successful, and therefore highly-esteemed parent, is very likely to be himself celebrated and perpetuated when his own children come to the stage in life where they are responsible for the investment of name-souls in the future generation. Very recently a Sauniqtimiut said to the writer rhetorically--

"What use am I, what purpose do I serve, if I cannot bring up my own children? I do not know myself, and I do not know what to do with myself and I have no sense of ongoing significance in my life if I cannot bring up my children." (The statement was aroused by the man's concern about having his children taken away from the family in order to be educated by the government authorities in a residential school.)

References and Notes

1. Weyer, E. M. The Eskimos: Their environment and folkways. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932, p. 248.
2. The use here of the term future generation requires some clarification and justification. Clearly when an elderly Inuk surrenders his life in order to benefit his progeny he is only directly benefiting the progeny that are already born. These would be his children and grandchildren or the next and next plus one generation. However I do believe the Inuit give consideration to and do act in the interests of generations as yet unborn. Firstly, Williamson suggests this in the quotation given. Secondly, the metaphysics of the name soul support this view as reincarnations generally skip generations so that people wishing to live again must think in terms of realising a new life through children born after their death. Thirdly, in contemporary times, land claims negotiations in Central and Eastern Arctic Canada are always carried out by the Inuit with a view to a settlement that will benefit "their children, their children's children and in turn their children". For this reason the Inuit I know are quite unwilling to settle for compensation that will bring fast rewards. What they insist upon are rights that will not perish or diminish with time.
3. Williamson, R. G. Eskimo underground: Socio-cultural change in the Canadian Central Arctic. Uppsala: Institutionen för Allmän och Jämförande Etnografi vid Uppsala Universitet, 1974, p. 50.

#### 4. Inuit Philosophic Ethics

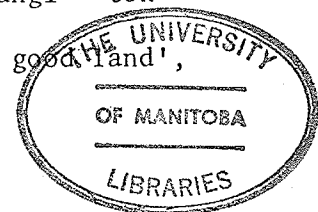
##### 4.1. The Nature of Inuktitut

The institutional distinction between religious, philosophic and scientific knowledge is not made by the Inuit. Therefore, in using such distinctions here an etic frame of reference is being imposed for the convenience of the author and reader. This frame may be nothing more than convention and it may be arbitrary. The previous section was concerned with mythology, metaphysics and ethics and was deemed religious. This section is concerned more with language and ethics and therefore more closely resembles what is understood to be philosophic.

As mentioned previously in section 3.2 on metaphysics, the Inuit language is distinctly different from our own not only in vocabulary and grammar but more fundamentally in the relationship of symbol to form. This point is best expressed by Edmund Carpenter<sup>1</sup> in Eskimo Realities when he wrote:

Eskimo wed themselves to nature, for nature's forms, they believe, lie hidden until man reveals them one by one. This is difficult for us to conceive, for our language emphasizes nouns, things already there, set apart from us, clearly defined and easily seen. The Eskimo language, by contrast, makes little distinction between "nouns" and "verbs"; rather, all words are forms of the verb "to be", which itself is lacking in Eskimo. That is, all words proclaim in themselves their own existence. Language is the principal tool with which the Eskimo make the natural world a human world. They use many "words" for snow which permit fine distinctions, not simply because they are much concerned with snow, but because snow takes its form from the actions in which it participates: sledding, falling, igloo-building. Different kinds of snow are brought into existence by the Eskimo as they experience their environment and speak: words do not label things already there. Words are like the knife of the carver: they free the idea, the thing, from the general formlessness of the outside. As a man speaks, not only is his language in a state of birth, but also the very thing about which he is talking.

The Eskimo language Inuktitut has an agglutinative structure where the root is modified by infixes and suffixes. For example Nuna - tsia - ungi - tok transliterates as Land-good-not-it or translates as 'it is not a good land',



Nunatsiaungitok.

Consequently various forms of quality can either be the subject of a "sentence-word" or a subject can be subsequently modified by a qualifying infix. The root for 'good' is PIU--and the root for 'right' is NAMA. These two roots can be modified in many ways to give various negations and shades of meaning that range from 'good' and 'bad' to 'very good', 'wrong', 'correct' and 'resent' and so forth as tabulated below.

<u>English</u>	<u>Inuktitut and Literal Translation</u>
Bad	PIU - GE - TOK <i>good not<sup>2</sup>-ve one</i>
Good	PIU - Y - UK <i>good one</i>
Very good	PIU - TSIK - TUK <i>good good it</i>
Proud	PIU - SU - GE - UK <i>good from one not-ve one</i>
Dislike	PIU - GU - SUN - GI - TOK <i>good not-ve (from) one not-ve (at) one</i>
Wrong	NAMA - GE - TOK <i>right not-ve one</i>
Right	NAMA - K - TOK <i>right one</i>
Quite right	NAMA - TSIK - TOK <i>right good one</i>
Correct	NAMA - AN - IK <i>right to be</i>
Resent	NAMA - GU - SUN - GI - TOK <i>right not-ve (from) one not-ve (at) one</i>

These few examples serve to illustrate the point made by Williamson<sup>3</sup> that the Eskimo language is capable, because of its agglutinative or holo-phrastic pattern of construction--of an almost infinite number of permutations of meaning-complexes, by the process of proliferation and arrangement of infixes and suffixes....We realize then, that the Eskimo language, far from being (as it is often popularly believed) a simple symbolic system employed by a people pursuing a very simple way of

life--is in fact a remarkably sophisticated language capable of considerable refinement of expression and extensive philosophical reaches.

In The Language of Morals R. M. Hare<sup>4</sup> places considerable emphasis on the understanding of prescriptive language as a means to determining moral language and thence ethics. The principle behind this thesis being per genus ad differentiam. Eventually his study leads to a detailed analysis of abstract concepts like 'right' and 'good'. Such concepts and their derivative forms exist in Inuktitut, but they are not at all central to ethics as it is conceptualized by the Inuit. For them being moral is being human. Ethics as codes of behaviour are derived from human nature. Therefore, in order to understand Inuit Ethics from an analysis of their language it is necessary to begin with the word/root INUK which means 'human' and from there to examine word/sentences that give meaning to INUK with various suffixes and infixes.

References and Notes

1. Carpenter, E. Eskimo realities. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, p. 38, 43.
2. -ve is used here as an abbreviation for negative.
3. Williamson, R. G. Eskimo underground: Socio-cultural change in the Canadian Central Arctic. Uppsala: Institutionen för Allman och Jämförande Etnografi vid Uppsala Universitet, 1974, p. 21.
4. Hare, R. M. The language of morals. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 2-3.

## 4.2 Concepts of Human Good

The Inuit language retains essentially the same grammar and vocabulary from North Alaska through Canada to Greenland.<sup>1</sup> There are, however, strong dialectical differences, these being most distinct in southern Alaska.

The root INUK, meaning 'person' or 'human being', is reported by Birket-Smith<sup>2</sup> to be Inuk in West Greenland, Inuk or Inun in the Thule district of West Greenland, Inun on the Melville peninsula in the Eastern Canadian Arctic, Inuk on the Simpson peninsula in the Central Arctic and Inuk again on the Upper Kazan River in the Western Arctic. Rasmussen<sup>3</sup> likewise attributes Inuk to Greenland, Labrador and North Alaska.

In order to refer to virtues that are considered to be distinctly human it is necessary to modify the root Inu-- . This can be done with various degrees of positive and negative meaning which can be translated and transliterated for the Netsilingmiut as follows:

<u>English</u>	<u>Inuktitut--Literal Translation</u>
Cruel	INU - TAOGE - TOK <i>human not-ve one</i>
Kind	INU - TAOY - OK <i>human is+ve one</i>
Generous	INU - TSIA - UK <i>human nice one</i>
Benevolent	INU - TSIA - VA - LUK <i>human nice very one</i>
Altruist	INU - TSIA - VUMARREAR - LUK <i>human nice extremely one</i>
Real Eskimo	INU - MAR - IK <i>human real is</i>
Toy Eskimo (Doll)	INU - NGU - UK <i>human toy is</i>

In order to bridge the gap of meaning between the translation and transliteration, a more literal translation could be as follows:

<u>Inutaogetok</u>	Not nice, unkind
<u>Inutaoyok</u>	A person is kind, is nice
<u>Inutsiauk</u>	Is very kind to the point of being generous
<u>Inutsiavaluk</u>	Extremely kind, most generous, very nice person
<u>Inutsiavumarrearluk</u>	An exceptional person that always behaves in a perfectly kind and generous manner before any thought of self-interest
<u>Inumarik</u>	A term increasingly used in modern times to denote a person who follows traditional Inuit values
<u>Inunguuk</u>	A toy, doll, carving, model, drawing or photograph of an Eskimo

The sentence/word that most fully expresses the ideal of human virtue amongst these Netsilik words is Inutsiavumarrearluk. The infix and suffix 'tseavumarrearluk' can be added to any root that reasonably could have distinctive inherent qualities such that the infix--'tsia'--brings out the good in the object qualified. In other words -tsia- does not simply mean 'good', it could equally mean 'nice', 'correct' or 'proper'. So it is possible to speak of boots as being kamiktsiavumarrearluk, that is, boots - good - extremely or boots that fit well, are made of good skins and have strong seams, perfect boots. One could speak of a man as angutitsiavumarrearluk, which would mean perfect in qualities associated with men--that is, an excellent hunter who is strong and tireless, able to quickly make an igloo, predict the weather, find game, make tools and train dogs. But it is not possible to speak of an Uncle as -tsiavumarrearluk as uncle does not carry with it a set of particular qualities as a human, man or boot does except those qualities the uncle might hold as a human or man. Equally so in a very practical fashion a Polar Bear could not be -tsiavumarrearluk unless dead because

when alive it has no useful qualities vis-a-vis man. Consequently the only live animal that could be -tsiavumarrearluk is the dog (kenmek) who would be strong, intelligent, obedient and enduring: that is, kenmektsiavumarrearluk. Inutsiavumarrearluk can thus be understood as a perfect human vis-a-vis those qualities discerned as specifically human that have value to his fellow humans in a concrete and beneficial way. It is a good that is thoroughly pragmatic.

Although the word Inutsiavumarrearluk does not appear specifically in other ethnographic and linguistic studies of the Inuit it is most probable that the concept is widespread given the commonality of the root Inuk and the grammar. Webster and Zibell<sup>4</sup>, in their dictionary of the Inupiat of Alaska, include the word INUPIAK, meaning 'real Eskimo', and INUNNIKUSUK, meaning 'gentleman'. Gubser<sup>5</sup> goes further by providing a folk definition for the Alaskan Nunamiut word INUALAUTAK (a good person) as

A good person never becomes angry; he works hard and is never lazy, helping friends and relatives in building a house or making clothes in time of need and giving them food, skins, and firewood; he does not steal; he does not lie; and he refrains from arguing or talking to people in a funny, affected, or 'neurotic' way.

By way of a corollary Gubser also offers a folk definition of a bad person, which begins

A bad person becomes angry with little provocation and is lazy and very sluggish in responding to other people's requests for help; he lies, cheats and steals, argues, acts strangely, and generally makes trouble with vicious gossip and impossible stories.

Apuđluk spoke of her first husband as being Inutsiavumarrearluk. "He was never angry and never gave anyone a hard time. Even when his relatives were unpleasant to him he didn't say anything. He was a very quiet man. Sometimes Kako reminds me of him. Today's people are nothing when compared to the old standard of Inutsiavumarrearluk. Life was different then. For example Samutuk's father died in the sea with a kyak and he saw his mother drown when she fell through thin ice. Nadjuk looked after

him for a while and then he became my adopted brother. Young people can never be really Inutsiavumarrearluk but they should try and learn to forgive right away. They shouldn't talk about other people, give whenever they are asked, and never dislike a person. Today they only forgive well."

For Kako someone who was Inutsiavumarrearluk was necessarily very smart and very intelligent. "When I was a child I had no problems. When I was young I met people who took their time, they were good. The impatient ones were bad. People can only be good if they think right. If a person wanted to be Inutsiavumarrearluk they could keep trying to be nice, kind and generous. That would help them to keep thinking about it and that in turn would help them to become good."

In order to confirm the folk definition of a good human and the necessary relationship of virtue to intelligence these points were put to other people at Chesterfield Inlet who were considered to have authoritative knowledge in such manners.

Kugeak: "Even if you don't know a person very well, it is easy to tell if they are kind, generous, loving and forgiving. It's very easy to tell when you see them. People who are happy, making jokes are also Inutsiavumarrearluk. It is not possible to be such a person without also being very intelligent, thoughtful."

Ipiak: "Someone who is Inutsiavumarrearluk doesn't say much to anybody. They don't bother other people. They never change. Someone who thinks correctly is always nice."

Samutuk: "To me someone who is Inutsiavumarrearluk is someone who never changes his attitude towards people, his personality never changes. Different people have different personalities, but someone who is wise can not be bad."

Egalak: (Samutuk's wife): "Someone who never changes their personality and who is sociable at all times, constant, is Inutsiavumarrearluk."

For the Inuit being wise is a necessary and sufficient condition to being good. Therefore a careful examination of the Inuit concepts of mind, thought, intelligence and wisdom is central to understanding their ethics.

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2. Birket-Smith, K. Five hundred Eskimo words: A comparative vocabulary from Greenland and central Eskimo dialects. Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition, 1921-24. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1928, p. 37. Vol. III, No. 3.
3. Rasmussen, K. Alaskan Eskimo words: Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24. Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1941, p. 17. Vol. III, No. 4.
4. Webster, D. H. & Zibell, W. Inupiat Eskimo Dictionary. P. 2, 30.
5. Gubser, N. J. The Nunamiut Eskimos: Hunters of caribou. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965, p. 218-219.
6. Ibid., p. 219.

#### 4.3 Concepts of Mind and Wisdom

Kako explained the phenomenon of mind as follows: "Mind is part of our spirit and that is why we think from our spirit. Animals also have spirit and mind but humans hunt and kill them. Therefore animals have smaller minds than humans. All mammals must have minds because they hunt each other. Fish also have mind because they swim away very fast when approached. But I do not think bugs have mind. It is not possible to say exactly what qualities such as curiosity, generosity and kindness might be constituents of animal minds. However, some animals who look around for other hunters certainly have bigger minds."

Samutuk confirmed this view with the observation "Animals have brains and minds. I know this because they try to get away from hunters."

Kako elaborated on the nature of mind as it applies to humans with: "Some women can have a better mind than a man and some men can have a better mind than a woman. Therefore there is no difference between the mind of men and women. All mind is the same in nature. Apart from kindness, generosity and foresight a human mind is curious. Humans are also curious with their eyes. People who have strong minds and who are curious are able to know things of other people even when they say nothing. A person has to control their mind through their own efforts. As for me, when I get mad, I control it until it passes. It will go away. A very good person can also be talkative to control their thoughts and keep them healthy. A bad person who gives people a bad time and doesn't bother about anybody gets mad easily. This is because they don't think enough. They may have a lot of mind but they are not using it."

It is clear from this description that mind is of central importance to the Inuit. However, the probable functional reason for this is best expressed

by Williamson<sup>1</sup>:

Traditionally the Keewatin Eskimos have survived for many centuries in an environment as severe and demanding as any in the world.... In such a setting, one might not be surprised to find a people who, more than most other Eskimo, are entirely absorbed with the struggle for sheer survival. It may to some seem paradoxical to discover that great value is attached to intellectual vigour and intelligent meta-physical appreciation of the cosmos. It should be realized, however, that the Eskimo of Keewatin were particularly well-suited to realize their physical dependency upon the whims of nature, and that simple physical exertion for the sake of survival would be insufficient.... A brief etymological glance at the Eskimo vocabulary for "thought" may perhaps illustrate to some extent the specific case in point. *Isu* is the Eskimo word-root meaning "the end", the ultimate: and built onto this root is the word *isuma* which is the word for "thought". From this root there spring many words connoting intelligence, the power of reason, the desire to exert oneself, the process of reflection and philosophizing, and the giving of opinions and advice. Significant is the fact that the word for leader, boss, chieftain, or person of authority, does not have any connotation of physical strength or technical facility. The word for leader is *isumatak*, which means, in essence, quite obviously, "the one who takes thought".

A breakdown of some of the more important terms that are formed from the root *Isuma* can be tabulated as follows:

<u>English</u>	<u>Inuktitut and Literal Translation</u>
Good idea	ISUMA - TSIA - TOK <i>mind correct one</i> he or she is thinking correctly
Excellent idea	ISUMA - TSIA - VA - LUK <i>mind correct very one</i> he or she is thinking very well
Bad idea	ISUMA - TAOGE - TOK <i>mind negative one</i> he or she is thinking wrongly
Very bad idea	ISUMA - TAOGE - TUA - LUK <i>mind negative very one</i> he or she is thinking very badly
Concentration	ISUMA - MAR - IK - TOK <i>mind real is one</i> he or she is really thinking

<u>English</u>	<u>Inuktitut and Literal Translation</u>
Imagine	ISUMA - NGU - UK <i>mind pretend one</i> children's term for 'let us imagine'
Stupid	ISUMA - KA - TSIA - GNE - TOK <i>mind with correct negative one</i> he or she is without a good mind
Senile	ISUMA - EGRUTE - LIK - TOK <i>mind fading now one</i> he or she is losing their mind
Retarded	ISUMA - KA - NGNE - TOK <i>mind with negative one</i> he or she is without mind, undeveloped

These words serve to illustrate how many important concepts are built into the idea of mind. However for the purposes of ethics, wisdom and great intelligence become synonymous with virtue and altruism when the word ISUMAKUTUYOUMARIARLUK is used.

<u>English</u>	<u>Inuktitut and Literal Translation</u>
Wise	ISUMA - KUTU - YOUMARIA - LUK <i>mind with extremely one</i>
Very wise	ISUMA - KUTU - YUK - YOUAMARIA - LUK <i>mind with very extremely one</i>

However, the latter term 'very wise' is not often used in general conversation. The synonymity of wisdom and virtue is further brought out through folk definitions of Isumakutuyoumariarluk as follows:

Hugeak: "It refers to someone who has not said his or her thought for a long long period of time."

Ipiak: "Someone who is kind and generous. Whatever that person thinks is always right and never wrong."

Samutuk: "It has much the same meaning as Inuktsiaviemarearluk. Such a person never changes. They think correctly. Their thoughts are directed towards what is right and strong. I have found that people who get mad easily or who are not strong in their minds can not look directly at people."

Although the word Isumakutuyoumariarluk is not to be found in other ethnographic works very similar terms based on the root Isuma are quite common. Rasmussen<sup>2</sup> provides words for 'concentrate' and 'thoughtless' (isumalerpoq and isumalunerpoq) for the Mackenzie Inuit. Thibert<sup>3</sup> gives sixteen different forms of issuma including a Padlarmiut (Southern Keewatin, close to Churchill) word issumadguyuk, meaning 'great thinker'. Webster and Zibell<sup>4</sup> include six derivatives of isuma in their dictionary for the Inupiat of Alaska, including isumatturuk for 'is wise' and isumalluagiitchuk for 'is foolish, unwise'.

Briggs<sup>5</sup> provides a detailed analysis of the concept of mind (ihuma) amongst the Inuit of the Backs River in the Central Canadian Arctic. These people live adjacent to the Netsilingmiut and the substitution of an 'h' for an 's' in nearly all of their vocabulary is merely dialectical. According to Briggs<sup>6</sup> a person who has (or uses) ihuma is

cheerful but not giddy. He is patient in the face of difficulties and accepts unpleasant but uncontrollable events with calmness; and he does not sulk, scold, get annoyed, or attack others physically.

A person who lacks ihuma,

will be immoderately happy and playful and will laugh too easily. He will be easily upset and frightened, unable to distinguish between real physical danger and imaginary danger; and he will be easily angered or annoyed. He will cry, scold, and hit on slight provocation, but on the other hand, he will also forget his distresses quickly. His perception of his environment and his judgements concerning the future will be confused and unrealistic.

Briggs extends the folk definitions to elaborate on the nature and meaning of an individual having too little or too much mind<sup>8</sup>. Her understanding of an insufficiency of mind corresponds with the opinions of Kako mentioned earlier.

However, she considers ihumataaq to be fairly translated as 'a wise person', which it is not as the word does not contain any infixes that give it a superlative meaning. This term is sometimes used in a derogatory sense to denote someone who is 'too bossy', particularly when young bilingual Inuit are referring to white people. From this experience and also her failure to deal with terms that contain superlative infixes Briggs wrongly concludes that too much mind can be detrimental. What is bad is an inadequate control of mind, which of course would not be a problem for an extremely wise person. Gubser<sup>9</sup> quite rightly points out that "thinking too much" can have a negative effect on a person's happiness. Anxiety and worrying are expressed by the word isumaguluyaktok for the Netsilingmiut and it contains no infixes denoting a superlative quantity of mind but simply a 'worried' mind. It concerns a question of a state of mind and not too much mind as Briggs<sup>10</sup> interprets the case.

The central importance of thought, intelligence and wisdom in the Inuit culture is well summed up by Williamson when he observed,

it will be readily understood that the value system of the Eskimo people ascribes considerable importance to the capacity of the individual for thought....Only by the exercise of intelligence, alertness, and imagination was the simplest form of survival possible. It is a common observation among the Eskimo that the stupid do not survive. The Eskimo have remarkably well-developed powers of observation, and retention of visual memory, so that they are able to quickly discern changes in weather, which can come with great rapidity, the condition of ice, and the signs of wildlife upon which they depend. Nevertheless the Eskimo feel that the ability to observe is meaningless without the ability to analyze and interpret what is observed.

The Inuit ability for empirical observation and interpretation is more scientific than it is folkloric and it is the association of this ability with wisdom and virtue that makes much of Inuit ethics characteristically pragmatic.

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6. Ibid., p. 360.
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10. Briggs, op. cit., p. 364.
11. Williamson, op. cit., p. 28-29.

### Inuit Consequentialism

The pragmatic nature of Inuit ethics is well expressed by Jenness<sup>1</sup> with reference to his ethnographic work in the Central Arctic:

To the Copper Eskimo goodness means social goodness, that and no more. Whatever affects the welfare of the community as a whole is morally good or bad... The foremost virtues therefore are peacefulness and good-nature, courage and energy, patience and endurance, honesty, hospitality, charity towards both the old and the young, loyal co-operation with one's kin and providence in all questions relating to the food supply.

However, this simple pragmatism becomes sophisticated consequentialism in the hands of a wise man who is Isumakutuyoumariarluk.

In addressing the question of what happened to people who were not good Aupudluk explained "The people who weren't nice but not all bad wouldn't help others and would keep food to themselves. Such people would get left behind. But their lives didn't depend on it, they still got help in the end when they really needed it."

In pursuing the same point I asked Kako how mentally retarded people could be happy, kind and loving. He replied, "A person can only use their brain the way it is meant to be used when they have limited intelligence and that is the right way." On the corollary of the same question I asked Kako how some intelligent people could use their abilities for selfish ends such as greed. "A greedy person," he explained, "is not smart because some day a greedy person will end up with nothing and then that person will end up receiving no help."

This at first sounds very much like the Socratic ethical egoist position of "do yourselves concern yourselves with your own true self-interest"<sup>2</sup>. Clearly Kako is suggesting that the greedy man is not acting in his true self-interest, that he is not taking an objective consequentialist approach to the ethical question of hoarding and sharing. But Kako would not consider self-interest and ethical egoism to offer a foundation for a prime directive.

As Kako pointed out to me when I began my studies with him he was helping me because I was supporting his daughter and granddaughter and his assistance and cooperation would further that objective.

