

MEDDELELSER OM GRØNLAND

UDGIVNE AF

KOMMISSIONEN FOR VIDENSKABELIGE UNDERSØGELSER I GRØNLAND

Bd. 203 • Nr. 3

THE POLAR ESKIMO POPULATION,
THULE DISTRICT, NORTH GREENLAND

BY

ROLF GILBERG

WITH 10 FIGURES AND 25 TABLES



Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck

København 1976

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Abstract

The Polar Eskimo society developed during the 20th Century from a small, self-sufficient hunting society into a large, primarily hunting society dependent on supplies from the outside world. As a result of outside influences, in the 1950's and 1960's the Polar Eskimo population doubled from three hundred to over six hundred individuals.

Diagrams and tables included in this paper give a to some extent detailed picture of the changes which took place, and the development of the Polar Eskimo population from 1893 to 1973 is treated in some detail. Special attention is given to developments in 1969.

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Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	4
1. Location.....	5
2. Definition of the Polar Eskimo population.....	6
3. Methods.....	8
Collection of data.....	8
Punch card census.....	8
4. Some authors' remarks on the Polar Eskimo population.....	12
5. Births.....	17
Number of births.....	17
Distribution of births by months.....	18
Twins.....	21
6. Mortality.....	23
Death rate.....	23
Duration of life.....	26
Infant mortality.....	26
Child mortality.....	27
Adult mortality.....	27
Causes of death.....	27
7. The difference between the numbers of births and deaths.....	31
8. Sex ratio.....	31
Polar Eskimo sex ratio.....	31
Sex ratio of other Eskimo groups.....	33
9. The family.....	33
Reproduction rate.....	33
Family size.....	35
Sterility.....	36
Adoption and family planning.....	38
10. Migrations and admixture with other ethnic groups.....	38
11. Population structure.....	40
The population on December 31, 1969.....	40
The population on December 31, 1973.....	45
Comparison of the years 1903, 1924, 1943, 1953, 1963, 1969, 1973.....	45
12. Development of the Polar Eskimo population, 1893-1973.....	47
Phase I (1893-1903).....	47
Phase II (1903-1922).....	47
Phase III (1922-1934).....	50
Phase IV (1934-1953).....	51
Phase V (1953-1969).....	51
Phase VI (1969-1973).....	52
13. Conclusion.....	52
Acknowledgements.....	53
References.....	54
Appendix: Polar Eskimos Bibliography.....	57

Introduction

All over the world an industrial development and an intensification of agriculture have taken place in the twentieth century. This has led to concentrations of many people in small areas, and this accumulation of people has created problems. Overpopulation or underpopulation in an area depends on the interaction between the natural resources, production, economy, and the population in question. Too rapid a population growth or too drastic a draining of resources usually prevents a favourable development in the area.

The purpose of this article is to investigate within an ecological frame of reference the demographical changes in the Polar Eskimo society, where the population density is low, but the population is rapidly increasing and as a result of greater contact with the outside world it receives many new impulses. By observing the socio-demographical changes here one can obtain an impression of the ability of this people living farthest north on the earth to adapt to the variable conditions of their arctic environment.

The picture is very different from the one that was published in Archives of Environmental Health in 1968:

“The international biological program: Worldwide research program seeks answers to some 64 ecological questions.

A century and a half ago, on a lonely, ice-bound stretch of northwest Greenland, a group of 250 Polar Eskimos who assumed they were the only humans on earth were discovered.

Since then they have continued to live in exactly the same way. Most of their children die before reaching puberty, the smaller ones usually killed by dogs. So the women have all the children they can. Many of the men are also killed, usually by the polar bears which they hunt. Those who survive, therefore, have four or five wives. Thus there is not only a rapid evolution in this tight society, which still numbers only 250, but also there is intense genetic pressure to breed and train strong, skillful children and hunters to survive against the many environmental threats.

Can the rest of mankind learn something from the Eskimo experience to help mankind adapt to its own environment, for the problems of adaptation generate more and more difficult problems.

This is the kind of question, along with hundreds of others, which the International Biological Program seeks to answer.

A program of worldwide scientific cooperation reminiscent of the International Geophysical Year, IPB aims to help man avoid the foolhardy, perhaps fatal mismanagement of his remaining natural resources and habitat.—*Conservation Foundation Letter*, Washington, The Conservation Foundation, June 24, 1968, p. 1. (From *Arch. Environ Health*.)”

This is pictured in a drawing by KELD HANSEN, 1974, (figure 1).

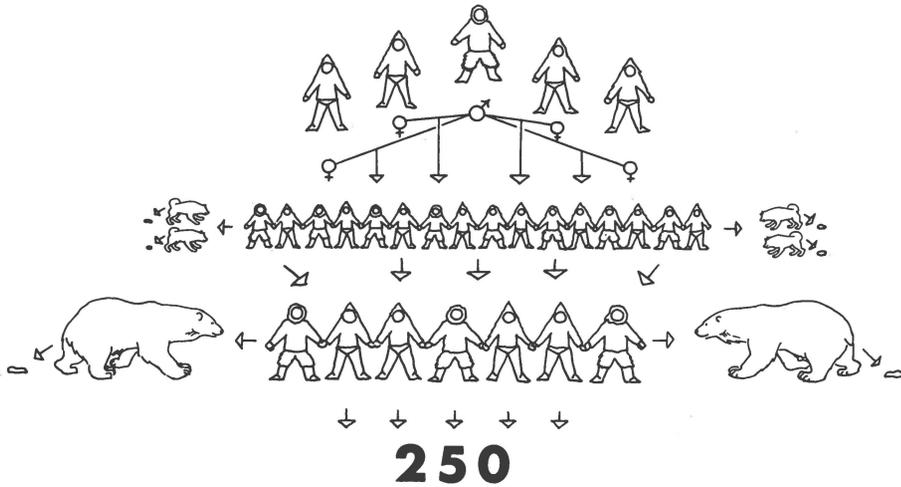


Fig. 1.

1. Location

The Polar Eskimos inhabit the coast on Hayes Halvø on the west coast of North Greenland between 74°30'–79°15' North Latitude and 58°–73° West Longitude. Thule District, as this area is now called, is separated from West Greenland to the south by the uninhabited glacial shores of Melville Bugt, and from North Greenland by the enormous ice masses of the Humboldt Gletcher. Bounded by the Greenland Icecap to the east, and by Kane Bassin, Smith Sund, Baffin Bugt, and Melville Bugt to the west, the land of the Polar Eskimos can thus be regarded as an "island" in an ocean of "ice".

Apart from a couple of weather stations there is no permanent settlement anywhere on earth farther north than Thule District. Since they met White Men for the first time in 1818 the Polar Eskimos have been given many names over the years: Arctic Highlanders, Smith Sound Eskimos, Cape York Eskimos, etc. The Polar Eskimos, the most prevalent name, derives from *Den Litterære Grønlands Ekspedition's* (The Literary Greenland Expedition's) visit in Thule District 1903–1904. Like other Eskimos they call themselves INUIT, or people.

Thule District has a high arctic climate with a long hard winter and a short chilly summer. The Polar Eskimos still support themselves mainly by hunting; thus they divide the year into a nine-months' sledding period (October–June) and a three-months' kayak season (July–September). Because of its northerly location Thule District has a polar night of four months' duration (from the end of October to the end of February). As all outdoor activity is severely limited at this time, during

the rest of the year the hunter must build up stores of meat for the winter by securing more game than he needs for daily consumption.

Like other Eskimo societies the Polar Eskimo society is based on the family. Traditionally these people lived in small groups of from one to four families scattered over a vast coastal area but after the administrative town, Thule, was moved in 1953 and the house type was changed, a concentration of the Polar Eskimo population took place over the years around Thule's store and the stores of four other settlements. Hunters who had roamed about were settled permanently and their dependence on supplies to and from the outside world steadily increased.

2. Definition of the Polar Eskimo population

Thule District is an isolated area. The population is well-defined geographically, and a definition of this kind would be sufficient up to 1818, when foreigners began to visit the district.

The largest wave of immigration took place to the American base at North Star Bay, where Thule Air Base was constructed in 1951-1955. At its peak it contained more than 6,000 men. The importance of the base declined during the 1960's, and its staff dwindled to about 3,000 men, and later in the 1970's to 1,500 men, in both cases half of whom were American military personnel and the rest Danes. The inhabitants of the base have no contact of any significance with the local Polar Eskimo population, and they are not included in the official population census for Thule Commune; therefore, they are left out of consideration in this article on the population of Thule District.