In conclusion therefore Inuit consequentialism, which is so often characterized as pragmatism, must be viewed in the context of the Inuit Summum Bonum (3.5). The primary interest of the Inuit is the future generation. They use every part of their physical and intellectual abilities in the advancement of that end. Numerous, healthy children and grandchildren in a physical and social environment that enhance their well-being is what is good for the Inuit. Consequentialist ethics directed towards this good can be conceived as the Inuit prime directive: do what is best for the future generation.

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## 5. Some Questions of Inuit Ethics

### 5.1. Authority

If ethical decisions are to be made by consequential analysis, then it follows that authority in ethical matters should fall to those most able to be objective with regard to such questions. Individually speaking, it may be impossible to determine who most closely resembles an ideal observer. However, within the context of the Inuit hunting camp, the oldest members of the community have the greatest experience from which to make comparisons and draw conclusions. It therefore follows that authority should rest with the elders, and this is indeed the case as Williamson<sup>1</sup> explains:

In a society where experience in the task of survival is won only by a life of hazard, and the exercise of intelligence, ingenuity and wisdom--the guiding and guarding knowledge of people who by their years are thought to be well-endowed with such experience, the older people--are very highly valued and respected.

Aupudluk gives testimony to the nature of authority in her autobiography (Appendix 1, "My Values") when she explains, "My mother and father told me to obey and listen to any person who was older than myself, whether it was a man or woman. And I did. Whenever anyone older told me or taught me, whatever they had in their mind, I would listen to them carefully and if there was ever something to do I would follow their instructions and obey them immediately because in the Inuit way the older people are the head of life."

The strength of this authority is poignantly expressed in the observation of Geert van den Steenhoven<sup>2</sup> in regard to suicide among the elderly Netsilingmiut. (The underlining is his.)

More common, perhaps, was their suicide under conditions of miserable infirmity or sickness. Often unable to commit the suicide all by themselves, they would use their parental authority, ordering their son to attach the seal thongs to the walls or to push down their head in the loop. I know of several cases, where the children hesitated

out of pure and simple human attachment to their father or mother (rather than of fear for the police), but where the repeated and urged commands of the parents made them obey in the end.

However, this authority<sup>3</sup> does not go beyond the extended family as he further explains<sup>4</sup>:

In short, the husband, i.e. the ihumatar of the nuclear family, though he is the autonomous authority within his own restricted jurisdiction of daily affairs, is ideally not sovereign but subject to the higher authority of his father, grandfather, oldest uncle or brother, whatever the case may be. Therefore, Netsilik formal anarchy does not stop at the last possible stage, e.g. the nuclear family, but at the next to last where a small number of nuclear families, closely related along the father's line, co-operates under recognized common leadership. The leadership should indeed be regarded as: "understood" and "recognized" rather than formally expressed...outside the family, formal anarchy prevails among these Eskimos. Again, there may at any given time be found individuals of general or specialized prestige whose influence is felt throughout the entire camp, or even band, but they have neither formal authority nor recognized jurisdiction; their stars rise and fall, and to follow them remains a matter of voluntary choice for everyone else.

This authority, and the accompanying responsibility, is felt in a very real way by the individuals to whom it befalls. In recent years the father of a close friend and in another case the father of a relative died. In both cases they were the oldest sons and they were left without grandparents or uncles alive in their community. On separate occasions when these middle-aged men were visiting me they specifically remarked on how much they had aged and how advanced in years they now considered themselves to be. All their younger brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, now looked to them for guidance and willingly confirmed the observation that this oldest brother or uncle was indeed very much older.

However, the respect that goes with age is not entirely automatic. Steenhoven<sup>5</sup> considers the observations of Jean Gabus amongst the Caribou Eskimos<sup>6</sup> to be equally applicable to the Netsilingmiut.

Generally, the children will do the talking and make the propositions; the old father listens, and as soon as he feels that everything has been said, he gives his own opinion and decides. Thus is the

principle, for in certain camps the old father is not even consulted any more, because his control is not good and his sons far surpass him in energy and intelligence....It was only very rarely that I have met senile old men; and even if the physical effects of their age were clearly felt, I was struck by their valour and their lively spirit. But if the old man gives bad counsel, the repercussions of the latter may be serious, and he will lose his authority.

Thus, although the oldest male member of an extended family may be given authority by some sense of "birth right", he only maintains it and keeps it through wise counsel. This fluid concept of leadership is the extent to which the traditional Inuit authority is institutionalized. Weyer<sup>7</sup> explains that this lack of any kind of chieftainship is for the most part universal among the Inuit from Alaska to Greenland.

Complementary to the Inuit premise that truth is to be found amongst the beliefs and statements of the elderly is the premise that peers share equality in such matters. Just as the aged members of the community are respected for the truths they possess, so too are peers respected for the truths they may possess. Williamson observes on this point that<sup>8</sup>

Equally (vis-a-vis their seniors) respect is accorded by Eskimo people to their peers, their doings and their opinions being rarely challenged, their shortcomings tactfully minimized and their good qualities strongly praised. Verbal self-denigration is habitual and frequent and often genuinely felt. In the intimate society of the Eskimo camp, each individual is allowed as much room for initiative and personal satisfaction as possible. Idiosyncracies, foibles, ugliness and all forms of individual unattractiveness are tolerated to an extreme degree.

In implementing a consequentialist ethic good and right become synonymous with objective truth. Given the respect afforded to experience within the extended family and given the respect afforded to individual freedom beyond it, the Inuit would seem to have created a social environment in which truth in ethical matters would have considerable opportunity to emerge and be heeded. Birket-Smith<sup>9</sup> was clearly much impressed by this situation when he

wrote,

there are no chiefs, nobility, nor slaves. No clan system and no secret society lay bonds upon the initiative of the individual,... They know no government. Here, for once, is a society which is entirely built of that voluntary agreement of which Kropotkin dreamt. Subject to personal liability toward the inherited laws everyone enjoys full individual freedom.

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## 5.2 Distribution of Resources

Inuit ethics with regard to the distribution of resources are built on the already quoted insight of Kako that "A greedy person is not smart because a greedy person will end up with nothing some day and then he will end up with no help." The critical difference between the situation the Inuit found themselves in and the predicament of most other cultures was the certainty with which it could be stated that "a greedy person will end up with nothing some day". This fact necessitated communalism with regard to all resources. Not merely food, land and game but also an individual's willingness to contribute labour, effort and perhaps even patience were included. In this context behaviour that might be disruptive of the group's harmony, such as anger, could be regarded as a negative resource, for anger wastes energy just as carelessness or greed can waste food. This necessity for sharing and cooperation is explained by Williamson in environmental terms as follows:

Among a people particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of climate and game-availability, a high degree of social interdependency was a basic necessity. No hunter could hope to invariably bring home food for the family. Thus within the extended family, and in fact beyond, within the camp group, the practice of sharing is highly valued and firmly institutionalized.

In order to substantiate the thesis that communalism for the Inuit was an environmental necessity it may prove valuable to illustrate how their situation differs fundamentally from that of contemporary Western society. Garret Hardin<sup>2</sup> in The Tragedy of the Commons demonstrates why it is essential for resources to be legally regulated and not held in common. Using game theory he demonstrates the inevitable disastrous effects of ethical egoism illustrated with the case of shared grazing land. In Figure 1 "A" benefits greatly if he grazes one extra cow if all the "others" do not. This is represented numerically as +1 for "A". Due to a deterioration of the common

Figure 1

	"Others" do not graze extra cow	"Others" graze extra cow
"A" grazes extra cow	+1	0
"A" does not graze extra cow	Less than 1	-1

Figure 2

	"Others" share	"Others" do not share
"A" shares his catch	+1	-1
"A" does not share his catch	0	0

grass land no-one would benefit if "A" and the "others" all graze an extra cow. This is a 0 benefit. If no-one including "others" and "A" graze extra cows then "A" benefits slightly but not as much as if he had grazed one more cow. This benefit to "A" is therefore less than 1. Finally, if "A" does not graze an extra cow and everyone else does "A" will be one cow down, i.e. -1. The best solution for everyone would be to graze no extra cows so that "A" and "others" would all obtain a "less than 1" advantage. But, ethical egoism being what it is, the only way to bring about this solution is to have regulations enacted that restrict the growth of grazing herds. If this is not done, it is argued, all "others" will think like "A's" and graze extra cows to everyone's disadvantage.

However, it is not necessary to regulate sharing amongst the Inuit, as they must share or very possibly die. This different situation is illustrated in Figure 2. Here if "A" shares his catch and "others" also share their catch then "A" will benefit due to an enhanced security of food supply (+1). If "A" shares and "others" do not then "A" clearly loses (-1) and no doubt would very soon stop sharing as he became hungry while his associates grew fat. If both "A" and "others" do not share no-one will benefit from the advantage of a secure food supply which represents a 0 benefit to "A". At first, in the very short term, "A" might benefit from not sharing his catch while the "others" did. But the others would find themselves in a disadvantaged -1 situation and would soon cut "A" out of their sharing. At this point "A" would again be in a 0 benefit situation.

This game plan is equally applicable to any resource be it food, hunting rights, or labour, such that if an individual shares he will enjoy the security of the community. If he does not share, the security of the community will be denied him. Weyer<sup>3</sup> sums up these property mores regarding food resources

as follows:

These mores are basic; for they govern the apportioning of the primary essential to life, sustenance. Naturally, they owe their distinctive character to the unusual life-conditions upon which they have developed.

(1) Hunting grounds, or rather the privilege of hunting on them, is a communal right, except in rather rare instances.

(2) The hunter or hunters almost always have the preferential share in the game secured, but part of each catch is generally divided among the community or among those present at the apportioning.

(3) Stored provisions are normally the property of the family or household; but in time of scarcity there is a tendency toward communalism. Hospitality is stressed under all circumstances.

However, Birket-Smith<sup>4</sup> quite rightly adds to this unwritten "Inuit Constitution" the principle that "No-one may be excused from hunting except in the case of bodily infirmity". This properly recognizes labour as a common resource.

In their situation sharing, benevolence, produces the greatest rewards for the Inuit. It brings security of food supply in a hostile environment where there can be no other rational choice. In the Arctic it is not sufficient to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you"; it is essential to survival that an Inuk "does unto others as he needs to have them do unto him". Such people are necessarily Inutsiavumarrearluk, kind and generous, in a very practical and pragmatic way.

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Suicide, Invalidicide and Senilicide

Williamson correctly observes that<sup>1</sup>:

Suicide, or voluntary death, or assisted suicide, whereby an old and sick person is helped to kill himself, (as occurred in Igloodik in the early 1960's)--do not carry the moral stigma which is known in Christian society, because of the religious conviction that death is merely a transcendency whereby the person simply passes out of a temporary vehicle, the body of the time.

This is in keeping with the Inuit metaphysical beliefs in reincarnation, which help to provide a rationale for suicide when it was a required altruistic act. Steenhoven notes from his work amongst the Netsilingmiut that

As regards abandonment, it is known that in times of starvation it may be imperative to leave infirm parents behind, if longer journeys have to be made in search of game. With only a few dogs available, one had to be able either to pull or at least to keep up with a sled by walking. I have no doubt that a hunter who had in this way to abandon his old parent(s) by departing to other hunting grounds with his wife and children, would normally return to the former, if he had succeeded in obtaining game in time and if he had the dogs to return. It is also known that the old and infirm who feel that they have become, under the circumstances, too much of an unproductive burden to their children, sometimes followed a standing tradition by causing their own abandonment, for instance, letting themselves slide from the sled, thus freezing to death.

On the ethics of suicide Kako clearly discriminates between altruistic and egoistic suicide, the latter in his view being quite wrong. "The people who commit suicide are often those who lack intelligence. They don't think of the future, only the present. They don't consider their families and relatives. However, those who do not have a family, relatives or friends have no future. Therefore such people do have a reason to kill themselves. Some old people could be killed because they made a request to be helped with their suicide. Or they would be left behind so that their children could get to a hunting ground."

Weyer<sup>3</sup> substantiates the practice of suicide, invalidicide and senilicide amongst the Inuit from Alaska to Greenland with approximately 25 references. These include anthropologists and explorers namely Stefansson,

Ray, Jenness, Rasmussen, Birket-Smith, Boas, Mathiassen, Bilby, Turner, Hawks, Holm and Nansen. In all the cases quoted the people involved in the act and the authors reporting the event perceive the suicide or assisted suicide as justifiable and unselfish. However, in more recent times, the influence of the R.C.M.P. and missionaries sometimes confused what for the Inuit was a simple and straightforward problem as Aupudluk illustrates from her experience. "The old lady couldn't kill herself because she didn't have sufficient strength. She was very small and didn't weigh much. When her husband died her relatives treated her badly, she used to eat her own feces and drink her own urine. She asked to be left behind many times but her relatives wouldn't just let the old woman die. They were scared of the R.C.M.P. and there was no hospital then." Of course this situation doesn't occur now since the introduction of pensions, welfare and health care. But if this problem was at one time confused for the Inuit it did at the same time create ethical difficulties for the representatives of the Church. A Catholic priest who had strong views about the wrongness of suicide once explained to me that he knew of five suicides which he found difficult to deal with as they involved old people killing themselves in order to provide more food for their children.

Balikci<sup>4</sup> in The Netsilik Eskimo: Adoptive Processes, is of the opinion that such suicides are beneficial and enhance future survival:

Furthermore, suicide in crisis situations, invalidicide and senilicide were additional responses to harsh pressures (Balikci, 1960). We may consider these forms of demographic controls as adaptive, in the sense that unproductive members of the family were eliminated, the size of the family adjusted to the capacity of the provider, and the survival chances of future hunters were maximized.

However, in his earlier work, Suicide Behaviour Among the Netsilik Eskimos<sup>5</sup>, he concludes that Netsilik suicide belongs to the egoistic type. I do not agree with this thesis, but rather share the views of Kako, Williamson, Weyer and the authors he refers to. It is therefore necessary to briefly look at some

of Balikci's arguments and criticize them.

Firstly, on a methodological point, Balikci was assisted by Rev. Frans Van de Velde<sup>6</sup> who "help(ed) in securing some of the data". Priests, in my experience, generally have a deep and sophisticated understanding of native religions. However, although they openly discuss such subjects with their native parishioners they really discuss it outside their Church. For this reason I believe A. R. Gualtieri<sup>7</sup> came to the wrong conclusion that missionaries held the "perception that prior to their arrival there had been little or no religion among the Dene and Inuit" when he interviewed priests on this subject, because his informants simply were not candid with him.

It is most probably due to this methodological difficulty that Balikci fails to identify the belief in the name/soul and its importance as the religious foundation for the integration of Netsilingmiut society. Thus Balikci wrongly comes to the conclusion that

Following the arrival of a Catholic missionary in 1936, these Eskimos collectively converted to Christianity....In the field of religious beliefs and practices the consequences of this conversion were far-reaching. In 1959<sup>8</sup> the younger generation was largely ignorant of the ancient beliefs.

The overwhelmed individual seems *no longer related* to his wider social milieu, to his people. It is precisely this *lack of wider relatedness* that we have to understand.<sup>9</sup>

To sum up, except for certain group elaborations resulting from technological and ecological necessities, Netsilik society presents a very loose form of social integration. The absence of formal government, priestly organization, territorial administration, formalized means of social control, and unilinear kinship groupings point essentially to a family level of social integration.<sup>10</sup>

Admitting Durkheim's generalization that suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of religious, domestic and political societies, we can consider Netsilik suicide as belonging to the egoistic type of suicide.<sup>11</sup>

Another major difficulty with his thesis is in relying on etic interpretations of suicide causes in a cross-cultural situation<sup>12</sup>.

In our search for meaningful criteria for classifying the suicide cases we followed Durkheim's approach and paid little attention to the multiplicity of immediate causes of suicide as outlined by our informants.

Certainly Kako would consider the 6<sup>13</sup> cases of suicide due to marital dissatisfaction as egoistic. But not the 4 cases of senilicide or the 16 cases of invalidicide, or most of the 20 cases of suicide where a near relative died. To understand this very different interpretation it is necessary to take into account the high priority given by the Inuit to the future generation. There is little or no dispute by Balikci over the interpretation of the 4 cases of senilicide, but in the case of invalidicide even the most valued members of the community, the productive hunters, are an intolerable burden to their families when incapacitated.

At first a hunter who was taken ill would be given food for himself and his family by those with whom he shared his catch when he was healthy. But this one-way giving could not continue forever, such that when his friends started to "cut him off" then it would be in the best interests of his wife and children for him to die. Once dead his children would be adopted and would probably stay with their mother if she found a new husband or was taken on as a second wife. Probably such arrangements would be made to everyone's mutual satisfaction before the incapacitated hunter killed himself.

In the case of the death of a near relative, which Balikci notes to be usually a descendant, similar logic applies. Normally the head of a large family would not be driven to suicide by the loss of a son. But if a parent lost their only son and particularly if they were an only parent then, as Kako suggests, "they would have no future". In Netsilik society wives go to the households of their husbands, in return for which the first-born son goes to the wife's parents. If the husband died the wife and her children would go

back to the wife's parents or to a new marriage. But the parents of the husband, if he were an only son, would have nowhere to go. Each family needs as many hunters as possible but they only require one matriarch and patriarch. These elderly people would therefore be redundant in a brother's or sister's household. They might not be overly advanced in years but if they were past the age of being able to produce or adopt and raise more sons, then their practical value would terminate. In such a situation they would only be a drain on the food supply of whomever they lived with, at which point their deaths would contribute more to the future generation than their lives.

Given the above economic interpretation of suicide and the integrative power of the name/soul concept the Durkheimian classification of "altruistic type" would seem more appropriate than the "egoistic type" with regard to the Netsilingmiut and probably most Inuit. This is in keeping with the Durkheimian<sup>13</sup> thesis and is a rejection of Balikci's rejection of that thesis<sup>14</sup>.

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#### 5.4 Female Infanticide

The Arctic environment is so actively hostile to life the Inuit find they must not only adapt their technology for hunting, clothing and shelter to the needs of survival but they must also tailor their social relationships and beliefs to the same needs. In the traditional culture the most unfortunate of these adaptations was perhaps the necessity of killing approximately 50% of all baby girls.

This fact has been documented by a number of anthropologists and the figures in Figure 1, collected by Weyer<sup>1</sup>, show the phenomenon to be a common feature across Arctic North America. However, the figures in Figure 2 show how the situation of more boys than girls is turned around in the adult population to give more women than men. This is due to female infanticides in the first place and a subsequent high mortality rate amongst young male hunters inexperienced in the techniques of Arctic survival. Weyer<sup>2</sup> tells us that

The death rate among young men is especially high; within the period dealt with by Bertelsen, proportionally four and a half times as many men of the age group thirty to thirty-five died as did within the same age-group in Denmark. This enormous rate of mortality among younger men is due primarily to the dangers of their hunting activities. Drowning in kayaks is the fate of many. In South Greenland in 1889 the death rate among males from this cause alone was 9.3 per thousand male population, or almost as high as the death rate from all causes in the United States in recent years.

In contemporary times the bringing of the Inuit community at large under the wing of a welfare state has removed the need for female infanticide. In spite of this there is still a higher mortality rate amongst young men drowning and freezing than young women. During my field work in the Arctic this past summer I was requested to recover the body of a nine-year-old boy who was my wife's nephew. If I reflect on this matter I cannot remember a summer or winter

when some young man has not died from a hunting accident in the community where I was living during the ten years I spent in the Arctic. This situation brings about an imbalance in the contemporary population, although it is relieved in part by the fact that relatively few Inuit men marry non-Inuit women while a comparatively large number of Inuit women marry non-Inuit men.

The Inuit metaphysics of reincarnation produce a situation in which the qualities of personhood are synonymous with the name. Consequently in traditional times the fetus was generally named after birth so that humans did not receive the sanctity of personhood until their sex was known. Names, and with it sanctity and personhood, were normally given by the oldest and most senior relatives. When a child was born, therefore, the grandparents generally had the authority of life and death over the baby. Providing no extraordinary circumstances such as acute starvation prevailed the infant would be promptly named if it was a boy. However, it would only receive a name if it was a girl under the most favourable conditions, such as plenty of food, a promise of future marriage, or a general surfeit of boys in that particular family group. In more recent times, now that female infanticide is no longer a required practice, naming is done during pregnancy so that sanctity and personhood is given to the fetus before the sex is known.

In spite of the appearance of a certain stoic cruelty in these matters it should be understood that the event of female infanticide was never passed without considerable emotional difficulty. Such deaths were perceived as necessary, "they could not be helped", but the accompanying distress, particularly for the mother, was not perceived as in any sense good. My mother-in-law had thirteen children of which five are living. The grandparents would not give her first daughter by her third and present husband a name. The parents wanted to keep

the child but would not go openly against the wishes of the older relatives and therefore could not give the baby a name themselves. Consequently the infant existed without sanctity and personhood for several months, until an unrelated elderly friend took pity on my mother-in-law and gave the infant a name. Unfortunately, that girl died when she was six but because she was loved so much her name was given to my wife when she was born.

Kako explains, "Infanticide was mostly for the baby girls when there were too many girls and not enough boys. Those infants didn't have names. Sometimes they were named before birth but naming during delivery was most popular. Nowadays the names are often given during pregnancy."

Balikci, in his paper Female Infanticide on the Arctic Coast, reaches essentially the same conclusions as myself, i.e., the practice is an adaptation to the harsh environment. However, he also concludes that it is to some degree chauvinistic and arbitrary<sup>3</sup>:

*Female* infanticide is thus in harmony with the image of the ideal Netsilik personality. Female infanticide works flexibly. It is not governed by a rigid social rule; decisions to kill seem to be made on an ad hoc basis within the family.

This opinion would not be supported by the Inuit; it is an etic perspective. It is also not compatible with Inuit metaphysics and consequentialism. Inuit proper names and pronouns are devoid of sex gender and while decisions may be taken quickly they are, by the authority of age, founded on the greatest experience. The "ideal Netsilik personality" has nothing to do with being a man or woman, but is concerned rather with being human, Inutsiavamariarluk.<sup>4</sup> Balikci is not entirely alone in his views about the unsophisticated nature of female infanticide; Weyer writes<sup>5</sup>:

Possibly it should not be called a policy, inasmuch as there is very little deliberate and purposeful group direction of group destiny. If there is shown any approach toward a philosophy it is merely a blunt pragmatism.

This opinion is shared by many anthropologists<sup>5</sup> with perhaps the notable exception of Williamson. I do not consider there to be anything "blunt" about Kako's understanding of the true best interests of the greedy man. Such pragmatism is consequentialism when handled by the wise man who is Isumakutumavearluk.