On the other hand the official census includes the number of Danish and West Greenlandic employees of the administration in Thule Commune. These two groups are mainly occupied at Dundas (the Eskimo settlement called Ūmánaq) on the Weather and Radio Station in the valley next to Thule Air Base and in the administrative town, Thule (the Eskimo settlement called Qânâq). Thule Commune is identical with Thule District, with the exception that Station Nord is included in Thule Commune.

These Danes and West Greenlanders, whose stay is often brief, from a few months to two years, are not included in this investigation of the Polar Eskimo population in Thule District, unless they become part of the local Eskimo population by marriage.

Two additional factors delimit the Polar Eskimo population. In the first place the members in question of the local Eskimo population must *reside* within the geographical boundaries of the district. Residence thus means that Polar Eskimos who are in West Greenland or in Denmark temporarily for purposes of education or hospitalization, or on hunting

trips in Canada, are *included* in the census of the local Eskimo population in Thule District, even though they are not present in person when a given census is taken.

In the second place the census does not include Greenlandic hunters from Upernavik District who may settle in the area temporarily and who have no genetical connection with the local Polar Eskimo population in the district.

Immigration: Accordingly, in addition to the descendants of the population of before 1818 and of the Canadian Eskimos who immigrated in the 1860's, other immigrants who left descendants among the Polar Eskimos are considered members of the Polar Eskimo population. Taking the American MATTHEW HENSON as an example, this should be interpreted as follows: HENSON is included, as he himself had a son by a Polar Eskimo, but neither his parents nor his siblings are taken into account, and he will only be included in the census from the date of his son's birth (1906) until he leaves the district permanently (1909). Moreover, immigrants are not included by the date of entry, but either by (a) their wedding date or by (b) the date of the first child's birth, if this date precedes the wedding date.

Emigration: In order to be considered emigrant the person in question must have been away for at least one year and reside elsewhere.

The following three sub-groups are included in the Polar Eskimo population:

- A. *Polar Eskimos*, about whom no record of non-Polar Eskimo ancestors is known.
- B. *Polar Eskimos*, who have among their ancestors no known non-Polar Eskimos.
- C. *Non-Polar Eskimo* members of the Polar Eskimo population. These are members of the Polar Eskimo breeding isolate linked either through a child or by legal marriage. Thus it is only the non-Polar Eskimo parent or spouse who belongs to the Polar Eskimo breeding isolate. Her or his ancestors, siblings or other kinfolk are not considered members of the population. To the non-Polar Eskimo category belong (see also p. 38):
 - a) Baffin Island Eskimo immigrants of the 1860's, since it is unknown whether they had mixed with other groups (Eskimos, Indians, or Whites) in Canada before coming to Thule District. One of them,

Qumangâpik (Uis), came from as far south as Southhampton Island, the rest came from Arctic Bay (GILBERG, 1975).

- b) West Greenlanders. The first one to come was HANS HENDRIK in the 1850's. Since 1910 most West Greenlanders immigrated from Upernavik District, the least mixed part of the West Greenland population.
- c) Caucasians. Mostly Danes and US citizens.
- d) Negro.

3. Methods

Collection of data

In addition to direct interrogation of the Polar Eskimo population in 1928–1932, 1934–1937, 1938–1939, 1963, and 1969, the following sources were used in collecting data: Church Registers (established in 1909), hospital case records, midwives' journals, Hunting Council reports, and the National Register. Finally, information about family relations was obtained from expedition diaries and notes, as well as from the abundant literature concerning the Polar Eskimos. Further information about genealogies is contained in *Polar Eskimo Genealogy* (GILBERG *et al.*, in prep.).

Punch card census

As no consecutive annual census of the Polar Eskimo population which would give an impression of its growth over a long period of years is available, a census of this kind has been constructed. Figure 2 shows how this was done with the aid of punch cards.

As can be seen from the fictitious example, the card contains the demographic data of the person concerned. The 102 holes at the edge are used to carry the following data, which, if positive, are represented by a punched hole; if information is unavailable or if it is negative, the hole is not open.

Hole (1): indicates the person's sex (male ♂: open; female ♀: closed).

Holes (2) (3): indicate whether anthropometric data were collected in 1963 (2) and in 1969 (3).

Holes (4) (6) (7) (13): indicate how old the person became, if dead, and that the person was childless.

Hole (5): Indicates twins.

Holes (8) (9) (10) (11) (12): indicate the person's ethnic affiliation; thus, if a Polar Eskimo's (hole 10) ancestors include West Greenlanders hole (8) is also punched. If the punch card's subject is also a descendant of the Canadian immigrants, hole (12) is punched too. In this way the population can easily be divided into various groups according to their ancestors' origins.

102 101 100 99 98 97 96 95 94 93 92 91 90 89 88 87 86 85 84 83 82 81 80 79 78 77 76 75 74 73

1 Census-no: 308

2

3 ID code no: B037 Marriage no: aq - 131 - 357

4 Name: Uisakavsak Minik Peter

5 Sex: male Family name: Qujaukitsoq

6 Born: 11-03-1911 at: Kangerdlugssuaq

7 Dead: 03-08-1966 Cause of death: drowned - kayak accident.

8 Total age in years: 55

9 Marriage: (1) - - (2) 06-05-1936. (3) 22-08-1942.

10 First child born: 13-01-1934. Last child born: 17-06-1954. Interval in years: 20

11 Order of children: (1) ♀ (2) no children (3) ♂, ♂, ab, ♀, ♀, ♀, ♂.

12 Total number of children: 4 ♀ + 3 ♂ = 7 children

13 Age at first child birth: 23 years. Age at last child birth: 43 years.

14 Blood group: O, MN, S-

15

16

17

18

19

20

21 Selector-Hulkort nr. 102

22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 1972

Fig. 2. Polar Eskimo census punch card.

Holes (15–102): describe that part of the card subject’s lifetime which falls under the period from 1855 (hole 15) to 1972 (hole 102). The person’s lifetime is indicated by punched holes corresponding to the years in which he/she lived.

Census no: The Polar Eskimo population which existed in 1963 has been given serial numbers for use when a simple and anonymous method of operation is desirable. The numbers from 1 to 399 are used for persons over 15 years of age, and the numbers from 400 to 799 for children.

Yearly censuses can be taken with the help of a knitting needle. For example, if you want to know the size of the population in 1925, you stick the needle in hole (55), and by lifting the needle you remove the cards pertaining to all those persons who were *not* alive in 1925. The remaining cards are then counted, and give the size of the population in 1925. If the result of a specific date in 1925 is wanted, persons who died or were born in 1925 will have to be sorted with reference to the desired date. Table 1 shows the results of such censuses on December 31 and are given graphically in Figure 10.

The views expressed about the Polar Eskimo population in this article are based on the figures arrived at by this method. It should be emphasized that these figures for the Polar Eskimo population do not agree with the official statistics for the population in Thule District or Thule Commune for the corresponding years, as these official figures do not differentiate between Polar Eskimos and other people, but solely between persons “born in Greenland” and persons “born outside of Greenland”. The difference between the official census and the figures pertaining to the size of the Polar Eskimo population are shown on Table 2 (TRAP, 1970: 604).