Figure 1

## Population Statistics

Proportion according to sex

Children

<u>Location or Tribe</u>	<u>No. of Girls</u>	<u>No. of Boys</u>	<u>Girls per 100 Boys</u>
Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska	46	50	92
Cape Smyth, Alaska	14	27	52
Bernard Harbour (Dolphin and Union Strait)	18	21	86
Netsilik Eskimos (1902)	66	138	48
Sinamiut (Boothia Peninsula) (1902)	7	12	58
Sauniktumiut (south and west of Chesterfield Inlet) (1902)	33	41	80
Qaernermiut (Barren Grounds)	11	24	46
Coast Padlimiut (Barren Grounds)	26	31	84
Interior Padlimiut (Barren Grounds)	20	28	71
Hauneqtormiut (Barren Grounds)	10	13	77
Harvaqtormiut (Barren Grounds)	15	23	65
Kinipetu (Qaernermiut) (Barren Grounds)	27	38	71
Aivilik Eskimos (northwest coast of Huson Bay)	15	27	56
North Greenland exclusive of Thule (1921)	773	803	96*
South Greenland	1106	1058	104*
East Greenland	117	118	99*
East Greenland	128	99	129

\*Age group 0-9 years

Figure 2  
 Population Statistics  
 Proportion according to sex

<u>Location or Tribe</u>	<u>No. of Females</u>	<u>No. of Males</u>	<u>Females per 100 Males</u>
Cape Prince of Wales, Alaska	29	30	97
Cape Smyth, Alaska	52	45	116
Bernard Harbour (Dolphin and Union Strait)	42	46	91
Cape Bexley (Dolphin and Union Strait)	10	19	53
Netsilik Eskimos (Boothia Isthmus) (1902)	123	119	103
Sinamiut (Boothia Isthmus) (1902)	13	13	100
Sauniktumiut (south and west of Chesterfield Inlet) (1902)	58	46	126
Qaernermiut (Barren Grounds)	30	25	120
Coast Padlimiut (Barren Grounds)	28	22	127
Interior Padlimiut (Barren Grounds)	31	25	124
Hauneqtormiut (Barren Grounds)	18	13	129
Harvaqtormiut (Barren Grounds)	21	17	123
Kinipetu (Qaernermiut) (Chesterfield Inlet)	46	35	131
Aivilik Eskimos (northwest coast of Hudson Bay)	34	26	131
Iglulik Eskimos (north of Hudson Bay)	161	146	110
Baffin Island	119	111	107
North Greenland exclusive of Thule (1921)	2321	2018	115*
South Greenland (1921)	2801	2421	116*
East Greenland (1921)	234	211	111*
East Greenland (1921)	175	146	120

\*10 years and over

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1. Weyer, E. M. The Eskimos: Their environment and folkways. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932, p. 134-135.
2. Ibid., p. 127-128.
3. Balikci, A. Female infanticide on the Arctic coast. Man, 1967, 2, 615-625.
4. Weyer, op. cit., p. 131-132.
5. Milton Freeman in A Social and Ecologic Analysis of Systematic Female Infanticide Among the Netsilik Eskimos, American Anthropologist, Vol. 73, 1971, p. 1017, reviews much of the work done in this area and comes to the conclusion that infanticide is to be explained by an understanding of sex roles within the culture. However like the anthropologistshe builds his arguments on, he fails to take into account a cognitive understanding of Inuit consequentialism and concepts of being human.

## 6. Conclusion

A practice in a culture other than our own may appear strange to us while that same practice is considered the norm to the people who uphold it. Conversely a similar practice in our own culture will appear equally unusual to the members of the culture under examination. The problem for the anthropologist is to overcome such divergent perspectives by understanding the underlying principles that create and shape cultural phenomena. In this thesis the phenomenon under examination is Inuit ethics. Thus it follows that if an explanation can be offered that rationalizes cultural divergencies as they appear here then that explanation will be making a statement about the underlying principles of ethics. Such principles are not merely the concern of the anthropologist but also the ethicist and moral philosopher. As stated in the Introduction it is beyond the scope of this thesis to describe or defend a particular ethical theory, although it is hoped that the conclusions made here might lend support to the position held by Campbell<sup>1</sup>.

Confronted with the kinds of divergent ethics described here, many anthropologists and philosophers have opted for some form of ethical relativism. In her critique of Turnbull's Mountain People Christine Battersby<sup>2</sup> concludes,

Turnbull is able to discover non-moral society only because he starts out with a fairly rigid conception of what a moral society should be like. Hence Turnbull's 'lesson for humanity' is only a genuine lesson if we accept that Turnbull's criteria for morality are the correct criteria....There seems to be a problem not simply with the definition of the term 'morality'; there also seems to be a problem with examples of 'morality'. Bearing this in mind, it would seem to be over-optimistic of philosophers to expect to provide a generally accepted list of necessary and sufficient conditions which have to be satisfied in order to class a rule, an action, or a society as 'moral'. It would seem useful to spell out some of the more commonly

accepted paradigms of morality-- particularly those used by anthropologists in 'reporting' on other cultures. But to hope to adjudicate between these conflicting paradigms, and say that one is correct and another incorrect, would seem a hopeless task.

Surrendering to the "hopeless task" would seem to be accepting the impossibility of any moral absolutes. However, if as I suggested the task of the anthropologist is to look for underlying principles that create and shape cultural phenomena, relativism could be avoided.

One common denominator in many of these discussions is the question of inviolability and where lines of inviolability are drawn between creation, life, human life, moral agents, and their dependent group. The necessities of a group's best interests have often been the deciding factor in how those lines are drawn and ideologies have sometimes been subservient to those needs. In the Inuit culture the fetus or near born is inviolability when it is given a name. This name was metaphysically considered to be a person's spirit so that the passing on of the name provided the means for reincarnation. When female infanticide was practised naming was done at birth so that a baby need not be given inviolability through a reincarnation if the child was to be allowed to perish. However, in recent times, naming is done during pregnancy so that the inviolability of the Inuit fetus has moved backwards from time of birth to middle of pregnancy. This change in metaphysics is coincidental with the current abandonment of systematic female infanticide.

Ethnocentricity, relativism and the problems of ethical and moral absolutes, are all parts of a debate that is at least as old as Sophism. If Inuit ethics can offer anything towards the resolution of this question such an insight will most likely come from what is particularly unique to the Inuit situation, namely, the ever-present necessities of survival. In the debate over reducing ethics to sociobiology it is perhaps instructive

to observe that the biological wishes of the mother in cases of female infanticide are overridden by culturally made decisions. Further, these decisions are not based on rules or ritual but are empirical and therefore flexible to the needs of the particular situation. The Inuit have lived, developed a culture and produced an ethics under the daily threat of mass starvation and possible extinction. Such a prospect is now considered a part of the contemporary ethos since man has acquired the ability to bring about his own destruction. This situation has stimulated a proliferation of literature that purports to offer social and ethical prescriptions that can best thwart the impending demise of the human race. Perhaps not untypical of such views are those expressed here by Quine: <sup>3</sup>

One thinks also of unborn generations. Insofar as our moral standards were shaped by evolution for fostering the survival of the race, a concern for the unborn was assured. One then proceeds, as one will, to systematize and minimize one's ethical axioms by reducing some casually to others. This effort at system-building leads to the formulation and scrutiny of principles, and one is then taken aback by the seeming absurdity of respecting the interests of nonexistent people: of unactualized possibilities. This counter-revolutionary bit of moral rationalization is welcome as it touches population control, since the blind drive to mass procreation is now so counter-productive. But the gratification is short-lived, for the same rationalization would seem to condone a despoiling of the environment for the exclusive convenience of people now living.

It need not. A formulation is ready to hand which sustains the moral values that favour limiting the population while still safeguarding the environment. Namely, it is a matter of respecting the future interests of people now unborn, but only of future actual people. We recognize no present unactualized possibilities.

The Inuit have maintained a culture for thousands of years on the principle of the priority of the future generation. The idea is not new of just "ready to hand". We can take comfort in the knowledge that it is a well-tested prime directive, successful under the most adverse conditions.

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3. Quine, W. V. On the nature of moral values. In A. I. Goldman & J. Kim (Eds.), Values and morals, Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing, p. 45.

APPENDIX I

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AUPUDLUK

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
My Values	91
First Deaths	94
Two Beautiful Girls	97
The Tragedy of Death	99
Treats	103
How My Father Became a Shaman	105
My Father the Great Shaman	110
Hunting Beliefs	116
Summer Camps	118
Living in an Igloo	120
Travelling With Dogs	124
A Woman's Skill	128
Other Tribes	134
The Land	137
Father's Anger	140
Stepmother's Lies	145
The Thunder Man	147
Nuanak the Murderer	149
The Ship and Alcohol	151
Drum Dance	152
Gifts and Trade	154
The Curse of Anger	155
Marriage	156
The Danger of Anger	160
Cruel Mother-in-Law	162
Death of My First Husband	167

	<u>Page</u>
The Doctor	172
Brother's Death	175
Giving Birth	176
Inuit Games	177
Haunted Houses	178
Parents and Grandparents	180
Kunga, Pisukti, Natchuk	181
My Children	184
Ietatuk	186
The Great Sickness	187
Hospital	190
Out on the Land	191

## My Values

My values have not changed. My values when I was with my mother and father, even now, right now, have not changed at all. I remember my mother and father, when I was young they told me what was right and what was wrong. For example, they told me what I should do and what I should not do when I had my first baby. And the orders that they gave, I always used to follow them, no matter what. Even if I did not want to, I had to follow what my father and my mother told me in those days.

My first husband's mother-in-law never used to allow me to do the things I wanted to do because I had a baby and I had to obey her because I was scared. But when my first husband died and I moved back with my mother and father things seemed to be so different because I was more free to do the things I wanted within the family circle.

My mother and father told me to obey and listen to any person who was older than myself whether it was a man or woman. And I did. Whenever anyone older told me or taught me, whatever they had in their mind, I would listen to them carefully and if there was ever something to do I would follow their instructions and obey them immediately because in the Inuit way the older people are the head of life.

There were a few times when I did not want to listen to people. Even when they were older than I was. This only happened a few times and when they had finished telling me what to do, I would not say anything. I would not even look at them. This was the strongest protest I would make.

I remember when I saw other young people dressed nicely I would want to be like them. And when they seemed to be very good at sewing, I would

dream of being a good sewer. When they were good mothers, I wished to be a good mother. When they were kind and happy with other people, I would dream and dream to be like them. When I think of those things when I was very young and compare them to what I now think, it is hard for me to come to terms with life.

Eskimo people have now changed their lives from what it was in the days of my mother and grandparents and great grandparents. So when I see other people having a nice house and a healthy life, and nice clothes and having everything they want and buying everything they want I want to be like them for a while. But there's one thing that I know that has changed in my life. If I buy anything that I really want, I would have no use for it because I know my life will not be long now. Because I know I only have a few years left. Sometimes I am very sad because I worry. Then the days are dark. But I'm not always worried or sad. There is happiness, still happiness in my life, however, it is so little compared to the sadness and the worries I have deep inside me.

I will always try to help other people when I know they need help. Now, tomorrow, whenever. Even when I die. Because in the days of my mother and father they used to believe, and it was true, that even a person who dies is still alive and you could get help from a dead person if you needed it. This is how I think. When I'm dead I will try and help those who want my help. The people here in this land, maybe even those who are in distant lands. I will try my best to help other people even when I die.

I remember when I was young I used to like listening to my mother and father and to the other older people who were their age. But sometimes they would say,

"You are only a child, go outside and play. You have no right to listen

to us adults." And I would be sad because I wanted to listen to them so much but they would not allow it and I had to go out.

## First Deaths

And I recall in those days when I was young, very young. The people that I used to see, the faces and names that are now only memories. Near Inuksivik, at a place where we were camping that year. They used to have games, all sorts of games and everyone used to be very happy. There seemed to be no sadness in my young days when people were laughing and playing Eskimo games. I remember, one day, when I was only a little girl, it was a beautiful summer day we were eating outside and everyone was enjoying each other's company and everyone was laughing, making jokes; they made jokes of the hard times.

But there was also sadness. Sad times when my mother and father and their relatives and their friends would be depressed because they were hungry, because there were not many caribou or seal around. They would be sad because someone's relative died, someone's mother died or father died, or someone's baby died. When one person was sad the others would join in. Those are the days that I recall.

The saddest time that I remember when I was a little girl was when an old lady, Usuhatok's wife, died. My mother and father told me to stay inside the igloo that day. But I was curious and went to the porch to see what was going on. My father and mother went to the igloo next door and when they came out they were carrying a dead person. After that my mother and father and all the people who were helping to bring the dead lady out, cried. And I wondered why they cried because in those days I didn't know that people died. I thought they just slept and would wake up again. How silly it was to think that they just went to sleep.

I was very scared. I did not know why they were crying. Not long after that someone else died too. It was a relation of the dead woman and I asked my mother and father and other people.

"How do people die? Where do they go?" And I would make them cry because I was too young to understand.

Now I know what death does to people and where it takes them. When I think about it now, I feel sorry for my mother and father and the people that I used to question because I wanted to know if they would come back. I should not have said that. I used to get scared very easily and believe what people said. Whatever they told me, I would believe it. If they told me something sad I would get sad. If they told me something that made people happy I would be happy. I would believe everything.

Like any children, I would play with other children, I would cry and I would make other little boys and girls cry. I had a mother and father and they brought me up. We were living near Chesterfield Inlet when I started to remember things well. It was a large camp with many families and I used to play with many children. Sometimes I got scolded when I was bad but mothers were happy with me when I was good. In those days, I was very young and I saw the old way of life that has now gone.

One little girl was my best friend. We had so much fun when we were playing together. Sometimes she would not play the way I wanted so I would make her cry and she would go home and tell her mother. But she was the one girl I used to play with a lot, we had so much in common we would play all day until we were tired out. I will never forget that little girl.

It was in the spring when Usukatok's wife's daughter-in-law became sick and died. Before she was ill she had told her friend,

"Today I was looking at the moon and I saw my two best friends there. I think I will follow them soon."

And she told her relatives,

"Look, look at my best friends on the moon. I know I will be with them soon."

On hearing this her sister-in-law said,

"Sister-in-law don't talk that way. Death can do anything. It might happen to you."

But her sister-in-law was happy because she was in love with the dying woman's husband and she knew that her husband would be hers when she was dead. The two ladies that she saw on the moon were Ikuak and Hakuluk who were cousins.

## Two Beautiful Girls

There was once a young girl with long, long hair. Her name was Miscearak and her hair used to trail on the ground because it was so long. I have not seen her myself, I have only heard the story from her brother Akiutak.

One day Akiutak came to visit my mother and father. They were telling stories and after a while as they talked on, Akiutak said, "I have seen one lady with long hair but nowadays, compared to her, there are no ladies with really long hair. There's only one woman that I know of and have seen and been with that had really long hair and that person was my sister. I remember her beautiful long hair. My sister's hair, when she combed it and stood up, it would touch the ground. I know there will never be another lady with long hair like that." He never did see anyone else with long hair so long as he lived.

But I remember another young girl, who was my cousin. Her name was Penelua and she had beautiful long hair.

Kathlak adopted her. Her real mother's name was Utchukyuk. And her father's name was Talleriktok. She had two brothers and their names were Ukoktok and Esakiyak. Esakiyak who is dead now.

When her father died the young girl began to lose her mind. Very slowly at first, she started to lose her memory. Although her memory was going she was still healthy. I heard that she remained alive and well for a long time but we used to travel from place to place and they went away that fall. They were travelling by night during freeze up and were working very hard. They got hot and were sweating, so they stopped to cool down for a while. Then the girl who was losing her memory took her cup and went to

the lake that was just beginning to freeze over. The ice was very thin.

She walked straight onto the lake and out into the middle. But her mother didn't see her until it was too late. She was standing in the middle of the lake and her father yelled at her to come back. She looked at him and she got excited. She didn't know what to do. She just looked shocked, surprised, and she was smiling. Everyone told her, "You are going to go through the ice. Try and come back here."

The mother said, "No, stay there. Stay still."

The people were telling her different things, so she got confused and didn't know what to do. She tried to come back and she never made it because the ice broke and she fell into the water and froze. The girl couldn't swim and no-one in her family could swim either. That young girl with beautiful long hair who had lost her memory died that very day.

## The Tragedy of Death

During the springtime we were living with my friend Tounout, near Repulse Bay. We were camped near the shore where my father and his friend were harpooning whales. While they were hunting I noticed that they were scanning the horizon out to sea. I didn't know they were expecting friends. My step-brother and I were playing. There was no wind at all. It was a beautiful day and someone shouted,

"There are some boats coming. Some boats are coming."

The children were yelling,

"The boats are coming, the boats are coming."

And everyone looked.

There were some families out on the land hunting for caribou. They had slept overnight and two men had just walked in carrying some caribou to our camp. We children were playing when suddenly the adults told us to be very quiet. And then we heard some distant cries and I realized they were the cries of desperate people wanting help. One of the women in the boat kept yelling as soon as she saw our tents but I couldn't see the boats yet. The boat had a sail but because there was no wind it was very slow in coming to the land. There had been a terrible accident among the shifting ice floes and some people had been killed. There had been two boats but one of the boats was crushed. When the lead closed up they thought they would get through, but with no wind the boat was too slow and that's when the boat was crushed. There was one large flat piece of ice that was big enough for the family to get out on. They saw the pack closing. The land was close, if only they had stayed there.

The people in the other boat saw it all happen. They had also stopped, to make some tea, but on the other side of the large flat ice floe. If they had only noticed the ice bearing down on them they would have fled and been safe.

When my aunt, Telegra was yelling, everyone in our camp was silent. She was shouting,

"We have been crushed, we have had a terrible accident. The people with us have been killed by the ice."

She repeated again and again, screaming.

I had a brother who died, he was only a baby at the time, still on my mother's back. He was very ill when the people got to the shore in the other boat. They were all crying. Every one of them.

My step-brother almost lost his leg, today he uses crutches. He was with his hunting partner in the other canoe and was trying to help.

My aunt Hakaluk was holding her adopted child inside the canoe. She got very confused. Her brother on the ice told her,

"Jump out of the boat. Throw your baby here, on the ice, and jump, get out of the boat." Her brother and his brother's young friend were waiting for her to throw the baby to them with their arms stretched out towards her because they knew that they could catch the baby and they knew that his sister could just make it to safety. But he did not notice the ice closing in so fast. It was too late. The ice crushed the boat and the mother and baby inside it. They were both killed and his leg got caught as well. They tried to look for his sister without success. They almost saved the little baby, but he did not live as his bones were all crushed. He was very small.

When my aunt adopted the baby she had said to her friends,

"When something happens to this child that I adopt, I will give up my life for him."

So when she knew it was hopeless to save her baby she just sat there in the boat waiting for life to end.

One of my friends, Ikuak, saw her parka floating on the water. There were some beads on it. I remember the beads on her parka and I asked where they came from. My parents told me that there were some white people, maybe Americans, that used to trade for fur with their goods. The beads came from those Americans.

Two more children that they had not saved, a brother and sister, were not seen for a long time after the accident, when it was almost forgotten. One day someone in camp saw an ice floe far away and on that little piece of ice there were two people standing. That floe was only big enough for those two to stand up on and they were slowly being driven out to sea by the wind. The men went out after them in their boats and when they got close they could see the children were very still and all they noticed were their eyes. Their eyes were red, as red as blood. The people thought that they had died and came back to life again. Their eyes will never be forgotten. They were so very red. There was no white in their eyes, nothing but red like blood. They all knew they had died but somehow they had come back. The sister was older than the brother who was my age. They did not cry. They only looked at the people on the land. The people thought they couldn't see because their eyes were so red. They thought they had gone blind. Everyone knew that those two children had really died but had come back to life. Their mother who was with the baby had died with the baby but when she died the people knew that she had saved them. We all knew they had been saved by their mother who drowned

in the sea.

Their father was distraught. Even though he was a shaman he could not save his wife and her adopted child. He wanted to shoot himself. He had had two wives and they had both been killed by the ice, at sea: drowned. The shaman blamed himself, for he was in the same boat with his wives, but when the ice started to crush to boat everyone lost their minds trying to save themselves and now it was too late so he was blaming himself for their deaths.

There were other people inside the two boats when the ice crushed them and I always remember it every spring when we would go from place to place looking for a good site to camp. I lost many friends and relatives that summer and I will never forget.

## Treats

I remember in my young days when my father was hunting caribou I used to run to him and help him carry the meat home so I could bring in the bone marrow and eat it. All of us children used to do that; we loved the bone marrow, it was so delicious. I always used to look for my father so I could run to him to greet him and eat the bone marrow as soon as he came home.

One time after I got inside the igloo a little girl was crying because there was no more bone marrow. My father told me,

"Daughter, take this marrow to that little girl who is crying. She wants some."

So I ran to her igloo and took it to her but her mother said,

"She will get some tomorrow. Just take it back home."

So I was happy and took it home but my father asked me,

"Why did you bring it back?" and I told him,

"Her mother wanted me to bring it back home because she knows that they will have some tomorrow." So I ate two bone marrows and it was so delicious.

Not long after that I saw my father and the other men carrying some caribou meat so I ran to them and noticed there was some caribou tongue on top. There were two tongues so I brought them home to my mother and my mother cooked them for me and I ate them both. When the girl and her brother found out that I had eaten two delicious tongues they got mad at me and the oldest one said,

"You are greedy. You only want to eat the best parts of the caribou. We wanted some too."

I replied, "I was not greedy. I only ate them because I love them. I did not, I was not thinking that I wanted to eat them alone but you were not around so I finished them."

In those days I had beautiful, delicious food when we had them. But now it is hard to get, even when we have rifles to shoot with. I will never forget those days when I was happy.

## How My Father Became a Shaman

My father became a magician by himself. He was a fatherless boy when he was growing up, but his mother had married again. His step-father's name was Kuttiutikok, which is my name.

He often used to get left behind when they were travelling because he was only a little boy. In those days they used to pull the sled themselves because they only had two dogs and my father would get left behind because he was so slow.

My mother was scared of her second husband so she couldn't do anything about the situation. She loved her son very much but she couldn't do anything to help him because she had to listen to her husband. The poor boy would walk and follow their trails so that by the time he'd caught up with them they would be in their igloo. Sometimes when he was tired he would rest; he was only little. They could have pulled him along on the sled, but his step-father disliked him.

His mother's name was Tinathluk and when her son reached the igloo at night she would give him water right away.

He was about ten years old when he became a shaman. One of the dogs was named Kasuknik and this dog, Kasuknik, had become sick. When he was too old to pull the sled my father's step-father left Kasuknik behind as well. When the boy saw the dog sitting in front of him he thought he heard someone talking. He looked at the dog and the dog was singing. The voice was coming out of him as he was sitting with his head looking up toward the sky. The dog was a real dog but he was singing and in hearing this my father became a shaman. Even when he heard Kasuknik singing the boy just passed on.

Although he was very small he did not forget what happened that day.

Perhaps the dog, or his father who had died before, helped him to remember.

The boy never used to get cold because he had to walk so far to catch up with his family. I believe his real father, who was dead, used to help him because he was so young when he used to follow the tracks.

His mother used to be very worried and sometimes she would go before the dogs like a leader to encourage them and she would cry while she was walking along thinking of my father. But when they stopped my grandmother would stop crying so that her husband would not know. When my father caught up with his mother and step-father he told them,

"Today Kasuknik was singing a song when I passed by him."

"How was he singing a song? What song was he singing?" asked his mother.

"My little aunt

My little aunt has a little hood

On her little head,"

He replied, "and the dog sang that song over and over again."

So she asked him to try and sing the dog's song if he could remember it.

This is Kasuknik's song as my father sang it,

"My little aunt who is in front of me,

Who wears a little hat.

She has a very small head.

My cloak, this long cloak, this cloak of seal skin,

Sometimes I cannot carry it.

Sometimes it's too heavy.

The weapon, my master's weapon,

The whip has often hit me.

My master's whip has often struck me."

And the boy told them,

"The dog sang that song, he stopped, but as I passed by he sang the song

again, he sang the song over and over again. I was not scared of the dog singing. I just watched him and heard the dog and remembered what he sang. He did not seem to see me while he was singing, he was looking up into the sky."

Whose song was the dog singing?

The dog was singing his own song about his aunt, the dog in front of him and about the whip.

When my father told the story to his step-father and his mother, his step-father said,

"When people, anyone, hears a dog talking, or singing, the person who heard the dog will always become a shaman. Now, tomorrow, the dog will return in good health."

"Perhaps," his wife said. "But I do not believe my son; the dog might not return. My little boy is only imagining things. He's too small, too young. He's only imagining things."

The step-father believed the boy but his mother could not although she was hoping that her son would become a shaman because, she was a shaman herself but did not have the power to make my father into a shaman. He told me he remembered being a little child, he recalled following his parents, walking a long, long way. Sometimes when he stopped, he used to cry. But in the end he would just follow his parents and not cry any more. My father remembered that when his step-father first left him behind, he would reach the camp when they had finished building the igloo and gone to bed. His mother would be waiting for him. But later on, when he got used to being left behind and following the dog team, he would get to the camp before the igloo was finished. His step-father was not mean to him, possibly he was only teaching

him the very hard way of life they had to follow in those days. He was not mean to him at all in regard to food. But he did that so the boy would get used to the cold land. Perhaps this treatment helped my father a great deal but he remembered his mother's eyes; they used to be red and swollen, because she was so worried about her son. When he was old enough to keep up with the dog team, he used to help them and when he was a young man he used to help his step-father and his mother pull the sled.

My father's father, Nemelek, who was blind, had died when my father was only a baby. He had a brother but he was adopted when he was born so they did not know each other very well. But the step-father who thought that perhaps the boy was too heavy to carry on the sled was not loved by his parents. They used to let him get hungry, so he never did this to his adopted son; he fed him very well.

The boy's mother woke up very early the next morning. She went out of the igloo but quickly came back in to tell her husband, Kasuknik, the dog, had come back.

Her husband said,

"Bring him in, bring him in."

For he was also skeptical as Kasuknik was a very sick animal when they left him. The wife looked through the doorway and the covered porch of the igloo at Kasuknik, the dog, and called,

"Kasuknik, come here. Kasuknik, come here."

This dog was close to dying yesterday, but today he was healthy. When his wife called him to come in, the dog shook, shook himself, and stood up. He did not seem sick at all, indeed, he seemed very well. When the woman brought him in, the step-father said,

"He is back."

Then he hit him with his left arm, twice, on the head because he thought the dog would not come back due to his illness. However, he had returned and in accordance with Inuit custom he hit the dog twice so that the dog could remain with the family again.

In those days, long before my time, and long before the time of my father and his parents, people believed that dogs used to talk to each other.

Maybe they were half humans.

No, they were not. They were dogs. I'm glad dogs do not talk today.

## My Father the Great Shaman

My father was a great shaman. I know that he used to fly with his magic. Even when we moved to Chesterfield Inlet where there were missionaries, Father, when he got too old to walk, used to fly. He would fly to a very far away land and he could make two tusks grow out of his mouth. But they seemed very loose, my father's tusks.

He was a great magician. My father had black hair while his younger brother had grey hair. He was bigger than his brother and he was heavier. His wife was not a shaman although I have heard that she knew some magic words and that she knew how to use them. One time she took a rope, tied it around my head and put me on the floor. I was just a girl. Then she instructed me to lie there quite still whilst she held the rope with both hands and said, before she pulled,

"Let me get a helper. Let me get a helper."

My mother explained to me later that if the rope tied to my head got heavier she knew she would be getting help from her magic. When my mother and father used to do this to me I was quite small but sometimes they would find me very heavy and then they knew they were getting help from their magic. The help was needed either to hunt caribou or to get someone well who was sick. Sometimes when they were pulling on the rope they would ask,

"Where are the caribou herd?"

If my head became heavier they were answered by their magic and that way they knew where the caribou herd would be found. But if I was very light with only my normal weight, their magic would not be helping them. My mother generally used her parka belt on me but other people would use seal skin rope

around their children's head to try and find out if their magic could help them.

Once, my father told me that my uncle, my present husband's father, was almost killed by a shaman called Inikegrunasuak. He tried to kill him with his magic and my uncle had not even known. My father was sitting down with some men talking to them about hunting while my uncle was telling a story to another group of men somewhere else when Iniknegrunasuak came in and tried to take his spirit away. He succeeded and when my uncle stood up he saw that there was blood where he had been sitting down. My uncle's spirit was gone and he was going to die. My father knew that his brother was in very serious trouble, so he said, "Iniknegrunasuak is going to kill my brother."

He was far away from his brother at that time, inside his own igloo, and the next day he left to help his brother. My uncle did not know that his spirit had been taken away by Iniknegrunasuak, even though he was a shaman himself. So my father went to where his brother was and the old man who used his magic to take his spirit. My father's brother was still talking and telling stories about his hunting when my father came in and said, "You have taken the spirit away from my brother. You will kill him now. He will die."

The old man, Iniknegrunasuak, replied, "I thought he was a magician. I wanted to find out. I wanted to see if he would discover the danger in time. I know he's a shaman too. That is why I tried to kill him. I'm playing with my magic."

So my father answered Iniknegrunasuak, "You took my brother's spirit away. When he dies, maybe you will have a long life, and maybe not."

Then Iniknegrunasuak tried to confess his wrong thoughts and my father said to his brother, "I will try and save you but he wants you to die and you might die."

My father went out of the igloo for a moment and when he came back in it seems as if he was trying to grab something over by the wall. The people were watching him and he did grab something but they could not see what he had caught. He was holding something in his hand, the people could not see it and then he told Iniknegrunasuak, "Look, try and look at this, try and see what I'm holding. You too, my brother, look."

He slowly spread his hands and now the people could see, it was like a balloon but appeared very delicate. My father was holding it so carefully and he told his brother, "Brother, try and stay still, very still."

Then he went very close to his brother and blew on the little balloon extremely carefully until finally my father said, "Brother, you have come back to life now."

My father turned to Iniknegrunasuak and said, "You."

Then turning back to his brother, added, "He tried to kill you but I'm glad I came in time to save you my brother."

Iniknegrunasuak's face turned quite pale and red at the same time because he was ashamed of himself, because he had tried to kill my uncle without any reason. This he confessed, "I tried to kill him with no reason."

Iniknegrunasuak was known to have taken away the spirits of many people and killed them. The people knew this and the relatives would watch their younger brothers or sisters very carefully if Iniknegrunasuak was around. Iniknegrunasuak was not a good hunter. He could only catch fish, that was the only animal that he could take by himself. Because of that he was jealous of other people and that is why he tried to kill the people who were good hunters.

I used to see Iniknegrunasuak when I was a little girl. We often used to live in the same camp with him. My uncle would have been killed if my father

had not gone to save him, and he used to joke about it, saying, "If my brother had not been there, if I didn't have a brother, I would have been dead a long time ago." In this way he would make fun of Iniknegrunasuak's attempt to take his spirit away. "Iniknegrunasuak did not want me to live. He had done that to many other people. It is too bad that he is dead now. I feel sorry for him. If he had not tried to kill so many people by taking their spirits away, he would have lived longer. But now he's dead."

After saying that he would laugh. He was much more talkative than my father and he used to make jokes more freely. He was also more active than my father.

The missionaries came and the Inuit slowly began to go over to the Roman Catholic Church. When I was still a little girl I recall that my brother, who was married then and had children began to go to church. They were not Christians yet but they used to go to the Roman Catholic Church. They were the first family to work with the missionaries and slowly the priests taught the Inuit how to be Roman Catholics and how to pray. Even the shamans turned to Catholicism. Even the strongest shamen that were known in those days. Maulayuk was a great shaman and he was first to become a Roman Catholic, my father was second.

Mulayuk, my father, and my uncle, and Ipkagnak could fly in those days. They would go to distant lands. If they were together in Chesterfield Inlet and were having a contest, then the next thing the people would know is that they would go to a place like Baker Lake which is far away from Chesterfield Inlet. Just by themselves. That was known as flying. Those men could fly in the thin air, but they had to be shamans.

They would tie up one man with a thong made from the skin of a square

flipper seal. They would really bind the shaman very tightly with many knots so that he could not move a bone or a muscle. The man would be tied up in a curl with his arms and knees bound together, very tightly, and he would be on a caribou skin that has never been used.

At first the light would be on where they are, inside an igloo or tent. Then they would blow the lights out and the ones who had tied the shaman would laugh because they too were shamans. They would all take turns, tying each other. Sometimes many people would come to watch them and I saw my father being tied that time. I began to cry when my father was bound and then they started to mumble some magic words and the lights were put out. Sometimes I would put my face on my mother's lap and cry because I was so scared and other times I was even too scared to cry or make any noise at all.

"Ahti--Ahti--Ahti..." Everyone would repeat that word many times. There would be many people all trying to help the magic. The people kept saying "Ahti". It is a magic word which I cannot describe or give a meaning to. Then I heard a big bursting. It seemed like a big bursting. It was my father that had broken all the ropes and I looked up and right there, my father had gone. I looked for my father but I did not see him. I thought I had lost my father forever but those games were used for contests and for fun in those days. My father had gone into the air.

I saw the caribou skin and the broken ropes on the floor. I looked up to the roof of the igloo but there was no hole and I thought he had gone through the well, there wasn't a hole anywhere. Shamans in those days could do anything. Impossible things. They could use their magic to save sick people, or dying people. They could use magic to kill other people or to get animals or to kill animals.

Then it was not long before my father returned. I heard a big bang

outside. It was my father who had come back from his trip to a distant land. That is how they used to use their magic.

The shamans could curse people in different ways. If a shaman hated or disliked a man or a woman and one of their relatives had just died, he would take some hair from the dead relative and keep it to curse other people. When the shaman hated somebody or was jealous of them because they were a better hunter than himself, or if he wanted to marry someone's wife, then he would put the hair of the dead relative on the ground where that person who he wanted to kill would walk. Or he would put it near or in front of the person he hated and when that person got that hair stuck onto his clothes then that person was cursed. Then all kinds of hair would grow from his face, from his hands, from his legs, from his feet or his back. Hair would grow and every time that person found it he would pull it. If he kept pulling them all out he would be successful but if he couldn't catch up with the hair growing on him, then he would die. That is how they used to curse other people if they hated them or disliked them or were jealous of them.

So hair was part of a shaman's magic, he could use the hair of a dead person to curse another person. But the shamans had to be careful how they used their magic because if a shaman cursed two people, or just cursed one person too many times, they too would die on the same day, exactly one year later. That was believed in those days. The shaman would die because when the cursed person dies he fights back and kills the shaman who put the curse on him when he was well and alive.

## Hunting Beliefs

It is known that the ptarmigan are the first animals to come to the Arctic. I even used to hear this from my mother and father who used to say and wish that there would be many ptarmigans each spring. I used to hear my mother and father and their friends and relatives say, "I hope there are lots of ptarmigans and other birds this spring because the other animals will follow them."

If there were lots of birds in springtime and lots of ptarmigans then there would be many caribou and other animals that summer. The people also knew that if there were only a few birds around when spring came it would be hard to find animals that summer and the following winter. In those days hunting and living was different to what it is now. It used to be very hard. They used to hunt with their kyaks in summer time and their bows and arrows in summer time and in winter with their dogs and their sleds.

We used to observe many rules to help with the hunting. For example, when the new moon came in, I used to tell my daughter to bring a little bit of snow into the igloo.

The meaning of this is if someone has a son that is just a little baby boy or a year old boy, or several years old, but not old enough to hunt, then each time there is a new moon, a girl, a sister, has to bring in a little bit of snow and put it near him or his grandmother's bed. In this way when the little baby boy is old enough to hunt and has become a man, he will catch many animals. By bringing the snow inside the igloo, the man, even when he is on his first hunt, will be a very good hunter.

When my husband used to hunt seals through their breathing holes, and

when he caught one and killed it and brought it home to us for food, then I would give it a drink of fresh water. This was done to help the hunter so that when he hunted for seals again he would catch another one because the seal would wish to come to that hunter again. It was a gift. The seal gave itself to the hunter so that the hunter may give food to his family. That was the meaning of giving fresh water to the seal. We only did it when they shot or harpooned a seal at its breathing hole.

I recall what my uncle, Nakyuk, told me. I have not forgotten yet. It concerns the muscle on the front leg of the caribou, he told me always to take it off. So every time my husband catches a caribou, I always remove that muscle. My uncle explained to me why this had to be done, he said, "Even if the caribou is dead, and taken to pieces, and eaten, the pain, the first pain a caribou will have, even when it's dead, is in that certain muscle. So the first thing I always do whenever I'm going to eat a bone marrow, is to take that muscle off its leg."

My uncle also told me about the bones, the bones of animals that are lying around on the ground. Even the bones of animals that may have been eaten by other animals. They may be covered with grass or covered with pebbles or stones, with just one end showing. If I was walking along outside and saw a bone on the ground that had been like that, in the same position, for years and years, I would pick it up and then put it back in its place. But not the way it was, I changed its position. I always change the position of bones that I know have been lying there for many years because that is the way my mother and father taught me ever since I started to remember.

## Summer Camps

We were living at a place called Ukkusiksalik that year hunting square flipper and round seals. We used to have a camp by the sea every spring but in the middle of the summer we would move inland, carrying our belongings to the caribou hunting grounds. But before we could start moving inland my father had to catch seals and walrus and bury them under rocks near the shore. We would also store away our sea weapons and the other things we wouldn't be needing while we were hunting caribou. I remember we would take some seal fat with us for the oil lamp.

My mother would collect a special kind of plant that she would use to make a wick for the lamp so we would have light in our tent, in our summer tent and have cooked caribou meat. My mother and father taught me how to identify the right kind of wick plant. The ones that were full, closely formed, and fluffy were best for the oil lamp. We would gather the plants and put them out in the sun to dry, and we twisted the tops into wicks.

Lighting the oil lamp was work too because we did not have matches or lighters as we do today. Two different kinds of stone were struck against each other to send sparks onto some dry grass. We had to blow on it, we blew, and blew and blew on it until a fire started to come out. Then, quickly, the burning grass was put on the seal oil lamp. The dry grass was placed in a little seal skin pot to help it catch fire better from the sparks and the blowing. That is how we used to make fire.

It's so amazing how we used to live. We looked for metal. Whatever metal we could find so that we would have something to cut up the meat with. I remember they used to make knives and ice chisels out of caribou antlers.

Caribou antlers and walrus tusks were very useful in the days of my parents. I myself have not seen how they made them and what they made them with. It must have been very hard, without any tools, to make an ice chisel, knife, a lady's knife which is called an uloo, a comb for combing hair and needles. I have not seen all the weapons and household goods that my father and mother once had. But I have seen a few, I have seen how they used to make fire with the rocks.

Our tents were made out of seal skin. We would sew them up and put them up to make a tent out of seal skin, but we had to scrape the fat off the skins, stretch them in the sun, and when they were dried we sewed them together to make a tent. Some tents would be for small families and others would be for big families. The big tents would have enough room for ten or twelve people to sleep in. I have seen a lot of people living in seal skin tents and can remember living in a seal skin tent myself. Seal skin tents were not dark because my mother and the other women would split the hides, taking the first layer of skin off, making them thinner and brighter. They were not dark at all. They were bright enough for my mother and grandmother to sew inside. My youngest daughter has been in a seal skin tent and was also in a caribou tent. Just after she was born her grandmother, my husband's mother, made a caribou skin tent and we lived in it that fall. But now we only use canvas tents. Every year, when the snow first started to come in the fall, my husband's mother would make a caribou skin tent. They used to be very warm. The thick fur of the caribou skin. Oh, to live in one, to be in a caribou tent. It was very warm. For light we used to burn caribou fat candles. We had to chew it first to make the fat soft enough to shape into little candles but they provided us with light in the tent when we were not using the seal oil lamp.

## Living in an Igloo

I remember in the fall, when there was only a little snow and it was too soft, my mother and father would gather it up into a big pile with their shovels. Everyone would trample on the snow to make it hard and then they would build up a circular snow wall and put a tent over the top. That is how they used to make igloos in the fall. It was made of compressed snow for the walls and the roof was a tent.

If the snow had not come and it was too cold to live in a tent, then the men would cut big square blocks of ice from a lake. They would work together to cut and haul the slabs of ice to their camp. The thick sheets of ice would form the side walls of their igloo just as the snow did before and it would help keep the warmth inside the tents.

But when winter came and the snow was deep enough to build an igloo, the men would use a stick with a sharp end to look for snow that was just right for building an igloo. They would sometimes put a walrus tusk or caribou antler tip on their probe so that the end would be shaped like a needle. The length of the stick would be the same as the distance from the man's feet to his hip. When they probed the snow and found some that felt soft at the bottom they knew it was good for building igloos because when they cut the snow blocks and reached the bottom they would use that soft snow to fill in the cracks between the blocks. That is the fastest way to build an igloo. With the right kind of snow some men could finish an igloo in less than an hour. When the igloo was finished they would then build on a porch if they were going to live there for some time. If they were going to live there for a long period of time then they would build another little igloo to store the meat in.

While the men did the building the women would shovel snow around the outside to make sure there were no holes in between the blocks. That was the women's job. Around the bottom of the igloo they would pile on large amounts of snow to keep the igloo warm. When the women had finished shoveling on the outside so that there were no holes in between the blocks, the women would then go inside and using the soft snow at the bottom of the igloo they would seal any cracks that were left with their hands.

The igloo was then ready to live in and we used to have to keep it clean. I remember, my mother and my mother-in-law and my grandparents used to clean the inside of their igloo with bones. A caribou bone, or seal bone, any bone that was big enough. They would also trim the edge of the igloo, where they would put their things, to make it flat. If they wanted to have a nice clean floor they would first scrape the floor with the bone and then put water all over the floor to make it shiny and flat from inside the igloo to the porch. When this was done it was much easier to sweep the inside of an igloo. If there happened to be some blood on the floor and the women didn't want blood inside their igloo then they would chip it off with their uloo and throw it out and replace it with some soft snow. This was pressed into the hole from where the blood had been cut out. At first it would leave a lump, but if they poured water over the repair it would shrink down to the level of the floor of the igloo and look like brand new. If we were going to live in one igloo for a long time we would have to keep it clean and that was hard work. The inside of the igloo used to be bright as well.

The beds were not very high. Sometimes I could sit on a bed and my feet would be touching the ground and the beds were not all at the same height either. If people lived and slept in the same igloo for a long time the beds

would start to sink down and then they would have to build them up with more snow. However they would put down a layer of willow twigs first and then lay the caribou skins in on top so that they wouldn't get wet. When the snow under the bed is beginning to melt, you have to be careful to repair it right away so that it would stay level with the rest of the bed. We had to make sure we took all the snow off the caribou skin each morning as it might be our only sleeping skin and we had to take very good care of it. The willow tree mattress was looked after very well too. But when we had too much to carry on our sled we would leave the twigs behind as we could generally find more where we were going.

During winter the people cooked inside the igloo. They would make a rack supported against the wall of the igloo and under it they placed the oil lamp, filled with blubber and some pieces of dried cotton plant or a piece of cloth for a wick. They would hang a pot tied up to the rack from its handle above the lamp and that is how they used to cook. To dry the clothes like boots and mitts they would push little sticks into the wall of the igloo and hang them there to dry over the lamp. Before the oil lamp was lit they would push sticks into the snow to support the lamp so that it was not touching the snow when in use. In this way the lamp was kept level and did not melt down into the snow. If it was a big lamp it would have four sticks, if it was a small lamp it would have three. Sometimes an old lamp would leak so they would put a little container under the crack or hole so that the dripping wouldn't make a big hole in the snow. The lamps were made of soapstone and my mother even used to cook in a soapstone pot when I was a girl. Some soapstone pots would be very big and others would be small. If a cooking pot happened to crack they would use the blood of an animal to help stick it together. In this way

the pot would stop cracking and be repaired with another piece of soapstone over the blood. That is how my father and mother used to fix their cooking pot when it happened to crack.

## Travelling with Dogs

Life used to be hard. I remember my father once made a sled from caribou skin. He used to be poor and everything meant life to him. One day when he didn't have a sled he took two big caribou skins, made a hole in the ice and put the caribou skins inside the hole, in the water. He then took some frozen fish, pulled out the caribou skins from the lake, laid them on the ground, and placed the fish in a line across the skins. Then the caribou skins were wrapped around the fish and kept overnight to freeze. If they did not have enough fish they would have to use caribou antlers inside the rolled up frozen skins. That is the way they used to make a sled when they did not have any wood, and I once saw my father do that. After the skin sled had frozen overnight they would then put mud on the bottom to make the runners. Then they would put water on top of the frozen mud runners to form a layer of ice so that the sled would go fast on top of the snow. Sometimes when people could not find any mud they would use some weeds from the bottom of a lake and put them on the runners of the sled. It is known that the water weeds are the fastest and smoothest, and would make the sled travel much lighter and faster. To get those plants from under the lake they would use their fish spear. But they would have to make sure the sled was made just right if it was to last a long time. If they made a mistake, the sled would just collapse. So they had to be very careful in making the skin sled, from caribou skin and other things that they could use.

My father was a very poor man so I have seen him make a sled from caribou skins, fish and caribou antlers. The sled froze very hard so it wouldn't break in the cold weather, it was very strong. We would all get on it and

still it wouldn't break. We would travel very far on that sled and I remember that when I was travelling with my mother and father by dog team I used to fall asleep because some of the trips used to be very long. I used to fall asleep while we were still travelling and I remember my father and mother would help pull the sled while I was sleeping. My father only had two or three dogs so my mother would have to walk in front of them and help pull the sled along as well. My father would be pulling from alongside the sled. I remember that when we went uphill they would have to work so hard. Thinking back, it makes me wish that I could have helped during their hard times when they were pulling the heavy sled with only two or three dogs.

The right way to feed the dogs was, if possible, every time after travelling. We would not feed them too much because then they would be useless the next day. When the igloo was built and we had eaten and were ready to go to bed, my father would feed the dogs just a little bit of meat if he was going to use them again the next day. When the dogs were very hungry they wouldn't want to pull the sled as much as when they were fed something the night before. But he did not over feed them because dogs that have been over fed would have a hard time keeping up. He also made sure that the dogs didn't get over tired. Some people with many dogs would not have a person walking in front of them but the people who only had a few would have to have someone in front of the dogs, leading them. Even the people who had many dogs would have to have someone walking in front when they were looking for a place to build the igloo and they were searching for the right kind of snow.

My husband who is living had many dogs so I did not have to help pull the sled or walk in front of the dogs. He had a leader dog too so I did not

have to walk in front of the team. But my father did not have a leader dog so my mother was the leader and helped pull the sled as well as being the leader. Even the people with a dog leader would have a woman walking in front of them when they only had a few dogs. The people with just two or three dogs would have a hard time travelling because they needed to carry all their belongings, clothing and food.

The dogs would be used in summer too. In those days the dogs were the most important means of transportation. In winter they would pull the sled and in summer they would help their master carry things on their backs. When we were going inland during the summer, we would make carry bags for the dogs and tie them around the dogs who would carry them following their master. Some big dogs would carry very heavy loads.

To train a dog to carry packs is difficult. If we started training a dog to pack the belongings that were to be taken inland that summer we had to start early. When the dog first started to carry things on his back with a pack he would either fall on the right side or the left side. He would sway as he was walking because he wasn't used to carrying things. So the master had to train them before they could travel a long distance. Eventually the dogs get used to carrying things but they had to be trained by just letting them follow their master and letting them rest as they needed it.

When there were puppies I used to play with them and make them carry something on their backs. Even when they were growing up I would do it so that when they were adult they could be easily trained to carry things on their backs. One day my father taught us how to make a little puppy carry things and my mother made a toy bag for the little dog. My father put a few rocks inside the little bag and put it on the back of the little puppy who

carried it as he walked. When my father left me and my brother to play we put lots of rocks on the little puppy and we used to laugh whenever the little puppy fell down. We would have lots of fun because when little puppies wouldn't stand up because the load of rocks were too heavy it was very funny to watch them, when we were children.