Table 1. *The development of the Polar Eskimo population, 1924-1973*

Year	Census			No. ♂ pr. 100 ♀	Sum. fert. qvot.	Year increase		live born			Born			twins	Dead			Migra- tion		
	December 31.					no.	%	♀	♂	♀+♂	♂ pr. 100 ♀	stillborn			÷ stillborn			♀	♂	
	♀	♂	♀+♂									♀	♂		T	♀	♂			♀+♂
1973.....	316	321	637	102		+ 7	+1.1	2	6	8	300	0	0	0		1	1	2	+1	
1972.....	314	316	630	101	11	+ 3	+0.5	5	2	7	40	0	0	0		1	3	4		
1971.....	310	317	627	102	26	+ 10	+1.6	8	8	16	100	0	0	0		3	4	7		+1
1970.....	305	312	617	102	21	+ 14	+2.3	3	10	13	333	0	1	1		1	2	3	+1	+3
70/73....	311	319	630	102	58	+ 34	+1.8	18	25	44	144	0	1	1		6	10	16	+2	+4
1969.....	302	301	603	100	45	+ 24	+4.1	18	9	27	50	0	1	1		0	1	1	+1	÷2
1968.....	283	296	579	105	43	+ 20	+3.6	11	14	25	127	1	1	3	♀♂	2	1	3	÷1	÷1
1967.....	275	284	559	103	55	+ 26	+4.9	17	14	31	82	0	1	1		4	2	6	+1	
1966.....	261	272	533	104	49	+ 23	+4.5	8	18	26	225	0	1	1		1	3	4	+1	
1965.....	253	257	510	102	55	+ 22	+4.5	18	10	28	56	0	0	0		2	3	5		÷1
1964.....	239	249	468	104	51	+ 23	+4.9	9	16	25	178	0	2	2	♀♀	0	4	4	+2	
1963.....	228	237	465	105	43	+ 17	+3.8	13	7	20	54	0	2	2		2	2	4	+2	÷1
1962.....	215	233	448	108	38	+ 0	+0.0	12	5	17	42	1	0	1		3	3	6	÷8	÷3
1961.....	214	234	448	109	56	+ 19	+4.4	13	12	25	92	0	0	0		1	3	4		÷2
1960.....	202	227	429	113	68	+ 19	+4.6	11	18	29	142	0	0	0	♀♂	3	5	8		
60/69....	247	259	506	105	50	+193	+3.9	130	123	253	93	2	8	10		18	27	45	÷2	÷10
1959.....	196	214	410	109	34	+ 15	+3.8	6	8	14	133	0	0	0		1	1	2	+3	
1958.....	188	207	395	110	41	+ 18	+4.8	9	7	16	78	1	2	3		0	1	1	+2	
1957.....	176	201	377	114	42	+ 10	+2.7	6	10	16	167	0	0	0		2	4	6		
1956.....	172	195	367	113	44	+ 10	+2.8	7	9	16	129	0	0	0		1	4	5	÷1	
1955.....	167	190	357	114	50	+ 7	+2.0	6	12	18	200	0	2	2	♀♀	5	8	13	+1	+1
1954.....	165	185	350	113	46	+ 11	+3.2	9	7	16	78	0	0	0		2	4	6		+1
1953.....	158	181	339	115	56	+ 10	+3.0	7	12	19	171	0	1	1	♂♂	2	5	7		
1952.....	153	176	329	115	36	+ 6	+1.9	6	6	12	100	1	0	1		2	2	4	÷3	+1
1951.....	152	171	323	112	37	+ 9	+2.9	5	7	12	140	1	0	1		1	1	2		÷1
1950.....	148	166	314	112	41	+ 11	+3.6	9	4	13	44	1	1	2	♀♂	1	2	3		+1

50/59.....	167	189	356	113	43	+107	+3.1	70	82	152	117	4	6	10		17	32	49	+2	+3
1949.....	140	163	303	116	36	+ 1	+0.3	3	8	11	267	0	1	1	♂♂	6	4	10	÷1	
1948.....	143	159	302	111	50	+ 5	+1.7	4	11	15	275	0	0	0		2	7	9	÷1	
1947.....	142	155	297	109	47	+ 9	+3.1	2	12	14	600	0	0	0		2	3	5		
1946.....	143	145	288	101	42	+ 9	+3.2	8	4	12	50	0	0	0		2	3	5	+2	
1945.....	135	144	279	107	22	÷ 4	÷1.4	2	4	6	200	0	1	1		3	7	10		
1944.....	136	147	283	108	39	+ 1	+0.4	5	6	11	120	0	0	0		7	2	9	÷1	
1943.....	139	143	282	103	32	+ 3	+1.1	6	3	9	50	0	0	0		2	4	6		
1942.....	135	144	279	107	43	+ 7	+2.6	8	4	12	50	0	0	0		3	2	5	+2	÷2
1941.....	128	144	272	113	44	+ 6	+2.3	4	8	12	200	0	0	0		1	2	3	÷3	
1940.....	128	138	266	108	34	+ 5	+1.9	6	3	9	50	0	0	0		3	2	5		
40/49.....	137	148	285	108	39	+ 42	+1.5	48	63	111	131	0	2	2		31	36	67	÷2	÷2
1939.....	124	137	261	110	42	+ 5	+2.0	5	6	11	120	0	0	0		5	3	8	+1	+1
1938.....	123	133	256	108	43	+ 5	+2.0	9	2	11	22	0	0	0		3	2	5	÷1	
1937.....	118	133	251	113	28	+ 0	+0.0	4	3	7	75	0	0	0		3	5	8	+1	
1936.....	116	135	251	116	52	+ 7	+2.9	5	8	13	160	0	2	2	♂♂	3	3	6		
1935.....	114	130	244	114	49	+ 5	+2.1	6	6	12	100	0	0	0		4	4	8		+1
1934.....	112	127	239	113	33	+ 0	+0.0	3	5	8	167	0	0	0		1	6	7	÷1	
1933.....	111	128	239	115	36	+ 1	+0.4	4	5	9	125	0	0	0		5	3	8		
1932.....	112	126	238	113	34	÷ 13	÷5.2	4	4	8	100	0	1	1		12	8	20		+1
1931.....	120	131	251	109	28	÷ 3	÷1.2	5	2	7	40	0	0	0		5	3	8		÷2
1930.....	120	134	254	112	39	+ 4	+1.6	3	7	10	233	0	0	0		4	2	6		
30/39.....	117	131	248	112	39	+ 11	+0.5	48	48	96	100	0	3	3		45	39	84		+1
1929.....	121	129	250	107	32	÷ 14	÷5.3	4	4	8	100	0	0	0		11	11	22		
1928.....	128	136	264	106	38	÷ 2	÷0.8	3	7	10	233	0	0	0	♂♂	4	7	11	÷1	
1927.....	130	136	266	105	56			5	10	15	200	0	0	0		3	4	7		
1926.....								3	4	7	133	1	0	1		1	1	2		
1925.....								4	5	9	125	0	0	0		4	2	6		
1924.....	126	131	257	104	23			5	1	6	20	0	0	0		2	1	3		
24/29.....	126	133	259	105	37	÷16	÷3.0	24	31	55	130	1	0	1		25	26	51	÷1	