Polar bear skin is very useful. We sometimes used it to pull things along, like a sled. Square flipper seal skin is also very good for pulling things along. We used a skin to pull things along when we didn't have a sled or our sled was overloaded or when we were only going a short distance. Polar bear skin was used in many different ways. It could be wrapped over the things on the sled and tied down to hold all the things in place that might fall off the sled when we were travelling. Some hunters who had many polar bear skins would put one on the sled before he loaded all his belongings on. Then he would put another polar bear skin on top and he would take a rope and tie it around the sled so that nothing would drop off when they were travelling a long way. Polar bear skin is used for the bottom of boots too, under the sole, because it does not wear out as fast as seal skin. It was strong and the boots would last for a long time. The fur of the polar bear skin doesn't come off either, whereas the caribou skin fur comes off easily. That is why we know that polar bear skin is stronger than caribou skin. And the meat of the polar bear, we would eat.

### A Woman's Skill

To make a kyak the men would find little bits of driftwood and shape them into a kyak frame. The women would gather up seal skins and sew them together, tightly, very tightly, so that they were waterproof. They would keep the seal skins wet until the kyak frame was ready and then, with the seal skins still wet, they would wrap them around the kyak made of driftwood, and sew them on tightly. That is how they used to make kyaks and the fur would be inside and the skin would be outside.

To prepare seal skins we first had to take the blubber off the skin when the seal was dead, just killed. Then we would scrape the fat off. It would take all day because we had to be very careful not to cut the skin. The seal skin was soaked in the salt water over night. Then the next day we would put little holes around its edge, stretched it out and pinned it down to the ground with little sticks to dry. Even though it was facing the sun it would take quite a few days to dry well. Then we scraped the skin again until it was all white on the skin side and finally we stepped on it to make it soft for sewing.

The bottom of a boot was made from square flipper seal which had been dried as well. But the soles that were cut out with a knife would be chewed to make them soft. After that they would put them in between layers of seal fat for at least half a day. Then they would take them out and chew them again. My mother told me, "This seal skin is more waterproof now and it won't get hard again."

But it smelt very bad because it had been in between fat, the blubber of the seal. So I've never done it myself because the smell is so strong, it stinks. I've seen them do it. Sometimes when a new pair of boots was

finished they would put blubber on them and hang them up. We don't do that any more so my brother-in-law, Uliyok, who was worried about his boots getting dry, said, "I did this to my kumoks and they never got dried yet."

I asked him what he did and he said, "I put them in gas, the gas for the stove, and left them there for a little while, then I took them out and in that way they never got dried again."

So I did that to my husband's boots one time, on the bottom, and the sole never got dried. In the old days some women used to make their boots more waterproof than other ladies because their stitches would be too far apart. So they used to put the boots in between blubber to keep them soft, they never used to get hard, they used to be more waterproof and the water-resistance used to last longer. Some women used to be very fast at sewing, others were very slow. The fast ones could finish a pair of boots in only half of the day. But the fast ones sometimes didn't make good waterproof boots while the slow sewers made better ones. The waterproof boots would be made tighter than the winter boots, they would fit snugly when the man puts them on.

But when winter was coming, the women used to make other kinds of boots that were different to the summer ones. The winter boots generally had fur on them and were looser. If they were too tight on the man when he's wearing them, out hunting, his feet could freeze very easily. They would wear caribou socks inside their winter boots and they made sure that the boots were much bigger than the fur socks so that when they put them on they would be loose and keep the hunter warm. Those winter boots, the real hunting ones, never used to look nice, but they were warm.

When I made myself some boots, even winter ones, I used to have them tight because they look ugly when they're so loose. My mother-in-law and

my father-in-law told me, "You're going to get cold feet if you wear those tight boots."

But I never used to say anything because I did not like the loose ones for myself. But now, when it is too late, I do not mind wearing those loose boots. Now I wear any kind of boot whether it's loose or tight. I do not mind. I like to wear Inuit boots very much because they are light and I am used to them now. Although I can still make the tops of the boots I find it hard to make the bottoms because my eyes are getting weak and sometimes my stitches are too far apart. The square flipper seal skin for the bottom of the boot is also hard for me to sew at my age. I cannot chew thick skins now so I do not do it any more and don't do much sewing. I still can sew. I know that. But my sewing is no good now. If I want new boots for my husband, my daughter-in-law or daughter must sew them because my stitches are no good any more. Anyway, we never have much square flipper for the bottom of the boots because we do not do as much hunting today as they used to do in those days.

To make caribou clothing we would first have to dry up a caribou skin out in the sun with little rocks on it so the edges didn't curl up. When it was well dried we would scrape the first layer of skin off it, the dry part of the caribou skin, until it was all the same. Then, in those days, we used to sleep on them for a few days so that the skin of the caribou was touching flesh, our flesh, to make it softer. After that we scraped them again and made them damp with a little water, rolled them up tightly, tied them and then we would step on the caribou skins to make them even softer. Two caribou skins would be enough to make a parka for a man. When the first skin was prepared it would be kept in the porch where it was cold until the second one was finished. After they were both done we would cut them to make caribou

caribou coats, either the outside parka, or the inside parka, or trousers out of a single caribou skin.

Even if we do not have to wash them like we wash out clothes today they still involved a lot of hard work. We had to make sure the stitches were close to each other because if we didn't sew the caribou clothing and boots carefully the man who was hunting away from home might freeze himself or at least get very cold. So we used to be careful with our stitches and making the skins soft and pliable in those days. The older ones, the older people, used to tell the younger ones, "Make sure the stitches are close to each other so that no wind can come through. Make sure that the clothing is not too tight on the man."

My step sister and her sister-in-law made stitches that were far apart so their husbands used to carry needles with them to make repairs. If they went hunting, and the stitches happened to break, they would have to sew them up to stop the wind coming through. If we didn't sew well that would mean a cold day for the hunter. So we had to sew very carefully and prepare the skins properly before we cut them to make a parka, or pants, or mitts, or socks for the men.

I used to look for the nicest caribou skin for my husband. Some caribou skins have white on them and I used to look for one that had a big white stripe to make a pattern in the parka. When the white stripe on the fur was narrow it would go yellow but when it was wide it would stay white longer. However even the caribou skins with wide white stripes on them used to get yellow fast inside an igloo but outside they used to stay white. If I knew we were going to travel around a lot that winter I would make my husband a caribou parka with a white pattern on it, but if I knew we were going to stay

on at one place for a long time I would only put a little bit of pattern on it. In those days we women used to have to look after the caribou clothing very well. If we didn't then it was our bad luck because we would have to make new ones again to replace them. When the men came back from hunting they would take their outer caribou parka off and beat out the bits of snow that might be stuck in between the fur, with a little stick. Then we would have to roll it up to make sure it's nicely folded and put it in the porch. A man would have two parkas, an inside one and an outside one. He would wear the inside one around the house. The caribou clothing could be made to look nice and sometimes, some people would have very beautiful clothing, even the ladies. The more we took good care of the caribou clothing the longer it would last. So we used to have to take the very best care of all the clothing in those days.

In those days people would trade. They would bring in fox skins to the Hudson Bay manager and the people would get beads if they wanted them. That's how they used to get beads and the women would use them to make their packing parka look very nice. I used to admire the ladies with beads on their clothes but we didn't have beads so I never had a parka with beautiful beads on it for trim. But I used to sew a lot. Sewing mittens, boots and caribou socks, trousers, pants, and overalls for babies. A caribou hat for the baby. A packing parka for myself with fringes on it, mittens for myself, boots for myself and clothing for the children and for the men.

We used to make the packing parkas out of summer skins because they were not as thick as the winter ones. The summer skins had very thin fur while the winter ones had thick fur. The men never used summer skins for their outside parkas in winter time. Some men would wear one caribou skin parka but most men would wear two different parkas. The summer skin one was worn inside touching

the skin of the man with the fur turned inside and the outside caribou parka was worn with the fur on the outside. I remember, in the old days, Inuit men would wear caribou skin parkas in the summer time made from summer skins that didn't have much fur on them so they wouldn't get too hot. There would be many beads on the caribou skin packing parka, and they would collect many caribou teeth and sew them on after they had finished the beads. The ladies would have beads on the sleeves, on the back, in the front, with all sorts of trimmings, different kinds of things. My mother-in-law used to wear beads on her packing parka. I used to see her when my husband was a little boy and I was a girl. The only men I've ever seen wearing beads were Aulatnak and Nauyagrak. They had one wife and maybe she made them for her two men. That woman was not too pretty but she used to do a lot of sewing. She used to have many beads on her parka and her two husbands used to have beads on their parkas too, on the back as well as the front.

## Other Tribes

Different tribes found it hard to greet each other. In the days of long ago, before my father and my mother, they used to kill each other. My father has told me such stories. He had heard them from his mother and father and his grandparents. Different tribes used to fight and even if they did greet each other properly they still wouldn't get along well. Different tribes had different dialects too. But they would understand each other because it was still the Inuit language.

If, for example, a young boy visited his next door neighbour, who was from a different tribe, and if while he's visiting a man there might say, "You are not a good hunter," or "You have funny eyes," or "Your mother was fat," or something like that. He could say "Your father is a thief".

The young man would not say anything if it was an older person that was talking to him in that way. But he would go home and tell his father or his brother or his mother and his mother would go to the man who said those things to her son or brother or sister. Then they would argue and sometimes they ended up fighting each other because they were from different tribes who probably had slightly different ways of life. They did that to prove they weren't afraid of the other tribe. A person who was older than the one being told off would go up to the man or woman and say, "What started this whole thing?"

Then it would develop into an argument after a short time. Different tribes used to argue. If they had fought, he would ask, "Who started the fight?" Or if they killed each other, "Who killed him first? Who gave the first shot? Who stabbed him first?"

There were once two old ladies from different tribes and they had two grandsons. One was from the Central Arctic and the other was from the Eastern Arctic. Before they have ever met or knew each other they both had grandsons, at the same time, so the babies were the same age. They talked to the babies and said, "You will be a good hunter. You will be the strongest man. You will be a fast runner."

The grandmothers would talk to their grandsons like that so that it would be true when the two little boys grew up to be men. One day those two women from different tribes met and lived in the same camp. The two old ladies became friendly with each other and one grandmother said, "If my grandson, this grandson of mine, that I've been teaching and keeping, cannot catch up with the animals, I will cry."

In those days the older people were the ones giving life and instructions to the youngest. Because, in those days, when a baby boy was born the grandparents would say he will be a good hunter and he was a good hunter, or they would say, he will fear no animal and the baby boy when he grew up would fear no animal. Some hunters could be attacked by animals very easily whereas other hunters, the brave ones, were not attacked easily. So when the grandmother said if my grandson cannot catch up with the animals I will cry, the other old lady said "and if my grandson cannot face an animal and be brave and if my grandson is killed easily by an animal I will cry."

The old ladies' two grandsons grew up and married. Before they met each other these two men were the strongest and the fastest runners in their camp. They had heard about each other so when they met they both started fighting a polar bear. They were from two different tribes. One was faster and he caught up with the polar bear and had killed it before the slow runner

arrived. There were several polar bears so then they fought them with their knives and the other one did not make a kill so they went home. The hunter who had killed the polar bears gave the meat away to the other people, because that was the way we used to live. We gave other people meat if we had plenty. When other people came that meant you had to give them the meat. So the young man who got the polar bears gave the meat away to the people.

The other old lady found out that her grandson had not killed any animal and that he was a slow runner so she began to cry. Her grandson was not faster than the other one and was not such a good hunter. The good hunter and the fast runner was giving the meat away but he could not give the fur away because the skin of a polar bear and the skin of a musk ox was the hunter's very own. He could give the meat away to anybody. So the hunter kept the fur of the polar bear and gave the meat away to other people who needed it.

The old lady who had a grandson that did not have any success in running and hunting the polar bear was crying and then after she cried, she used her magic to try and kill the other hunter. But the other hunter's grandmother was protecting him and he was saved by her.

That is how different tribes used to fight each other and kill each other. The magic could kill and the shamans would protect their youngsters. That is how life was in those days. Different tribes had to be very careful with each other because they could use their strength to kill. Or they could use their magic to make a man be killed by a beast or sickness. Different tribes were dangerous to each other if they didn't get along well. However, if they were friends, then there was nothing to be feared. Today we have to love each other.

## The Land

That same summer we went onto the land. We walked with our belongings and a few dogs to a river where my father and his two wives fished. They caught a lot that summer because they had made a fish trap from the rocks and they would spear the ones that could not escape. Then we went caribou hunting but the fish we took with us did not last long as we had no meat. There were not many caribou close to where we were fishing that summer. We were getting hungry when we met some other people who were also caribou hunting. My oldest sister had recently got married and she was with them. They stayed with us for a while and then moved on. We stayed in the same place for a while to see if my father could find some caribou but there were none and we were still getting hungry. So my mother and father had to go back to the river where they had been fishing to get some of the dry fish that had been cached there..

It was a clear summer day and my parents left early in the morning. It was very beautiful all that day, there was hardly any wind. My father's other wife was staying with us to look after us, my little brother and me. That evening my father's other wife said, "There is a big black cloud up there. Look at it."

I looked at the cloud. It was certainly very big and very dark. My father's other wife called me "daughter". Perhaps she thought of me as a daughter. Anyway I thought of her as another mother because she was always with us and I knew she was also my father's wife. Then she said, "Daughter, there is going to be a thunderstorm."

I only answered "Yes", I could not say anything more because I was so scared.

"I'm sorry to see that you're scared but there is nothing else to be done," my extra mother reassured me. "There is going to be a thunderstorm and that's that. I know you're very scared of thunder, my daughter, so you go into the tent and do not come out. Go in with your little brother."

We did and my father's other wife said, "That thunder will see what he does not like to see at all."

Then she told me again, "Daughter do not go out at all. Stay inside the tent. Do not look at me."

I heard her walking away from the tent, she was not very far away and there must have been a hole, because I did not go out and I remember looking at her through a hole in the tent. I looked at her carefully. She told me not to, but I did. She put the oloo down which she had been using to scrape the fat off the seal skin and she wiped her hands on the grass. Then she put her pants down and stood up facing the dark cloud. "Here, here is what you want to see," she said to the dark cloud. "Here is what you want to see. See it. Look at it well. You want to look at it so look as long as you want."

After she had said that I sat down beside my little brother, not moving at all, waiting for her. She was outside a long time, but when she came in she said, "The thunder, the cloud, the dark cloud, it wants to stay around. Maybe, it wants to make thunder. Maybe, there will be a thunderstorm." My little brother and I went outside to play and I remember the big dark cloud. I looked at it, it was going away, it slowly went away and disappeared. I heard the thunderstorm and it sounded very, very far away. Then she said to me, "Daughter do not cry, the thunder will not come close to us." And I did not cry because I believed her.

That night when we went to bed she told me, "Your father and mother will

not come tonight. They will come the day after tomorrow."

I asked her to tell me some stories and I was falling asleep as she told them to me but she kept waking me up to finish them. Perhaps she was scared too because there could be polar bears or wolves where we were at that time. Or strangers coming in. So she tried to keep me awake in case anything happened but I was fast asleep again when she shook me, "Daughter, daughter, you have to wake up. I heard someone coming, there's someone coming now. You have to wake up." And when I woke up she said, "I will go outside and see who it is. So stay awake."

I was wide awake then, I sat up and waited for her to come back but it was only a dog. We went to sleep again and the next day my little brother and I played while my father's other wife dried the caribou skins that had been in our camp and scraping some fat off the seal skins. That night, when we went to bed, my father's other wife heard someone walking again and she woke me up saying, "Daughter, wake up, I heard somebody walking towards our tent. You must stay awake."

Then I heard my father's voice and I ran out to meet him. They had come back sooner than my father's other wife had expected and my father explained, "I have used my magic to come back home early. The dogs will not come back for a long time yet. But I was worried about you and the children. So I came back home early with my magic."

I could not understand everything my father said to my mother and his other wife but I now know that my father was a great shaman.

### Father's Anger

I remember an old lady named Ukalianuk. She was very kind to me and I was always with her as she was so special to me. I was only a child so I always wanted to be close to her. One day we were travelling along and I was wrapped up in a caribou sleeping bag tied onto the sled. We were near Repulse Bay that time. Ukalianuk was my father's other wife and she was talking to my mother when my father said, "I will try and get some fish for us because we do not have any more food. I will fish here on this lake while I wait for you two because I am worried about my daughter and your daughter."

So my father stayed there not far from us while my mother and my father's other wife went off to get something from a meat cache. We were inside an igloo, my brother, my sister and myself, when we heard someone outside, walking around the igloo and about to go into the porch. My sister, Kasikiyak, went to the door and said, "That's my father. I will open the door for him."

She was going to take the snow block out but the youngest one, my brother, said "Do not open it my sister. It might not be my father."

My sister, Kasigiyak, who was the oldest, listened to our youngest brother and ran up onto the bed. She did not open the door and we all went to the bed. My sister and I, who were older than my little brother, thought it was my father but my little brother knew that it was not. When the man tried to open the door of our igloo we managed to stop him because there were three of us. Then he went away for a while, but later he came back. We were all alone so we were getting very scared and the man outside

in our porch asked, "Where is your mother?"

I did not know what to say but my little brother whispered, "Tell him my father is inside the igloo."

"He's in here," I said and again the man asked, "Where's your father?"

My little brother whispered once more, "Tell him my father's here."

So I yelled at the man outside of the igloo, "My father is here."

Then the man asked, "Where is your father's other wife?"

My little brother whispered to me, "She's here."

And I yelled at the man outside, "She is here."

Then, the man outside the door replied, "Your father might try and hit me so I am going away. I am scared now."

My little brother instructed me again, he whispered, "That's good, go away."

So I yelled out to the man, "That's good, go away now."

We were all scared, sitting so close to each other, huddled together, when we heard someone approaching our igloo again. Someone was running towards our igloo this time and my little brother who was younger than us said, "That is my father, now go and open the door."

My older sister opened the door for my father, he came in and looked at us. We were still holding each other's hands and my father asked, "You look so pale. You all look very pale. What happened?"

I told my father, "A man was trying to come into our house."

Then my father said, "He wouldn't do that to me. I know. He's scared of me."

My father went back to his fishing but this time he was fishing right in front of our igloo because he was worried about us.

A few days later we got all our belongings together to travel to another

place where the hunting was better. When we were ready to go my father became angry about something. I did not know but my mother was all ready by the sled waiting for my father and his other wife. She was still inside the igloo collecting a few things that she had forgotten. My father got mad, very mad, waiting for his other wife. I did not know he was carrying a knife, but then I saw it and my father stabbed his other wife. She was bleeding, the blood was pouring out of her parka but she was still alive. She walked all that day following us, bleeding all the time. I remember she walked behind the sled but before she started to follow us I saw her and heard her yelling. She turned around, back to where the igloo was and she yelled, "My name is Ukalianuk. The person whose name was Ukalanek, who died, I thought he was going to be with me all the time. Even when he's dead."

I heard her saying that and then she followed us still bleeding. She caught up with us when we stopped, my father built an igloo and she helped bring our things inside. I remember my mother telling her not to do any work but Ukalianuk wanted to help and she did even though she was still bleeding.

But Ukalianuk survived, she was a shaman like my father, and I am sure she cured herself. My father used to get mad so much and when he lost his temper he would do anything. Since my father and his other wife were shamans my father knew he would not kill her. But he was so mad he stabbed her anyway. I am glad my father did not kill Ukalianuk.

When all the things were inside the igloo I remember my mother helped my father's other wife into bed. She made her comfortable and she put on the seal lamp. Then she gave her water to drink and after that she fed her. Ukalianuk only ate a little and then she fell asleep because she was still

bleeding. My father did not talk to her, his other wife, at all. He did not even look at her.

The next day we travelled on again, it was in the spring time and we saw some ptarmigans. My father took his gun, ran to where the ptarmigans were, aimed and fired. There were some rocks behind the ptarmigans and his first shot ricocheted back. The bullet hit my father's forehead, straight on his forehead. I saw my father fall down right after he fired, and my mother said, "Oh, you shot yourself. You have shot yourself."

She ran to him and I heard my mother say, "Wake up, wake up."

But my father did not move. So my mother walked around my father, circling him. I heard her saying words that I cannot remember now and then my father sat up and my mother kneeled down beside him. She helped him stand up and they walked over to us. I saw my father's head. There was a hole in it. I saw it. It was dark and I knew that my father's head had a hole in it. I remember it so well because I looked and there was a hole. It seemed dark.

Then my father touched his head with his hand and I heard the bullet moving around inside. We all heard it, but he was still alive. He did all these things to prove that he was a shaman, to let us children know and to let me know he was a shaman and was able to take care of himself no matter what happened. He was well and alive even with a hole in his head, his forehead, because he was a shaman. I realize now that when he stabbed his wife he intended to prove he was a shaman to us and to his two wives.

I saw that hole in his forehead and I cannot forget it. I was so scared. My father was smiling when he came to me and said, "Daughter, I have a hole in my head now. The bullet accidentally came back to me. I've got a bullet in my head now." He was smiling but my mother and his other wife certainly were not smiling when he said that.

It was very dark when we got to the camp. It was Uvinik's camp. They must have been expecting us because Uvinik's two sons came to greet us before we arrived. I remember my mother telling them, "My husband has shot himself accidentally. His bullet hit a rock and came back to his head. So go and tell your father that my husband shot himself in the forehead. Go and tell your father that."

The two young boys hurried back to where their father's camp was and it was not very long before Uvinik came to meet us. But Uvinik told my father, "You did that on purpose, didn't you?"

My father did not say anything and Uvinik laughed because he knew my father well and he just laughed at my father even though he was a shaman. My father said nothing, he just smiled back at Uvinik.

When we got to the camp with our dog team Uvinik, his sons and the other men tied up the dogs. They had built our igloo before we arrived so they must have known we were coming. They were definitely expecting us. So my mother and my father's other wife put the sleeping bags and our belongings inside the new igloo. We stayed there for three days and my father still had the bullet in his head. But on the third day the bullet came out of his head through the hole that it had made going in. He showed it to me. He woke me up and said, "Daughter, look at this bullet that was inside my head. It came out again from where it went in."

He showed it to my mother as well. I don't know what he did with it after that. Perhaps he threw it away.

I used to get so scared of my father because he used to get mad very easily. When he got mad he would do anything in those days.

## Stepmother's Lies

My father had two wives and my sister was the daughter of his other wife. He loved the girl very much. But the mother left my father. And after a few years I heard that she had starved and died.

She had been telling lies about her husband and when he heard of this he did not say or do anything to her but she got scared. That is why she left my father.

She told people my father killed many other people because he was a shaman. She said he would put a curse on them and then they would die. She was a liar. Whenever she heard that someone had died, she would tell the people it was my father who made him or her die.

She did not hate my father. All she wanted to do was tell lies. I guess she had nothing much else to talk about. She was a liar. From those lies she became scared of my father and so she left him and moved in with her brother, Hapanak. She did all the work in her brother's house because his wife had just had a baby and she was not allowed to do any work or eat other people's meat. So, when she moved there she had to work hard.

My father would not kill anybody or think wrongly of anybody or about anybody. Most of all, he never dreamed of killing or putting a curse on anyone. But when this wife told lies about her husband the people started to believe her and they began to get worried. Then they told the RCMP.

We were out on the land hunting in the spring time, when the RCMP and the special constable came to get my father. They had heard that he put curses on other people to make them die and they took him to the settlement, Chesterfield Inlet, to ask him many questions.

So my father went to Chesterfield Inlet with the policemen and the special constable but he also took along his brother. After the policemen finished questioning my father they let him go but the people in Chesterfield Inlet wanted him killed by the RCMP.

They said to the policeman, "He has killed many people. He made them sick with his magic. Get rid of him. Kill him. We do not want him to kill other people again. So kill him."

Then the people asked my father, "How did you kill them? Did you kill the people with knives? Did you kill them with a gun? How did you kill them?"

The RCMP did not do anything to my father and the people themselves were questioned after that. They were jealous because he was a shaman and after a few days my father and his brother returned back to our camp.

## The Thunder Man

It was fall and we were hunting with Mukpatuk and his family. The snow had come and we were already living in igloos. My father and the other men were getting their sleds ready for the winter. And I remember one day that year, that fall, there was a thunderstorm. I was so very scared.

About five sleeps away from us, there was another family whose name was Umuteriak and they were Uuhor. That same day they heard the thunder. But it was very bad there, the lightning burned up the little wood that they had and their sleds. It was most unusual for the thunder to come in the middle of the fall when the snow had arrived and we were in our igloos. Everyone was scared and wondered what might happen next.

But by the following day the thunderstorm had passed and my mother told me, early that morning, to clean the floor of the igloo. I took the shovel that my father had made and started on the floor of our igloo first and then went on to the porch. I was taking the dirty snow out when I saw a stranger so I ran back into my home and told my mother and father, "There is a man outside there. We've got a visitor. But he's all black. He's all dressed in black."

Then my father went outside but he came straight back in again. He thought that man was the thunder.

"My daughter has seen it," he said and my mother ran out too at that very moment while my father ran next door. He told the man who lived there, "The thunder man has come."

So the oldest man came out with my father and went up to the man who was dressed all in black. The old man asked the man, "Are you a human being?"

The man answered, "Yes, I am a human being."

Everyone smiled at each other when he said that for he clearly was a real human being. He was a Padlarmiut which is a different tribe to my family. He was all dressed in black because he was very poor and his face was dark, because he was so suntanned. The man's name was Amutnak and he had left his wife and family because they were starving. He had come for help.

My father brought him to our house, to our igloo, and my mother fed him and gave him clothes because his were so old they had turned black. My uncle used to joke, "We thought you were the thunder man." And the Padlarmiut Kamunark would laugh.

That same day my father and the other men went out to get his wife and children, they were very hungry. They were starving.

After that we used to laugh and joke about it but even before his wife came I remember the people asked him, "Are you real? Are you a human being?" And he would smile as say, "Yes," he was. He would explain again that they had gone hungry and that the reason why his clothes were black was because they were old and he had no other clothes to wear.

When my father came back with the man's wife and their children, he explained to my mother, "If he was the thunder man, it would have thundered. The thunder and lightning would have come when he came to our doors and into our igloo. But I'm sure he's not a thunder man because the thunder didn't come back again."

They asked my mother to adopt their little boy because they used to go hungry often. But my mother did not want to take their son away from them so she did not adopt him. Some time, some years later, we heard that this family had starved to death near Eskimo Point.

## Nuanak the Murderer

I once heard of a man whose name was Nuanak, he had killed a man named Aleka and his brother. Nuanak wanted Aleka's wife so he killed the brothers and took their wife. But when he was living with the dead man's wife the policeman caught him and brought him to where they were staying. At that time my family and I were living there too and I remember my mother and father telling me to stay inside the house because Nuanak was around, the man who murdered two brothers. But whenever my parents were not looking I would go out and play, I used to play outside a lot. I did not think of fear so nothing happened to me, of course, the policemen were looking after Nuanak at that time.

Nuanak stayed at Katiktalik for a while with the RCMP and then they took him to Chesterfield Inlet. One day the RCMP and his special constable were going to make a trip to Churchill. They got the dogs and sled ready for the next morning. They put all the dog food on the sled and lashed them down with all their supplies before going to bed. While they were sleeping Nuanak made his escape. He took the RCMP's dogs and sled and went away.

At that time my father and my mother and myself were out on the land and Nuanak stopped by at our hunting camp. He showed my father all the things he had on the sled. He told my father that he sold a watch to the white man and the white man gave all those things to him. My father believed him and Nuanak went away, right then, because we did not know he was running from the RCMP. Nuanak kept on going, heading for Baker Lake.

That spring we were still in the same camp and the RCMP, their special constable and one lady, named Marne, came to look for Nuanak. They were

searching for Nuanak but they never found him as his tracks disappeared with the melting snow. They never did find him and no one knows whether Nuanak is dead or alive.

At that time, when the RCMP were looking for Nuanak, my parents told me that the Padlarmiut were starving. Many of them were starving that year and many Padlarmiut died because of that. If the white man did not come to help I suppose we would have all died. Especially the Padlarmiut.

## The Ship and Alcohol

I remember when I saw my first ship. We were in Chesterfield Inlet then. We were in a tent in summer time and the ship was very close to us. It was very big.

There was a man whose name was Howly and he was walking around our tent hitting it as he went around. Then he came to the entrance of our tent and asked, "Where is your husband?" He was looking for my father.

He asked my mother again, "Where is your husband?"

And she told him, "He is out visiting."

But he came in anyway and talked for a long time. We did not know what had happened because this man was always nice to everybody, he never yelled, but this time he was yelling and laughing and almost falling down. Later on we found out that there was a drink that could make people drunk and make them have little minds. This was the first time we saw a drunk man and I was ever so scared.

## Drum Dance

One time we were in a big family camp and we were all going to have a drum dance. My father, my uncle, my mother and other people all got ready and went to the dance. I went along too. Where we entered there was an old lady who was kneeling down right beside the door and her hood was tied up with a seal skin rope. She was singing a song, her eyes were tightly closed and she sang Inuit songs.

In the middle of the igloo there were two men that were having a fight. They were hitting each other on the head and one of the men would fall down each time he got hit. But when he tried to hit the other man, that man wouldn't fall down. After he had fallen down many times the woman who was constantly singing Eskimo songs opened her eyes and yelled out at her husband, "You cannot fight back. You cannot keep up with that man. You're not strong enough. You're not strong enough."

But each time the man fell down on the floor the people helped him up and he would ask the other man, "Are you going to hit me again? Are you going to hit me again?"

He would try and look straight at his opponent but because he had been hit so many times on the head he couldn't. He would squint and close his eyes and try and open them wider, saying, "Are you going to hit me again? Are you going to hit me again?"

The man kept asking the same question and his opponent kept hitting him down until, finally, he was taken away by his son.

After a long while, after they had had a drum dance, my uncle and another man played the same game, hitting each other on the head. I thought they

were serious because they were hitting each other so hard. But it was only a game to them to see which one was the strongest. The igloo that was built for the dance and the games was very big. Yet there were so many people even this big igloo was crowded. I remember my uncle's every movement in the hitting contest, maybe because I was hoping he would win and he did. But it was only a game to see who was the strongest of the men who fought.

The people were happy. The women played games too. The children had fun and the women sang songs to the men while they played the drum and danced. Everyone was happy, having a great time. That was the first drum dance I ever went to and I was amazed by it all. Whenever a woman started to sing, first, she would kneel down on the floor, close her eyes, then sway her body back and forth or from side to side. Only then after she started moving would she sing an Inuit song. Many women would kneel down beside her following her song and then a man would step out into the middle of the floor and dance with the drum. It was my first drum dance and I was so excited I was sort of scared and happy at the same time.

The man who got hit to the floor many times was living next door to us so my father went to see him. When he came home my father told my mother, "That man, you should go and see him. His head is so swollen it seems as if he's got two heads on him." That man was in bed for a long, long time.

## Gifts and Trade

Later that winter we moved to another camp. We had a visitor and my father and mother explained to me that this man was the son of my grandfather's other wife. My grandfather had two wives and his other wife had been married before but when her husband died my grandfather took her as a second wife. When her son came and visited he gave my father two dogs, one named Alualuk and the other Asutsik. Alualuk was a leader so my father was very happy with his gift of two big dogs that he could put into his team. The man went back to where he was living and the hunting was good that year. My father fed his dogs, the dogs were very strong, we were not hungry and he kept those two dogs for a long time. To me they were very beautiful. Alualuk was smaller than the other dog. Asutsik had fur that was very nice. Those two dogs were so beautiful I cannot forget them. But on the day the ship brought supplies to the Hudson Bay store and my father was helping unload the ship he came home and told my mother, "One of the white men wants two dogs. I will give him Alualuk and Asutsik because they are the best ones I have."

I started to cry and I cried all day. My father had traded with the white man. He gave the white man the two dogs, the best dogs he had, and the white man gave him a rifle, some bullets, tobacco, clothing, cups and a knife. The white man had given him many things, my father was very happy, and I remember that the white man from the ship took Alualuk and the other dog, the beautiful dog, to where they lived. I do not know where that was. They went away by ship and maybe they went to their home. It was very sad to see my father's two beautiful dogs being taken away, by a white man, to his home, far away. I never saw Alualuk again.

## The Curse of Anger

We were out in the land where there were hardly any people. We were living with one other family and I remember that my father and my step-sister's husband never used to get along very well. One time my sister's husband said to my father,

"You have scared your mother and because of that she died. It is your fault that your mother died." And when my father went home to his wife, my mother, my father said to her,

"That man who lives next to us, he said I killed my mother. I am upset because I did not kill my mother. She was well when I kept her with us. I did not kill her. That man, he always wants to win everything. And he always wants to be the boss. And he said that we always go hungry because I'm not a good hunter. And he will always be like that."

My mother said, "Will he? Do not talk like that my husband. Do not talk so because my brother-in-law is living in the same igloo as that man you dislike."

My father was upset for a very long time, my mother knew it, and one day my father said to her,

"My own brother lives in that same igloo with that man I dislike. So I will not think like that anymore because I might put a curse on my brother instead of the man I dislike."

## Marriage

I remember when my step brother came to get me and he said, "Step sister somebody came to get you. You are going to be married. They are going to make you married now."

I said, "That is not true."

But my step brother assured me, "It is true. They came to get you because you will be married now."

Then I started to cry because I believed him. I had thought he was only joking. They told me to make tea, so I made tea. Then my father came in and said, "Daughter, get ready."

He told me to go with them and I still did not believe what my father was saying and I started to cry again. I cried for a long time and my step brother's wife started crying with me. I was still crying when my mother and father told me to get on their sled. But I did, and we went away. Just as we were about to leave my father gave me his belt, his own belt, saying, "I am worried about you, so do not ever lose this belt. It is my own belt. Do not ever lose this belt."

I could only reply, "Yes."

So we went to where my husband was. They just came and took me to be the wife of this man who I had never seen before. And I went and lived with him and my mother-in-law. I had a new mother-in-law as well.

At first I didn't even look at my husband to be, because I was shy of him. He did the same thing too. Perhaps he was shy or scared to say anything to me. But slowly we got to know each other by just living in the same place and by doing things together every day, whether it was something easy or something hard. I used to be very scared of my father-in-law because he would only

tell me something when he wanted me to do something. Other than that he hardly ever said anything to me.

There were some little children at the camp and they used to play outside all day until they got hungry or tired. I remember they used to suck from the breast of a dog and drink milk from her. That dog was a fierce one but she never hurt the little children. To me it was amazing. My new mother-in-law told me to stay and sleep at her place but I was only a young girl. So I would play outside with the rest of the girls and boys and we would stay up all night looking for ptarmigan and throwing stones at them. The two smallest children would drink milk from the dog and I told them to stop but they insisted that it tasted very good and they just kept on drinking the milk from that she dog.

Late one evening we were still outside, playing and looking for ptarmigan with two big boys who had caught some. One of them had more than the other and they started to fight over them.

He said, "I have more than you," and the other said, "No, you didn't."

So they started to fight and I told them, "I am the oldest of the children, and I will go and tell your parents if you fight."

When the two little children who were with us heard me saying that they ran to the tent and came back with their two mothers who said, "Don't you ever dare fight like that. You will never become a good hunter if you fight over animals." And they stopped fighting.

My husband, the man who was to be my husband, used to hunt a lot and sleep out on the land for many days. They would catch many caribou and bring them back to the camp. We used to have fun with all the children and I would help my new mother-in-law. One day I was helping her cook outside, and a woman, who was older than me, came up to me, looked me in the eye, and said, "Did

your husband tell you something?"

"No, he didn't," I replied, and then she went away.

Early that evening I was playing a sand bag game with the children and the other young girls, it's like throwing a ball but the ball is made from a piece of skin or cloth filled with sand. We had two teams and we would give it to one of the teams while the other team tried to catch it. We played that game for a while with just a few of us but then the man who was to be my husband joined in. Then the rest of the people, the men and their wives played too and we were playing for a long time when a man started to beat up his wife. I was so scared I ran into the closest tent and a little girl followed me.

The woman in that tent asked me why I was afraid and I told her that a man was beating his wife. She reassured us, saying, "They won't fight you. So don't be scared."

So we went back outside and just watched the man fighting his wife. The woman who told us not to be afraid followed us and said again, "Do not be scared because he won't fight you. It's her fault. That is why her husband is fighting her."

I wondered why the man was hitting his wife, why he was fighting a woman. But later on I found out she was going after my husband. When we were in Chesterfield Inlet I saw the woman again and I asked her, "When I was cooking that time, why did you ask me if my husband had told me? Why are you just smiling now?"

The woman did not say anything and she just walked away. A few days later my new mother-in-law scolded me because I had talked to the woman in that way. I was very scared of my new mother-in-law so I finally told her

that that woman had asked me even before I slept with my husband, "Has he told you yet?" I explained that I hadn't known the woman had been my husband's girl friend. My mother-in-law scolded me again, "Don't do that to people who are older than you. They could curse you."

"It's all right if they curse me," I replied, "that lady, Tuluguttuak, was no good because she will go after anybody's husband."

## The Danger of Anger

I remember my mother and father went out with me to a different camp and we were travelling all day long for many days. I had a little brother, younger than me, and I remember my mother carrying him. I remember that my sister and her husband went along with us by dog team.

I was married then and I went with my first husband. His name was Ahsik and his Christian name was Isaac so white men called him Isaac but Inuit called him Ahsik. He was a very quiet man. My husband hardly said anything to anybody and he wouldn't get mad even when people tried to make him mad. We were going to follow my sister and we were in a hurry so we left my mother and father behind as they were still getting ready. They were going to catch up with us later.

We were just starting off when my little brother who was just two or three years old came running up to us, crying. My husband heard him and ran back to him, saying, "What's wrong, what's wrong with you? What happened?"

My little brother said, "My mother and father are fighting because my father had forgotten to put the caribou sinews on the sled and my mother just told him that, 'you always forget. You should put this on the sled, too. I do not want to leave it behind.' So my father got mad and they are fighting now."

We all ran back to where my mother and father were and I was a little behind my husband because I run slow. We could see a bit of my mother and father where they were fighting but they stopped the minute we got to them. My husband, my first husband, hardly ever used to say anything. He was a very quiet man. But as soon as he got there he said, "Your little son, your

little boy came running crying to me he was so scared. Why do you do that, my father-in-law? Father-in-law, you should not do that because we are not with other people, there are so few people around here. If you should have killed yourself with this rifle that you tried to kill yourself with, the RCMP would have thought that one of us killed you. The RCMP would think that I killed you or your daughter killed you or your wife killed you or your brother. That's what the RCMP would have thought. The RCMP might not believe us if you kill yourself and we have to tell them that."

I remember I saw some tears in my father's eyes when my husband said those things to him. Then we went on but a little while later my father's brother, my uncle and his wife came along and stopped by us with his dog team. When he found out what my father had tried to do, that he had tried to kill himself, my uncle talked to my father for a long time and my father did not say anything, he just looked down at the ground. Finally we travelled on with our dog team and when night came we built an igloo for us all so we were in an igloo together. That night my father was so happy and very kind to everyone in our family.

I remember my father very well because he had a bad temper, he'd get mad so fast. Whenever anybody said anything to him that made him very upset he would go home and want to kill himself, he would want to hang himself, or shoot himself, or stab himself, or drown himself, or freeze himself outside. I used to get scared of my father because he'd get mad so quickly.

### Cruel Mother-in-Law

When summer came we went to visit my mother and father in three boats, ours, my uncle's and another family's. We were all going downstream together on a big river. There was an old lady in our boat and she was very thirsty but I was scared to give her some water although I felt sorry for her. One of the men said, "Sister, can you not hear my mother is thirsty."

But she talked back to the man, and said, "She won't die of thirst. I am scared because the waves are too strong at the moment."

Another woman who was in the same boat with us told me, "Give her some water to drink, I know she's very thirsty. Take that can from inside the boat. She has used it to urinate in but if you clean it and rinse it in the water I'm sure she won't mind."

So I took the can that she used for urinating and rinsed it in the river and gave her some water to drink. The old lady drank it very fast and then she asked me for some more water. I gave it to her half full, but she couldn't drink all of it, and then she asked, "Who gave me the water?"

"Me," I replied.

"I am so thankful. I hope you have a long life." Then she explained, "When I was young I was able to take care of myself but now I'm too old and people have to carry me around and it sometimes bothers me. It's very hard when you get so old and you cannot do things for yourself and you have to tell and rely on other people."

The waves were getting bigger and I was becoming nervous, scared of the big waves. We were still going downstream and we were travelling faster now. My mother-in-law told me and my brother-in-law to paddle and make sure we

don't hit any rocks. When we looked ahead there seemed to be all sorts of rocks sticking up out of the water. We would stop using the paddles because we were too scared and the boat went faster and faster as it was swept downstream. There was a man with his family in front of us and another family behind. The man behind yelled, "The water is going to swallow you." He yelled to warn the others and those in our boat. I wondered how the water could swallow us and then we passed through a swirling rapid.

From the mouth of the river we went along the coast to Chesterfield Inlet where I stayed while my family went back up the river to hunt. My step-brother worked at the Hudson Bay store. He slept at his brother's place and he told me, "Come and eat at my house because I buy lots of food and sometimes the food is never eaten. So come and eat at my house when you're hungry."

I stayed with a friend, at her place, and my step-brother would sometimes get me after his work and we would eat at his house. My friend's tent was two or three miles away from Chesterfield Inlet and her husband was very sick. He would become unconscious because he had a headache for a long, long time. My step-brother and I were in Chesterfield Inlet for quite a while as our parents were still out on the land. My uncle had adopted him away from his parents because they did not look after him well. So my uncle took him and gave him to my father who looked after him. That is how I came to have a step-brother.

As for the old lady, she was my mother-in-law's mother. The old lady's name was Umattok and her daughter did not take good care of her but her son-in-law did. My mother-in-law took better care of her when her husband was alive but when her husband died she hardly took good care of her mother at all. Sometimes she would not let her eat or drink water or tea for a long, long

time.

I was living in the same house as the old lady because she was my mother-in-law's mother. I used to want to feed her and give her water to drink but I was scared of my mother-in-law so I never did anything to help the old lady. I did not know she was not well cared for when I first moved to my mother-in-law's place. So I wondered, when I first saw her, why she was near the entrance of the tent, so close to where the wind came in. But I knew later on that her daughter did not take good care of her or feed her well. I noticed the old lady, where she was placed on her bed. My mother-in-law and I brought in some meat and put it next to my mother-in-law's bed. The old lady, Umattok, would say, "I am hungry."

But her daughter would not even listen to her. It seemed as if she didn't hear her mother say she was hungry. When Umattok said she was hungry again I took some meat and caribou fat and cut it into small pieces and gave it to her. She asked me, "Who are you?"

I told her it was me and she said, "Tamnanuak, my daughter, would not give these to me but you have given them to me so thank you and I will eat them."

She was so thankful she cried. She couldn't see because she had become too old. She was not sick but she had become too old and she had become blind.

When they travelled from place to place to hunt they would put her on the sled and tie her there so that she wouldn't fall off.

My husband, who was the old lady's grandson, he took good care of Umattok, but he died too soon. The lives of my mother-in-law, her relatives, daughters and sons, were very short. My husband died first. The old lady told me and my husband, "When people die I know that they are still living. So when I die I will help you because you have helped me so much. But sometimes they

say people make mistakes. Some dead people would make a mistake and kill people they do not want to kill." Then she went on, "My daughter and Ikegrak, her son, I am so scared of them. I am tired of being scared of them. I you two could only live for a long time and have children and grandchildren like me. I only hope that you two will have long lives."

When we went out hunting with my husband and his family that winter my father-in-law said, "I do not like being out on the land, I prefer being near the sea. Sometimes I am scared of being in the middle of the land. It is dark. But one day I will die, I know this. When I die I would like to be close to the sea because the sea is beautiful. Because I love the sea."

It was not long after that when he died. He also used to say "If people think wrong of me. If people who might be happy, possibly having a drum dance, or people who might be sad, perhaps a relative dying, if they should think wrong of me, do not ever believe them because I do not think wrong of others."

My father-in-law died from sickness in his leg. His ankle was swollen and he used to complain about it even when he was young. As he got older his enlarged ankle became more and more swollen, and that is the reason why he died. His grave is in the middle of the cemetery behind the weather and radio station.

When her husband died my mother-in-law became very mean towards her mother. She would not let her eat for a long time and she would not let her drink. She would tell her, "You're no good. You have no reason to live. You should die."

When my mother-in-law said such things to her mother, my husband would sometimes say something to stop her from talking that way. One time he told

his mother, "I will only stop taking care of my grandmother when she cannot eat or do anything. If she was not alive we wouldn't be here now, even you, my mother, you wouldn't be alive if it were not for my grandmother. So as long as I am here and as long as I can carry my grandmother around, I will take good care of her in the best way I can."

After he had said that, my husband told me to get ready because we were going hunting. We had not gone very far when he saw some caribou. There were four caribou coming towards us. My husband was carrying his grandmother and he was in a hurry to take her off his back as he was also carrying his gun. He hit her accidentally in the rush and my husband's grandmother said, "I'm only in your way. Please just leave me here."

Then my husband told her again, "As I have said before, if you were not alive I wouldn't be alive so when I want to get rid of you and if I get tired of you it will be because you cannot breathe any more. While you're breathing I will never leave you. You are not very heavy."

I know very well that my mother-in-law wouldn't even think of carrying her mother and I know and understand she would just leave her mother in an old camp if she was alone with her.

## Death of My First Husband

Before my father-in-law died he told my husband, "Son, I will die soon. After I die, one year later, on the same day, in the same season, try and remember the day I died. When that day comes next year do not forget these things that I will tell you now."

My husband would always say, "Yes," to his father because we younger people in those days could never say "No," to our older people.

"These are the things that I will tell you not to do so do not do them until a year has passed and the anniversary of my death has come. When that day arrives, then you can do all the things I now forbid, then you will be able to do them all again."

He instructed his son as follows, "Your first caribou, the very first caribou you kill after I die and only that one. Do not eat the bone marrow from it and do not break the bones so you could eat the marrow because I know that it will hurt my leg as I have been sick with my bad leg for a long time. When you cut off the legs of the caribou just leave them but do not put rocks on top of them and before you leave them, take the meat off the legs. However, as for the caribous you catch after that first caribou, you can do anything with them. You can eat the bone marrow, and you can give them to anybody you wish to give them to."

After his father died my husband went hunting with his younger brother and they caught some caribou. His brother was gathering up some rocks in order to be ready to cache a caribou, while my husband was busy cutting them up. Then his brother stopped what he was doing, broke a bone and took out the marrow and ate it. He forgot to tell his brother he had eaten the bone marrow and my

husband had forgotten to tell his brother that his father had told him not to eat the marrow of the first caribou he caught. His brother was only a young boy, perhaps eleven or twelve years old. Unfortunately it was the very first caribou that my husband shot after his father's death and ever since then my husband had trouble with his back.

His back started to hurt when he was carrying his grandmother. He was walking along on a wet day, the ground was damp, and he stepped on some loose grass and fell. When he slipped he said, "I hurt my back a little bit."