Table 2. *The official census for Thule District compared to the size of the Polar Eskimo population in corresponding years*

	Year, on December 31.	1921	1930	1938	1945	1955	1960	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
Official census	born in Greenland.		266		312	400	473	533	560	604	607	619	620
	born outside												
	Greenland.....		5		10	28	58	74	82	80	75	68	73
	Thule District.....	250	271	277	322	428	531	607	642	684	682	687	693
Station Nord.....	0	0	0	0			31		36	30	31	30	
Polar Eskimo popul- ation.....		254	256	279	357	429	510	533	559	579	603	617	

4. Some authors' remarks on the Polar Eskimo population

The first meeting of the Polar Eskimos and White Men in Thule District took place at Kap York in August 1818. With the aid of his Greenlandic interpreter, SAKÆUS, JOHN ROSS, after dramatic events which KNUD RASMUSSEN (1921:1-3) vividly described, came into contact with 18 Polar Eskimos men on board his ship. Out of fear women and children had been hidden in the mountains. Ross did not reach land, since winds and currents forced the ships to withdraw after a few days. Thus Ross's account gives no information about the size of the population, but he does relate that the Polar Eskimos looked upon themselves as the only people in the world. One must therefore presume that the Polar Eskimos were very isolated before the visit took place. This view agrees with HOLTVED's remark: "The conditions suggest that communication with West Greenland ebbed out about the year 1600, whereafter the culture acquired a more special Polar Eskimo character in the Thule District." (1944 (2): 178).

The first attempt to indicate the size of the Polar Eskimo population was done by KANE: "I have a census, exactly confirmed by three separate informants, which enables me to count by name about one hundred and forty souls, scattered along in eight settlements from Kosoak, the Great River at the base of a Glacier near Cape Melville, to the windloved hut of Anokatok. There are more, perhaps, but certainly not many. Out of these I can number five deaths since our arrival; and I am aware of hardships and disasters encountered by the survivors, which, repeated as they must be in the future, cannot fail to involve a larger mortality. Crime combines with disease and exposure to thin their numbers: I know of three murders within the past two years; and one infanticide occurred only a few months ago. These facts, which are open to my limited sources of information, cannot, of course, indicate the number of deaths correctly. They confirm, however, a fearful conclusion which these

poor wretches have themselves communicated to us—that they are dying out: not lingeringly, but so rapidly as to be able to mark within a generation their progress toward extinction.” KANE (1856 (2): 108, 211).

KANE (1856 (2): 109) and HAYES (1867: 386) were both of the impression that the population was rapidly dying out, and they believed that the Polar Eskimos also thought so. No other information about the validity of this view has been found. It is neither confirmed nor invalidated by BESSELS, who visited the Polar Eskimos in 1871–1873, and “personally saw 102 individuals, but the entire tribe did not exceed this number by more than eight or ten.” (1884: 863). Presumably there were more, for twenty years later twice as many Polar Eskimos were counted in the area. This population increase cannot be attributed to immigration, as only one wave of immigration is known. This took place in the 1860’s from Canada to Greenland, and resulted in an increase of 9 ♀ and 7 ♂, (GILBERG, 1975).