Ever since then he had trouble with his back and it was from this that my husband died. That fall we went caribou hunting and my husband only caught a few because his back was bothering him so much. We met up with my father and mother, my husband's back was getting worse, so my father went to Chesterfield Inlet and told the nurses. Then the RCMP came and got my husband. It was the year the RCMP lost his wife. I was carrying my second oldest child. We moved to where the RCMP's house was and when my husband continued to get worse my mother-in-law told me to sleep at my father's place. My mother gave me my brother's sleeping bag because I did not have one and then my father asked me, "Why do you come and sleep at my house? You have a husband. Why don't you sleep with your husband?"

It was a fair question because my husband and I already had one child so I explained to my father that my mother-in-law told me to sleep here. Then he said, "You have a husband. You should stay with him. You have a child. You should stay with your child too. So do not come here, to my house, to sleep again."

When I tried to sleep with my husband my mother-in-law would tell me not to so when my mother gave me a sleeping bag and a caribou mattress I went home. But then my mother-in-law told me to go to my father's place and sleep there,

and I did. Then my father said, "When my daughter was young they came to get her, even when she was crying. Now that she loves her husband her mother-in-law does not want her to sleep with him any more."

I didn't know that my father intended to talk to my mother-in-law but before he did he asked me, "Daughter, do you love your husband?"

I answered my father, "Yes, I love my husband very much."

Every day I went home but at night my mother-in-law would tell me to get out. I did that to help her during the day time but at night she would send me home even though I was not feeling well at the time. Perhaps that's why she would send me home to my parents' place.

Finally my father told me not to go back to my husband again. I didn't go home for two days after that. But on the third day my mother-in-law came to get me and said, "I was thinking that I lost a daughter-in-law. So that's why I came here."

Then my mother said to her, "My daughter is not a very attractive woman so no one will take her away from you. No one will take your daughter-in-law away from you. She has told me that you do not want her to sleep with her husband and I did not believe her at first but now I do."

It was at about that time when I almost lost my little daughter. She almost froze. I must have been so clumsy. The RCMP gave each one of us a new blanket but my mother-in-law kept them all. She gave my husband just one blanket, although he found the place cold. So when my mother and my mother-in-law started to argue, the argument went on for a long time. I was beginning to get scared when my father finally said, "I told my daughter to stay here because she was not feeling well and because I thought you didn't want her as a daughter-in-law any more. It is me that made her stay in my house two days."

Then my mother-in-law replied, "We couldn't find a woman so we will never get tired of your daughter."

My father continued to explain, "She is my only child that is alive now. All the rest of my children died. She seems to be the oldest and the youngest one because she is the only child we have. Next time you tell her to sleep at my house I will never let her go back to your house again."

When he had finished my mother-in-law went out right away but I didn't go with her. I was with my parents all day and when the evening came my father told me, "Daughter, go to your mother-in-law. When they are getting ready to go to bed perhaps she will not tell you to go out and sleep at my house again."

So I went home to my mother-in-law and I slept with my husband that night. That is when I almost froze my little daughter. I woke my husband up and we cried when no one else could hear us. My husband used to be scared of everyone but just before he died his life changed a lot. Even if my mother-in-law scolded and nagged him my husband wouldn't get angry or talk back to her. Maybe that's why she always used to scold him. But just before he died he would talk back to his mother.

My husband died in the summer time, and then the doctor came to Chesterfield Inlet. I used to work at the doctor's house and I used to think that because the doctor could operate perhaps he could have operated on my husband and saved his life. It is a pity the doctor came too late. After my husband died my mother-in-law never used to tell me to go out. She only used to say, "If you want to visit your mother and father go and visit them any time you feel like visiting them."

My mother-in-law had a brother who was so kind and nice to everybody. But my mother-in-law was completely different from him. All I can say about my mother-in-law is that she was no good. Anyway I didn't stay with my mother-in-law, I

left her place and she went out on the land with her younger son and her mother, my husband's grandmother. The old lady died soon after they left; I think they never used to feed her, I think she probably starved. When my mother-in-law and her son were going away her daughter wanted to keep her grandmother but my mother-in-law said, "No, I want her to be with us."

The old lady died not very long after that when they were still out on the land. My mother-in-law's brother was worried about his sister so he told me and my step brother to go over to their camp and take them some food and seal fat. He was afraid they might run out of seal fat for their oil lamp and they might go hungry. So we went there and brought them those things because the place where they were staying was not very far from Chesterfield Inlet.

## The Doctor

The first white men I remembered were the store manager. People gave him a nickname, Isumatatnak, which means the little boss, and Atatasiagraluk was the bishop, which means the big father. The bishop had an assistant, a brother, who used to be called Ikayuktee, which means a helper to the bishop, and some RCMP, the policemen. Those are the first white men that I recall that came to Chesterfield Inlet to live there. The RCMP came to Chesterfield Inlet before the grey nuns, the sisters. The first policeman that I remember well was Kekeaksee, which means someone who nailed people. Inukyuak's husband was a policeman, Tautungi's father, Tautungi from Rankin Inlet. There was Kekeaksealuk, Igayitnak, the little cook, and Keelik, the man with grey hair. Those were the first policemen that I remember in Chesterfield Inlet when I was with the doctor, Kuklik's father.

I remember the summer when my husband died. It was in the middle of summer, there were many mosquitoes and I was working for the Hudson Bay Company. I used to wash the store after it closed. While I was there one of the RCMP, one of the policemen, told me that the doctor wanted me to work for him. But I did not say anything in reply to him. Each time he saw me he would ask, "Have you seen the doctor yet?"

I used to say, "No."

He asked me that same question too many times and then I ended up answering him back, "If he really wants me to work for him he will come and get me, but I will not go to his house and clean it up myself. He'll get me when he wants me to clean up his house."

After I gave him that same answer each time he asked me, he got tired and

stopped. That RCMP could speak fluent Eskimo.

After my husband died my mother-in-law invited me over to eat one Sunday morning after church. After we had eaten my mother-in-law told me and my sister-in-law to go and check the fish nets. So we went out to the shore at low tide, she had caught many fish. We left some of them at the point and took the rest to my mother-in-law's place. There were lots of fish that summer so when we got back from the nets my mother-in-law cooked for us and we ate fish head and drank tea. When we got home we were both sweating because it was so hot that afternoon. We had a cup of tea and ate fish. Then my mother-in-law said, "Aupudluk, I should comb your hair."

I used to scratch my head a lot. So my mother-in-law combed and washed my hair and then she told me, "You have lost a lot of hair. Look here."

There was a lot of loose hair, a lot of hair did come out when my mother-in-law combed it. My hair was very long at that time. So I drank tea and we three ladies were talking and laughing and making jokes when we heard someone walking towards our tent. Our tent had a door on it, a wooden door, and someone was coming in. My sister-in-law said, "I wonder who it is?"

So I said, "Yes, I wonder."

A man opened the door and came in. It was a white man and he asked in Eskimo, "Did I come into a wrong place?"

My mother-in-law asked him, "Who are you?"

The man replied, "I am the doctor."

I interrupted them and asked the doctor, "What do you want? Why did you come here?"

I knew he came for me and he confirmed this so I said, "I won't come with you because I'm working at the Hudson Bay store."

"I have talked to the Hudson Bay manager. He said I could come and get you, he said I could take you home."

I was saying "No," when my blind brother-in-law started talking to me. "Sister-in-law I cannot buy you things, I cannot buy clothes for you. If you work for this man you can buy yourself some things that you like. I am blind and I cannot buy those things for you, I cannot work."

After my brother-in-law, the blind man, talked to me, it was my mother-in-law's turn. She said the same things, she said she couldn't look after me and buy me the things I wanted and liked. So in the end I said, "Yes."

The doctor waited, I told him, "I'm still eating."

But he said, "I've got food at home so you can eat at my house."

"You don't have real food like Eskimo food," I said.

"I've got fish and meat at home too."

Then I told him again, "I will only go there after I have finished eating."

At last he said, "Yes." He tried to wait but he went out before me.

Then my brother-in-law spoke to his sister and me, "Sister take her to the doctor's house. Then she will be able to look after herself. My brother cannot buy the things for all of us. He is the only one working in our family."

So I worked for the doctor, cleaning his house. That's when <sup>Har-lik</sup> Kuklik was born. After that the doctor asked me to go with him to his home in the south but I said no because I was scared. Before he left he said, "There is a doctor coming to replace me. You are going to still work for him. Do the same things that you do for me. Clean up the house and cook for him."

## Brother's Death

Sometimes shamans could not help other people with their magic, when they get sick. So my brother died even though my father was a great shaman. He was married and had three children when my brother died from a heart attack. His children are Dennis Kalasik, Maryann Puyuat, and Tommy Tudlik. He died when they were just small, when they were camping out on the land between Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet.

When I heard that he died I thought I'd never be happy again because he was my only brother. I did not have any sisters or any brother other than him. It was the end of the world to me when I found out he was dead. I thought I would never get over it and a few days after he died I used to think to myself, "Why wasn't it me that died? I cannot hunt. My brother hunts. He's more useful than I am. I am no use to my family and my relatives. Why didn't I die instead of my brother?"

I used to think that because my mother and father's heart had broken. They were very sad because my brother was their only son. He had trouble with his heart after the doctor left. Perhaps he would have been safe if the doctor were there. Perhaps my brother would have had pills for his heart if there had been a doctor in Chesterfield Inlet then.

## Giving Birth

Ever since my young days I remember what my mother and father used to tell me about other women delivering their babies. I, myself, have experienced that.

I remember, in those days, when a woman was having a baby, no children or men were allowed near or inside the tent or igloo. Children and men were not allowed to watch a woman delivering a baby. That was the way it was said to be and meant to be, and that was the way it was.

When Hako became my husband and I was pregnant and the baby was due, I would give birth even if he was around. With him I could eat any meat that any hunter caught. But when I was with my first husband I was with a different family. So when I had my first baby, I was not allowed to eat after I had delivered it, even after many days. I was only allowed to eat very little, even if I was hungry. They thought, and they believed that if I ate any kind of meat after the birth of my first baby I would die. The baby would also die if I ate any kind of meat that any hunter caught. If I did eat it had to be meat without bones. I was not allowed to eat meat with bones in it. That was the way it was in those days and the rules had to be followed. I think my first baby died so young because of that.

When it was about two years old my father told me to give it to my cousin because he knew that I could not look after the baby well. I did not know how to take care of a baby. My cousin had many babies, but they all died when they were a few days or a year old, she never had any success with a healthy baby. That is why my father told me to give the baby to her, because I could not look after it as well.

## Inuit Games

We used to play many different kinds of Inuit games. People used to get very happy and excited when they were playing. One time my husband and the other men were playing sand ball when he accidentally hit someone. We thought the other man had died. I remember another incident at Chesterfield Inlet when all the men were playing football. My brother-in-law Inuksuk hit a man when he was running and the man fell down and broke his leg. It was the white man's football game with a white man's football. They were playing in front of the missionary's house and there were a lot of ladies watching the game and cheering. Right after the man's leg broke two men took him to the nurses at the hospital.

The Inuit used to play with a sand ball and another game was played with two men pulling each other. Sometimes two men competed by hitting each other on the head or the shoulder to see who was the strongest. I thought they used to be angry at each other when I was little but later on I discovered that they were always happy when they played that game. There was one game that was very interesting to me. Two poles about five or six feet long would be stuck in the snow and a rope would be tied between them. A man would jump on the rope and swing around it. To me that was very interesting.

Inuit women used to play games too. They would play some of the games that the men played or they would have a game of their own like blindfolding themselves and trying to catch the children. Sometimes they would play just like the men, to see which woman was the strongest. When the women hit each other on the forehead or on their shoulder the strongest one would fight with many other women. But I only saw that when I was very young.

## Haunted Houses

My son, Niemialik, used to tell the story of the haunted houses at Katiktalik. He said there was nothing to be scared of although you could hear the spirits making noises and walking around and you could see shadows inside the house. But there was only shadows and noises and they didn't bother people. The shadow-like shapes are only visible when you are inside the house with them. They are thought to be both white people and Inuit who used to live there and died from sickness. There were some policemen there once and it is thought that the shadow-like shapes belong to those of them who died there.

Katiktalik is just behind Daly Bay and the houses are still standing although they do not have any more windows. There are still pieces of cloth laying around those houses. Perhaps the windows were broken by passing polar bears who went inside, there are also many tracks of foxes. Outside the houses there are caribou tracks. It is believed that Katiktalik is haunted because the people who once lived there liked it so much they went back to that place. The people who died there came back to that place even when they were dead. But they don't bother people.

Komatnak and Niemialik were there when they were trapping and they both said there's nothing to be scared of. They said they could hear noises but they couldn't really see the people that were dead there, only the shadows. They could hear some people walking about upstairs but they couldn't see them, they said there's nothing to be afraid of. Those spirits do not mean to kill people so they don't bother anyone. It is known that many many people died there, there are many graves there.

In those houses, in those haunted houses, you could hear music and people

dancing. At night when no one was there you could see the houses with their lights on and hear voices. My son has been there and has gone into one of those houses. I have not been there for a long time. I used to go there with my mother and father when I was a little girl.

## Parents and Grandparents

My father was a great shaman but he used to get mad very easily. When he was angry he used to want to freeze himself or kill himself or stab himself. My husband's father, Kako's father, was shorter and skinnier than my father and he had lots of grey hair even when he was young. They were brothers. But my father was taller than his brother, and even when he was older he had no grey hair. Our parents died when my youngest daughter was very little but Kako's mother died a little later. I think my daughter can remember her.

Both my parents were older than Kako's parents. My mother's name was Kakunilik and my father was Nakyuk. Nulieayuk was Nakyuk's father. When Tautuk's wife died Nulieayuk felt sorry for Tautuk so he gave one of his wives to him. My father got married not long after that. His brother, Kako's father, did not get married for a long time so he helped him find a wife. There was a woman named Kakunielik and Kako's father married her mother. Later on Kakunielik had two husbands. My husband's mother had three children; Inuksuk, Pisuktie, that's my youngest daughter's name, she is named after her, and Udlieak, her uncle. She also had two twin boys but one of them died and the other one who was adopted died some time later.

Not long after we'd moved to Chesterfield Inlet my mother died. After that Kako's parents died and his sister died. She was married then but she died too.

## Kunga, Pisukti, Natchuk

Kako's sister died because she was sick. When she was a baby she was loved by her parents very much and her mother would ask her, "What is your name?"

"Pisuktie," she replied.

"What is your other name?"

"Tulugkknat."

"And what is your other name?"

But she would say, "I don't know."

In this way the mother would ask her what her names were and she would say her names. One day the little girl got tired of her mother continually asking her and at last she said, "My name is Natsik."

So the little girl named herself "Natsik" and everyone called her Natsik after that. Her real name was Pisuktie. My father loved her very much, she was my uncle's daughter.

I had many baby girls and my father-in-law did not like it, he used to want to kill the babies if they were girls. So my mother-in-law and I cried when he wanted to kill one of my baby girls. That baby girl had the same name as my youngest daughter but my husband said even if they are girls I will try and feed them. So my father-in-law did not kill my baby girl. My husband told his father, "I can hunt now and I can provide food for all my family. Girls can be useful because long ago men used to fight for them. So I will look after my daughter. I don't want my daughter to be killed by you."

My father-in-law did not kill the baby but when the girl grew up she did not live long. She was still only a girl when she had headaches and died. It turned out that my father-in-law loved that girl most of all my children. He did not

kill the girl but she died from sickness. She complained about a headache for two days and on the third day she died.

Her namesake, my youngest daughter, was born at Kakvik. She must dig when she goes to Kakvik. That is what the people do when they are old enough to go to the place where they were born. If she goes to Kakvik she would go to where our tent was and kneel down and pretend to dig on the ground. That is the way it used to be and it is still followed. I don't know why but with the Eskimos of long ago it had a meaning.

We used to be at Kakvik, there were many wolves there and on the day my youngest was born there were many wolves around. They would be quite close, some were dark black. But the children used to play outside anyway. One time they came home and said to me they saw a little dog. But it was not a little dog, it was a fox. That fox was drunk. While my son and his cousin Remy were playing, that fox came up to them and ran under the sled and tried to bite them. Remy's older brother's dog caught the drunk fox and took it home.

My youngest was born when the small lakes began to freeze. The lakes were covered with new ice so my mother-in-law used to go fishing by standing on a rock. She used to fish to find me some food. Then my mother-in-law gave me some caribou meat and she said, "If you really like slim women, try and pretend you're taking the meat off this caribou sinew and make sure that all the meat is off the sinew. Pretend you're rinsing the meat and rinse it well, if you want to believe what I'm saying. If you want to have a slim girl pretend you're rinsing the meat that you are going to eat."

So I pretended to rinse the meat I was going to eat and I really rinsed it more than once. Then my mother-in-law said, "You were only supposed to do it once."

After she had eaten she started to laugh. She laughed so much I asked her what was wrong. "I told you to pretend to rinse the meat, just to pretend, but you, you were not pretending. That is why I'm laughing at you," she said.

My youngest daughter was still a little baby when we went to Chesterfield Inlet. When we got there she was baptised by Atata Kuktamou. My mother-in-law marked the day she was born because we had calendars then. We used to get the calendars from the priests.

## My Children

My father died at the hospital in Chesterfield Inlet because he was sick. Kako's father, my uncle, died when we were living in an igloo at Chesterfield Inlet. He was sick so he died. That same year a lot of people and a lot of children died from sickness. Nearly everyone got sick, there were so many people that got sick and so many of them that died. My husband and I never got sick but our two oldest daughters died that year, before their grandparents died. They were grownups when they died, when they got sick, so we named our youngest daughter after them and her names are Kungayuak, Pisukte, Kaak, Natsuk. Those were the names we gave her, even before she was born, and those are the names of my daughters who died that year when the great sickness came to all the people in Chesterfield Inlet.

Pisukte was not originally one of her names but when she was a little baby she got very, very ill. Her head was swollen, she was very ill and she was going to die. But her grandmother gave her another name, Pisukte, and ever since she got the name, Pisukte, she got well. That is why she is alive today because her grandmother gave her the name Pisukte.

My oldest child's name was Ikotuyoitok. And the second oldest was Paulinak and that was her only name, Paulinak. And Karlik was the third one. Then Ikviksak. After Ikviksak, Kungayuak and then Inuyak. There were two that died, one girl and one boy. After Inuyak there was Okpik; then after Okpik there was Niemialik. Then after Niemialik there was Kungayuak. She was the youngest one. I have had twelve children in all. Out of the twelve there are only five alive now, some of them died. Two of the babies were not alive when they were born. One was premature and the other one was nine months old but it came out dead.

I had been travelling with my husband and I didn't know I was expecting.

I was so excited and happy about going hunting with my husband that I was running alongside the sled and jumping on it. We were alone as I had left my children with their grandmother. It was a very lovely day, it was not cold and we were having a great time. I would run beside the sled when the dog team was going fast and jump on the sled to get on while it was going. It was getting darker so I was feeling a little cold. To keep warm I kept on running and jumping on the sled. I didn't realize that I was squashing my baby inside me.

My husband had just finished the igloo and I had just stopped bringing the things inside when I felt the first pain of the delivery. I knew it was coming out. When it came out the head was all squashed. So I said to my husband, "It came out but it hasn't cried yet."

So he came up to me and said "Ehhhh" which means that something was wrong. We had a little laugh but it was not a real laugh, and then he said, "The head is all squashed up. You must have done it today when you were running along beside the sled and jumping on it."

He had been telling me to be careful when we were travelling with the dog team. But I had said it wouldn't happen, it wouldn't die. My husband had even told me, "The baby could die because you're jumping on the sled."

So we just had a laugh as the baby was not alive when it came out. My sister-in-law cried for the dead baby. She had sewn all the clothes for the baby. She had made a hat for it and boots for it so perhaps that is why she cried. When she was crying she said, "I'm going to throw the baby's clothes away."

So we just laughed at her.

## Ietukuk

Pisuktie's child's name is going to be Ietukuk, but she will be a nice person and the baby will love other people.

Ietukuk was a woman and she was married but her husband did not take good care of his mother. When her husband was around Ietukuk would treat her mother-in-law in the same way because she was scared of her husband. Ietukuk was Kako's mother's aunt. My father has never seen Ietukuk because she died before my father was born. Her husband wanted me to be called Nulieayuk and that is why my name is Nulieayuk. Ietukuk had one child and the child's name was Niviovak. Ietukuk was from the central Arctic and her close relations were from there too so when my youngest daughter has her child her child's name is going to be Ietukuk which means giving, someone who is always giving. When that child is big enough he or she will always give anything to anybody, even a valuable thing. That will be Ietukuk and that's-all I know about her.

## The Great Sickness

One we were very sick and Elee brought us to the settlement, Chesterfield Inlet. My youngest was a very tiny girl, she was so small that Elee had to wrap her up in a caribou sleeping bag and tie her to the back of the sled. My son was only a boy. He was also very small and his older sisters were also with us.

Elee was in the camp with us with his mother. The others had abandoned his mother, Elee, and Elee's sisters and brothers. She was a widow so the people who were with her left them behind and my husband brought them to our hunting camp. They left the widow with her children, behind. It was just after the death of her husband when no one could take care of her and her children. They didn't want to.

Elee's father died at the time the great sickness came to the Inuit. My two oldest daughters also died. There were a lot of people that died from sickness that year. We were in our summer camp when we got ill, we couldn't move, and winter came, so we had to stay in our summer camp all that winter. It was in the middle of winter when we became very sick. Everyone that I knew, every family that we'd met and knew, were struck with the sickness. It was in the muscles and when my muscle sickness began my husband was out hunting. A few hours after he came back he too got very ill.

Elee was only about fourteen years old. I remember, when he was bringing us to Chesterfield Inlet, he used to cry because he had a hard time and he was also suffering from snow blindness. We had one sleep on our way to Chesterfield Inlet. My husband had to give instructions to Elee so that he could build the igloo. I was sleeping all the time. I couldn't stand up so they had to drag me with a caribou skin to bring me in and out of the igloo

from the sled. I hated myself for that; I wished I could have helped Elee more. Somewhere in between our camp and Chesterfield Inlet my husband lost his mind but I don't recall the exact place. He was unconscious so we left a few of our belongings there and I remember, at that moment, I was so very scared and nervous.

Elee saw some of the houses although I couldn't see them. He wanted to walk to the settlement to get help but I did not want him to go. I thought he might be too long and I thought my husband would die so I told Elee "I cannot help your uncle and he might freeze. I cannot do anything to help him. So let's leave the belongings here and go to Chesterfield Inlet."

So, we left our belongings not very far from the settlement and I remember now that my baby daughter was not tied to the sled. I do not know how she didn't fall off. I was only thinking of my husband. I didn't think of her or my little boy. I was so worried about my husband. My baby was only tiny but I didn't carry her on my back because I was too ill. I do not know how she lived through the cold.

The dogs wouldn't listen to Elee either. They were not scared of Elee because he was not their master, so they didn't listen to him. Oh, how I wished that they would listen to Elee. Even when he tried to whip them they didn't listen. We were getting close to the radio station when the dogs got worse. Elee whipped them again but it did no good. We were right in the middle of the station when I told Elee to look at my husband to see if he was still breathing. He was still unconscious. Then I said, "Okay. Elee, go to the RCMP and get help now, quickly. See if the dogs will listen to one of the policemen. Quick, go and get help."

So he ran to the RCMP's house, crying. We didn't have to wait long before the police came and Okaktee was with them. The dogs that would not

obey Elee were just like toys when the men, the police, handled them, and they brought us to the hospital. My youngest daughter, her brother and sisters went to their grandmother's and later the RCMP gave us a house. When the policeman took us to the hospital, he carried me up the stairs as if I were a little baby. I had been ill for so long that I weighed very little. I hadn't been able to stand up because I had a muscle sickness.

It took us a long time to get from the camp to the settlement, because of the dogs. They were not used to Elee and his commands. Thinking back, it was hopeless. I was not scared myself, but thinking back, it must have been a very, very hard time for us, especially Elee. He had such a hard time. Elee, the boy, cried most of the way. Perhaps he got snow blindness from crying, crying too much. Oh, I felt sorry for Elee at that time when he tried to bring us to Chesterfield Inlet. Today he can handle the dogs, any dogs, I know.

After it was all over we moved to Rankin Inlet where my husband was working. Elee came alone by dog team from Chesterfield Inlet to visit. There were some caribou along the way so he caught some and brought them to Rankin Inlet for us.

## Hospital

But there's one good thing that the white men have brought with them. Hospitals and doctors. I would have died if there were no doctors. I am a sick woman and often have to go south to hospitals.

That is what is bothering me now. Now that I'm used to this new life, my sickness is what is bothering me. When I'm away at the hospital, away from my family, I worry about my family and they worry about me. But yet we cannot see each other.

I often ask myself, why do the doctors want me to live? Why are they making me live? They are just wasting their money on me. Even the government are wasting their money on me. I wonder how they could do it?

But thinking carefully I know why they send me away. Because they want me to live, because they want me to have a longer life and be with my family as long as I can.

## Out on the Land

We used to be out on the land, out on the land where there was freedom. Life was full of happiness when we lived out on the land.

On the land where there was freedom, we used to hunt for the food that may come to us. The food that my father hunted, trying his very best. It was a hard life but at that time it did not seem hard because that was the way we used to live.

We used to live out on the land, or by the sea, or on an island, wherever we wanted to go. But now it is sad to know that I am in one place for the rest of my life. Our lives have changed so much. The old ways have gone.

It's a very sad thing to live a confined life this way when I have not lived or experienced a life of that kind from the beginning.

My life has changed ever since I was a little girl and the stories I used to hear have changed. Only gossips are heard now.

I am in one place, we cannot travel, we cannot travel around. I am only in one place. My life is not free any more. I try to get used to it for a long time. Now I am used to it. But it took me a long, long time to get used to the way of life we now live.

Living in a house, taking care of a house, staying in one house for many years. Staying in this prison, it is like a prison, this house that you work so hard in and yet get no pleasure out of.

APPENDIX II

SIX INUIT MYTHS  
BY KAKO AND AUPUDLUK

ContentsPage

By Aupudluk

The Thunder and Lightning

194

By Kako

The Man Who Killed Visitors

196

The Orphan Boy

198

The Blind Boy

200

The People With No Legs

208

The Cannibal

212

## The Thunder and Lightning

There was once a boy and a girl who were brother and sister. They were left behind by the other people in their band because they did not have a mother or a father.

The brother would tell the girl, "What do we want to be? What do we want to be? Do we want to be musk oxen? Do we want to be musk oxen? If we are strong black musk oxen we can fight with our horns."

Again the boy would say to his sister, "What do we want to be? What do we want to be?"

His sister would answer, "We could be polar bears. But if we become polar bears we might fight each other."

They were sitting inside the rocks of an old tent ring when the little boy asked his sister what they wanted to be.

He said, "Do we want to be thunder?"

The girl remained completely silent and began to concentrate on the old tent rings that surrounded them. The boy found two rocks that were tools, that were left behind by their band and had been used for making fire. The girl found a skin and stretched it into a drum. Then the orphan boy started to strike the two rocks together and great sparks leapt from his hands. He had made lightning. The girl started to hit the drum that she had made and it thundered. Each beat on the tight skin made a beat that roared across the land. And so the abandoned children became thunder and lightning. The sister was thunder, the brother was lightning and they went in search of the people that were not kind to them when they lived together in the same camp. The people had been cruel to the boy and girl so they went to

their band's camp and raged a thunderstorm on them. The brother and the sister made the thunder and lightning last for many days until the wicked people were all killed. People came to see the destruction from other hunting camps. They found the people there were all dead, killed because they had been so cruel to the little boy and the little girl.

The distant travelers who came to see these wretched people that had been in this first thunderstorm were in the exact same position as when the thunderstorm started. Some people were sitting up, some people were standing up, some people were lying down, some people were working, cooking, some people were playing, children playing, including the babies, from the eldest to the youngest, the people never moved even when the other people came to see them.

And the dogs, some of them were lying down, some of them were standing up, some of them were under the rocks trying to get away from the thunder. They were all looking, staring vacantly at the same empty open ground.

And one traveler touched a dog and it disintegrated to a pile of ashes. So all the travelers went about and touched all those people that were in the thunderstorm. They all became ashes.

The brother and sister that had become thunder and lightning had done that to them because those thoughtless people were so cruel to the orphans. So that is why my mother and father used to tell me never to be mean to children who do not have parents because children that are not loved by anyone can become anything, an animal, the thunder, anything that could be vengeful and dangerous.

### The Man Who Killed Visitors

There was once a man who had his igloo on a trail between camps so many people used to stop by and visit. But this man was not a very nice man. He was always thinking of killing other people. One night when a visitor fell asleep this man decided to kill him even though he was visiting and was sleeping.

First the man went outside and got his sled ready some distance away from his igloo and hitched up his dogs so that he could escape right after he killed the visitor. But when he went back to his igloo the visitor had woken and said, "I am going to go now because I have had a little sleep."

And the man thought, "What a pity, I was going to kill him."

So the man followed his visitor out and when he was not looking he stabbed him from behind in the back. When the people heard that the man had killed his visitor the relatives told one of the strong men in the camp what had happened and said, "It is all right. He is dead now. We cannot do anything."

Because the relatives had known that the visitor was going to kill him anyway. So the people said to the man who had killed the visitor, "It is all right. He was going to kill you anyway. It is all right that you killed him. We cannot bring him back now."

A long while later they were going to have a drum dance and the people were ready to go to the drum dance and one of the people told the man who had killed the other man, "Do not sing your song. Do not sing your song when we're having a drum dance. Don't forget that.

You must not sing your song."

But the man sang his song when his turn came. When he began to dance he sang his song. And the minute he sang his song the relatives of the man who he had killed stabbed him from all around. Many knives were stuck in the man.

### The Orphan Boy

There was once a little orphan boy who tried to visit an old man. The little boy had just lost his mother and when he came to the old man's house the old man would laugh at him. He would laugh at the little boy and give him food to eat. He would sing a song to the little boy.

My slave boy, my slave boy  
 My little slave boy, my little slave boy just there  
 You just there, my little slave boy  
 Go and get your mother's rump which is in the grave  
 It is in the grave,  
 Go and get your mother's rump and eat it.

And the old man would laugh at the little boy after he sang the song that made the little boy so very unhappy.

One day the little boy got home to where he was staying with a woman that had adopted him and said, "Woman, that old man sings to me. He sings to me about my dead mother. He says I have to go and get my mother's rump and eat it. That is what he says."

The woman asked the little boy, "How does he sing it?" and the little boy sang

My slave boy, my slave boy  
 My little slave boy, my little slave boy just there  
 You just there, my little slave boy  
 Go and get your mother's rump which is in the grave  
 It is in the grave,  
 Go and get your mother's rump and eat it.

And the little boy told the woman, after he sang the song, the old man would laugh at me.

The woman who was looking after the little boy told him, "Little boy, next time he sings that song to you about your mother sing him a song about this story. That old man killed his brother-in-law; he killed his brother-in-law and put him into the sea by tying him to a seal so that his brother-in-law would be pulled under the water."

He could not wait to sing the song to the old man so he hurried to his house to visit. The old man sang about the dead mother again so after he sang the song the little boy sang his song to the old man too. It went like this.

Old man, old man  
Old man just there.  
You have killed your brother-in-law with a seal,  
That he had speared.  
You tied your brother-in-law to the seal,  
So that he would drown.  
You killed your brother-in-law.

And as soon as the little boy finished singing that song, he ran out.

The old man said, "What a thing to say. What a thing to think about."

The old man got very angry. He put his boots on, bit his knife between his teeth, and ran out to chase the little boy.

The little boy ran around the igloo and the old man followed him, trying to catch him. They ran around the igloo for a long time, faster and faster, until the little boy began rising up into the sky. The old man went up into the sky as well. And they became two stars forever to be seen.

## The Blind Boy

Once there was a blind boy, who had a mother and a sister, they were at home with very little food. That very day a polar bear came by, he looked at the ice window and scratched it. The mother was extremely scared, she could not handle the bow and arrow, so she gave it to the boy who was blind. The mother aimed for her son, he let go the arrow and the blind boy, Anigat, heard the polar bear sliding down the side of the igloo from the window.

"I have shot a polar bear," said Anigat very excitedly.

But the mother was quiet for awhile. "No, no, you haven't shot him, you haven't killed him. You missed him. He ran away."

And the boy was moved into the snow porch so the mother could skin the polar bear in secret. She and her daughter alone were eating.

When the little boy was put into the porch the mother gave him dog food, his little sister wanted to help but she couldn't because she was only a child. So when the mother was feeding her she would take some of her own meat and put in into her clothes to hide it. By doing this she thought she could save her brother.

But the mother became suspicious when her little girl was so fast, and she would tell her, "You are eating too fast. How come?"

The little girl would answer her mother, "I am hungry. That is why I eat fast."

After the little girl and her mother had eaten the polar bear meat, the little girl would go to her brother and she would give him some polar bear meat so that he could live like a human, not like a dog.

But Anigat did not want to eat the polar bear meat in case his sister was found out by the mother. Then the little girl, his sister, would cry and cry until Anigat would eat the polar bear meat.

Spring came and Anigat asked his sister, "Have you heard any loons crying out there yet? Have you heard any loons crying out there on the lake yet?"

The little sister answered, "Yes I have heard the cry the loons up there upon that lake."

So the brother Anigat told his sister, "Sister bring me up to that lake."

The little sister brought Anigat to where the loon was and the sister said, "Here's where I hear the cry of the loon."

And Anigat told his little sister, "Sister, leave me here."

Anigat's sister was worried, she did not want to leave her brother, she cried, because she knew that he could not find his way back. The little girl was crying so Anigat told his sister, "Little sister, pile up rocks starting from here and I will follow them down to our tent. I will not get lost. Go on home. While you go on your way, remember to pile up those little rocks so that I may feel them and I will come home also."

When Anigat's little sister had gone, he sat in front of the lake and heard someone coming out of the water. It was the loon and the loon came straight up to him and licked his eyes.

"Oh," Anigat thought. "Oh, they hurt. Oh how much they hurt. But I must not say anything."

And the loon asked Anigat, "Do you see anything?"

Anigat said, "No, I do not see anything."

But he could see a little bit, he told a lie to the loon. Still Anigat sat waiting beside the lake and when the loon turned around he saw that the loon's back had no meat or feathers on it. The loon's back was all bones; and he sat there pretending that he did not see anything. After awhile the loon returned and, this time, he licked Anigat's eyes harder; this time it hurt very much and Anigat tried to be patient and not move away from the loon so that he might be able to regain his sight. Finally the loon stopped licking Anigat's eyes and the loon asked, "Do you see anything?"

"Yes, I see. I can see now. . . I see the land and every detail on it, on the far side of this lake."

Now Anigat could see he started to go home and he looked on the ground and saw little pebbles and neat piles. They were so close to each other. His little sister had put them there so that Anigat could go home to the tent. All the way from the lake to the tent the little piles of pebbles so carefully made traced a perfectly clear path. Anigat looked around and he saw the polar bear skin drying in the sun. And Anigat went into his mother's tent and he asked her, "Whose polar bear skin is that out there drying in the sun?"

The mother said, "Oh, those people who just passed by, they just left me, I got it from them."

And Anigat's mother told Anigat, "Anigat eat. I have just eaten. I am now warm and I am full up. Why do you not eat so you may be full up and warm like me?"

But Anigat only said, "I will eat only when I catch my own food. I will eat, only when I catch my own food."

When he repeated that his mother began to cry, wanting Anigat to eat. So Anigat ate.

After Anigat had eaten he and his sister went out of the tent and she saw some white whales out in the bay. Anigat went down to the seashore with his siter and harpooned many white whales. They had plenty of food now. After some time when they had already killed enough Anigat asked, "Do you love your mother sister?"

The sister answered, "No, I do not love her because she was cruel to you and she always thinks in the wrong way."

So Anigat put a rope around his mother's waist as if to help with the hunt, he was going to harpoon another whale. Then Anigat got ready to aim with the rope around his mother's waist and when the mother saw a baby whale she said, "There's a baby one, there's a tender one, there's the one that's good to eat. Aim at it Anigat. Aim at it."

Anigat saw the baby whale but there was a big white whale just behind it. He pretended to aim at the baby one but when he aimed, he aimed for the big white whale and harpooned it. As soon as the harpoon stuck, Anigat and his sister ran away from their mother as she was being dragged into the sea. She ran for a long time on land, by the shore, across the rocks but when she was going to be pulled in she jumped into the sea. As she hit the water, the big white whale went out to where the sea was deep and Anigat and his sister watched on and when the big white whale came up to the surface to breathe, Anigat's mother was kneeling on top sweeping the hair back from face

and eyes. She sang this song:

My son,  
 My son,  
 My son tied me at the end of a rope to this whale.  
 I was up there,  
 Now I am here,  
 In the water.  
 My son,  
 When you were born I took care of you,  
 I took care of you the best way I could.  
 When you were on the wet sleeping bag,  
 I dried it up for you.  
 I did all those things for you,  
 My son,  
 My son who did this to me.  
 This will be the end of me.  
 This will be the end of me.

And each time the whale would dive the woman would say, "The end of me."

After that Anigat and his sister went away from where they had been living with their mother and on the way they got thirsty. Anigat told his sister, "Sister get me some water from that crack."

His sister lowered a pail on the end of a rope down into the crack and brought up some water for her brother and herself. As they walked on further, they saw some bits of food and blocks of snow that had been used for a wind break by some people who had been fishing. A little while later they came to where there were some people, Anigat was thirsty again and he asked his sister to get some water for him. But she said, "I am scared, my brother, I am scared. I do not know these people."

But Anigat told his sister, "Sister do not be scared. I will protect you. Whatever happens, I will protect you."

He reassured her until at last she went into one of the igloos and said, "My brother outside, he is outside, he wants some water to

drink. I came here to get some water if you have it."

The oldest of the people said, "There's the pail. It's full of water. It is there. Take it. But first, take your parka off before you go out."

Those were the people with the long nails. When she turned around to go out, all the people that were inside the igloo jumped on Anigat's sister and clawed at her back and ate the bits of flesh that they tore off in their nails.

Anigat was beginning to worry and was about to go in through the porch when he guessed something was very wrong so he jumped in through the ice window and killed all the people that were trying to eat his sister's flesh. The flesh was all gone, stripped to the bone like the loon that gave Anigat his sight.

An old man who was still alive pleaded, "I told my young people, I told my youngsters that Anigat will come, Anigat will come and kill them. Anigat will come and save his sister. I told them that. But they did not listen."

With these words the breath went out of him and he died. He was still licking his fingernails when he died.

Anigat and his sister walked on and had walked a long way before they finally reached some more signs of other people. There were some snow blocks that had been used for the wind break and inside them Anigat and his sister found some bits of meat and a few bones picked clean. When they tried to eat some of the good ones, they immediately turned into bones. This strange food that Anigat and his sister had discovered were the leftovers of the people who have no anus. When

they came to their iglòos Anigat was thirsty again so he told his sister, "Sister go get some water. I am thirsty."

But she did not want to go because she was scared and her back was still raw from what happened the last time so Anigat said, "I will save you again. Go get me some water for I am thirsty."

So Anigat's sister went in to one of the igloos and said, "My brother, Anigat, who is outside, wants some water, so if you have water I came to get it for him."

Then one of the people said, "You shall have a husband now, and Anigat shall have a wife, tell him to come in and drink his water inside our igloo."

She ran outside smiling at her brother and said, "You have a wife now and I have a husband. We are told to come in and you can drink the water."

In due time, Anigat's sister, who was now married, became pregnant and her mother-in-law was making preparations for the birth. She would collect caribou sinew and plat them into a cord and she would keep on sharpening her uloo, the woman's knife. Anigat's sister was scared because she had never had a baby before but her mother-in-law reassured her.

"Do not be scared. It's got its own way out and it will go out the way it should. Please do not be scared."

When Anigat's sister had the baby the mother-in-law sang,

My daughter-in-law, my daughter-in-law,  
Your daughter-in-law, your daughter-in-law,  
Our daughter-in-law, our daughter-in-law,  
She has had a boy, a boy, a baby boy.  
He's got an anus, he is a boy.  
Let me have an anus.

After she sang the song everyone tried to make an anus with their sharp uloos but some cut in the wrong place and they died and other people would cut in the right place and they would have an anus and live. The ones who succeeded were very happy and that night they had a drum dance.

Anigat's sister was resting at home because she had just had the baby. The drum dance was in the next igloo and while she was resting someone would come in, blow out the lamp, kiss her and then quickly go out again. When she heard the drum dance starting up again she put some soot on her face and on her nose because she wanted to find out who came hurrying in to kiss her. She waited. Then just as she heard the noise of someone approaching a man got on top of her and kissed her and quickly jumped out of the bed to go outside again. Then Anigat's sister heard laughter from the igloo next door. She got up, grabbed her uloo, went inside and cut off one of her breasts. She knew that her brother, Anigat, had kissed her and she asked her brother, "Anigat, you think that I taste good? Here, have this."

Anigat was very ashamed of what he had done and so he asked his sister, "Sister let us have a blowing contest."

So everyone had a candle and the people went around the igloo and tried to blow each other's candles out.

Anigat's candle was put out by his sister so he became the moon and she became the sun.

## The People With No Legs

The men with no legs were out hunting when an Eskimo man came to their village and he went into one of their houses where an old lady was living.

When the Eskimo man came in the old lady was worried for his safety so she told him, "Come here, come behind my bed and hide. I will hide you there. My two sons will come home soon."

Not long after that one of them did return from his hunting. The old lady told her son, "There's a human being here and he is scared so I am hiding him."

When his mother told him that, the man with no legs replied, "That's all right but if there's a human being here let me see him."

Then the Eskimo man got out of his hiding place and when the man with no legs had seen him he was satisfied and told him to hide again.

The younger son came in next and remarked, "I smell a human being."

The old lady looked at her son and replied, "My son, there is a human being here. He is scared, so I hid him."

"That's fine," he said. "If there's a human being here let me see him."

The Eskimo man got out of his hiding place again and the man with no legs said, "Good, now you stay out and sit with us and eat with us."

So the Eskimo man sat between the two brothers with no legs and the younger one asked him, "What do you eat? Polar bear meat or human beings?"

And the Eskimo man answered, "I eat polar bear meat."

And that is what they ate.

Then the brothers said to the Eskimo man, "A man without legs will come to our igloo. He will be here after we have finished eating. He is the strongest man in this village and he has a weapon."

The two young brothers showed him what kind of weapon he had and they taught the Eskimo man how to fight with it. It was a rock shaped like an uloo, an Eskimo woman's knife, and it was covered in fat. It was slippery but the Eskimo man said, "I will use this. This small weapon is just right for me."

One of the brothers warned him again, "Remember, that the strongest man will come after we have eaten and before he comes in he will get ready to fight you. Before he fights you, he will move his arms back and forth and that is the sign that he is ready to attack."

Not long after that they heard someone approaching the igloo and a man with no legs came in through the door.

He came in smiling and said, "Oh, we have something to eat now. We have something to eat now. Some fat meat. We will eat a human being now. We will eat a human being after I have killed him. My children and my wife will be happy."

The Eskimo man remembered what the two brothers with no legs had told him and he took the rock which was shaped like an uloo and got ready to use it. The man with no legs was smiling because he thought that he was going to kill this Eskimo and have him for supper. As soon as the man with no legs swung his arms out, the Eskimo threw the uloo shaped rock into the neck of the man with no legs. He died right away and the minute he fell onto the ground some people from the porch, other people with no legs, took him out and ate him. Then the two brothers who were helping the Eskimo man took their knives and

jumped into the proch. They made a lot of noise and in a little while the two brothers came back carrying a body and some arms of the people with no legs. A little boy with no legs came in, he was eating a rib of a human being.

He looked at the body of the dead man who had been brought in, went up to it, licked it with his tongue and said, "I thought my father was skinny but he is so fat and delicious."

The Eskimo man and the two brothers with no legs and the old lady waited for the people with no legs to go to sleep then late at night when they were all asleep the two brothers told the Eskimo man, "Young man, we are scared too, so you have to escape by yourself. Right now what you must do is get a sled ready. When you are ready, you must go as fast as you can because we know that they will follow you and try to kill you and eat you." And the two brothers explained carefully to the Eskimo man, "When they follow you and when they catch up with you, the leader of the dogs will try and trip you up, when you're running, with the rope he is pulling the sled with. Be sure to keep as far away as you can from the lead dog. Go right now, quick. And remember the lead dog will urinate and bark just before he attacks you. And remember where you killed the man with no legs today. Make sure you hit the same spot. Do that with your bow and arrow and the dog will die. But if the dog does not die immediately, with your first shot, be sure to hit him at the edge of his ear and then he will die for sure with your second shot."

So the Eskimo man went and he had not gone very far when he saw that the people with no legs were following him. He went as fast as he could. The people with no legs were catching up with him. The

first dog team to reach him was the one the two brothers were telling him about. There was a big lead dog and he was getting closer. He went around the Eskimo man and when he had circled him the big lead dog urinated many times then he was barking. The young Eskimo man knew he was ready to attack so he took his bow and arrow and shot him in his neck. But the dog did not die and the Eskimo man remembered what the brothers had told him. He took his bow and arrow and shot the dog again, this time on the edge of his ear. Now the dog was howling and he barked and yelled and ran down towards the sea and the other dog teams ran back to their igloos. The man with no legs tried to call the dog back.

The dog's name was Alulaq and the man with no legs tried to stop his dog shouting, "Alulaq, Alulaq, stop, stop, Alulaq, Alulaq, stop, stop."

The young Eskimo man heard this man with no legs yelling until he went into the sea and then he went home to his own family and own people.

### The Cannibal

There once was a man called Igoumarasukyukyukyak who had eaten his mother and his father and his children.

When he had finished the children his wife was the only one left. When Igoumarasukyukyukyak went hunting his wife took her old parka and stuffed it full of dry grass and stood it up so that it looked as if she was bent over. She left her old parka kneeling inside the igloo while she waited outside. A storm began to blow but she just sat there beside the igloo and waited for the snow to cover her up.

Igoumarasukyukyukyak came back home from his hunting, went inside the igloo and saw what he thought was his wife kneeling down. He pretended to be brushing the snow off his caribou clothes with his snow knife but the moment he looked up he stabbed his wife's parka. When he found out there was only grass inside it, he said to himself, "Why did it look like a human being? Why?"

Then he used his knife to search for his wife outside around the igloo. Igoumarasukyukyukyak sunk the knife deep into the snow around his igloo and almost got to where she was buried under drifts. He almost cut his wife's finger and the knife would almost touch her hand. At last he gave up and went inside the igloo and slept. Now his wife took her chance and ran away to where there were other people and waited for her husband because she knew he would come. When the man came to look for his wife he went to every house in that village until he went into the igloo where his wife was. One of the people said, "Igoumarasukyukyukyak you have eaten your children, you have eaten

your father and mother."

Igoumarasukyukyukyak did not say anything for awhile then replied,  
"Who said it? Who told you?"

And the man answered, "Your wife said it, your wife told us."

And Igoumarasukyukyukyak said, "My wife has eaten her children too. She cut off their little feet and their little hands. She has eaten their little feet and their little hands."

Then his wife answered back to him, "Yes I have eaten those parts. I have eaten them. When I was cooking them and when I was cutting them I cried. I cried and I cried."

Igoumarasukyukyukyak went away.

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