The first proper censuses were taken in the PEARY period (1891–1909). COOK, who participated in the first PEARY *North Greenland Expedition* 1891–1893, numbered the population in 1892 at 243 men, women and children: “... these people were said to be rapidly dying out from disease, cold and starvation. These predictions, I believe, are founded upon insufficient or incompetent observations” (COOK, 1894a).

On a later PEARY expedition HUGH J. LEE took a census on August 31, 1895, when the population consisted of 253 persons (113 ♀ and 140 ♂). A year later an epidemic had reduced the population to 229 people. PEARY himself believed “that the tribe was originally much more numerous than at present seems to be borne out, not only by their own statement, but by the existence of many ancient igloos all along the coast. That the tribe previous to my visit was either increasing or decreasing in numbers I should be strongly inclined to doubt, it being probable that nature’s balance between the population and the food-producing capabilities of the country had been established for generations. But since 1891 there has been a marked preponderance of the birthrate over the death-rate, until the epidemic of 1895–1896 decimated the tribe, carrying off eleven per cent. In the year since, the birthrate is again in excess” (1898 (1): 490).

The concept of a larger population at an earlier date based on the numerous prehistoric dwelling ruins is probably not quite correct, for in part many people immigrated to Greenland over a long period of time through Thule District, and these immigrants could have built some of the dwellings before they moved on to the rest of Greenland; in part not all of the dwellings or all of the settlements were occupied simultaneously.

It seems to be correct that apart from fluctuations from one year to another the number of the population has remained more or less station-

ary, for since PEARY's time up to Second World War the size of the population has stayed at about 250, varying from 200 to 300 individuals. PEARY's theory about the balance between population growth and food production in this small hunting society is probably valid.

On the basis of a list of settlements in one of PEARY's diaries it is possible to arrive at a census of the Polar Eskimos in August 1901. At that time 232 people (90 ♀ 135 ♂ and 7 children) lived at 11 settlements.

In 1903-1904 *Den Litterære Grønlands Ekspedition* wintered in Thule District. After 36 Polar Eskimos had succumbed to an epidemic in the winter of 1901-1902, MYLIUS-ERICHSEN had a dark view of the population's future: "We know from HALL that around 1872 the tribe consisted of more than 150 individuals (a rough, presumably too low an estimate), and our count amounts to but 198 individuals. Thus the continued existence of the tribe on these coasts is threatened" (1905: 19).

HENSON went along on all the PEARY expeditions as PEARY's right hand. About 1911 HENSON found that the population numbered 218 persons, which fits in well with Reverend OLSEN's census of 217 Polar Eskimos (99 ♀ and 118 ♂), distributed on 9 settlements in 1910. HENSON remarked about his census that: "It is my conviction that the life of this little tribe is doomed, and that extinction is nearly due. It will be caused partly by themselves (RG: as a result of the extinction of game by more effective weapons), and partly by the misguided endeavors of civilized people" (1912: 50).

McMILLAN stayed in the district from 1913 to 1917: "They are increasing rapidly. In 1909 the total population of these northern shores numbered 218; in 1917, 261" (1918: 17). EKBLAW was together with MACMILLAN in Thule District, and he states concerning the population: "Their number, a little group of 250 persons, probably never more, certainly often many less, determined by the years of minimum food supply, has probably never been much greater or much smaller than now" (1921: 132). In comparison it can be noted that Reverend OLSEN numbered the population in 1918 at 240 persons.

FREUCHEN lived among the Polar Eskimos from 1910 to 1920. He makes the following remarks concerning the population and its future: "In the spring of 1912 the Polar Eskimos tribe numbered 227 individuals, a rather rapid increase since 1906, when PEARY counted 207 in September. But in such a small population large fluctuations can of course occur in the percent of increase, or of decrease resulting from disease or accidents. Yet the tribe has been far more numerous, probably up to 400-500 people. The sharp decrease is due to epidemics" (1915: 1094, 1107).

No other authors are known to share FREUCHEN's idea of a population numbering 400-500. Thus, WISSLER writes: "that the present position of the Polar Eskimo represents a great shrinkage of population may

be doubted; it is more likely a matter of shifting habitation" (1918: 161-162). It is likely, therefore, that FREUCHEN's figure of 400-500 people exceeds probability, and that about half the number seems like a more reasonable guess; it should be emphasized, however, that nobody *knows* for sure how many Polar Eskimos lived in the area when Ross visited them in 1818.

The authors cited here, the majority of whom visited Thule District at the turn of the century, have in common a pessimistic view of the population's future. If one looks at the growth curve of the Polar Eskimo population (Figure 10) one can also see that it was just in this period that the census showed a sharp decrease. Table 3 shows the censuses of the Polar Eskimo population as they appear in the literature.

Table 3. *Polar Eskimo census from the literature*

Year	Census	Source	
1854.....	c. 140	KANE	1856
1861.....	c. 100	HAYES	1867
1873.....	c. 112	BESSELS	1875
1892.....	243	COOK	1894
1895.....	253	PEARY	1898
1896.....	229	PEARY	1898
1897.....	234	PEARY	1898
1903.....	198	MYLIUS-ERICHSEN	1905
1906.....	207	PEARY	1907
1909.....	217	OLSEN	1910
1911.....	218	HENSON	1912
1917.....	261	MACMILLAN	1918
1918.....	235	Grønland 200 år	1921
1923.....	251	RASMUSSEN	1925
1924.....	260	HOLTVED	1944
1925.....	264	HOLTVED	1944
1926.....	267	HOLTVED	1944
1927.....	276	HOLTVED	1944
1927.....	284	Greenland	1928
1929.....	261	HOLTVED	1944
1930.....	263	HOLTVED	1944
1931.....	251	HOLTVED	1944
1932.....	252	HOLTVED	1944
1933.....	253	HOLTVED	1944
1934.....	253	HOLTVED	1944
1935.....	274	HOLTVED	1967
1951.....	302	MALAUURIE	1952

Table 4. *Number of births in the Polar Eskimo population 1890-1973*

Period	Number births				Average pr. year	♂ pr. 100 ♀
	♀	♂	?	♀+♂		
A. 1970-1973.....	18	27		45	11.2	150
B. 1960-1969.....	133	130		263	26.3	98
C. 1950-1959.....	74	88		162	16.2	119
D. 1940-1949.....	48	65		113	11.3	135
E. 1930-1939.....	48	51		99	9.9	106
F. 1920-1929.....	37	45	3	85	8.5	124
G. 1910-1919.....	47	40	1	88	8.8	89
H. 1900-1909.....	35	35		70	7.0	100
I. 1890-1899.....	14	31	2	47	4.7	221
1890-1973.....	454	512	6	972	11.6	113
Unknown time.....		2	2	4		
84 years.....	454	514	8	976	11.6	113

(Stillborn incl., abortions excl.).

Table 5. *Birthplace of Polar Eskimo children, 1954-1973*

	♀	♂	♀ + ♂	% of total	♂ pr. 100 ♀
Born at Qânâq.....	110	126	236	57.7	115
Born at settlement.....	75	71	146	35.7	95
Unknown birthplace or born in Denmark or West Greenland..	10	17	27	6.6	170
Total.....	195	214	409	100.0	110

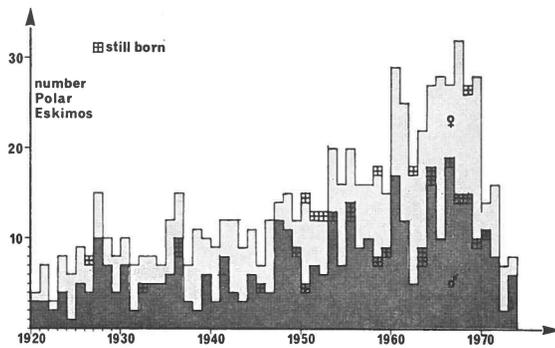


Fig. 3. Number of male and female Polar Eskimos born 1920–1973.

5. Births

The number of live births is basic to a determination of fertility.

During the PEARY period there were a few more births than deaths, not taking the 1895–1896 epidemic into account (PEARY, 1898 (1): 490). MYLIUS-ERICHSEN was of the opinion (1905: 18) that the number of births around 1903 was from 5 to 6 births per year on the average. The number of births in our material is shown in Table 4 for the period 1890–1973. Here it appears that the number of births rises steadily from 1890 up to Second World War, whereupon it increases sharply. In the 1960's it rises still higher, and, finally, the number rate falls considerably in the 1970's (Figure 3). The population has grown over the years, and therefore many more children are born, but in addition there is a real increase in the number of births per woman. The interval between births had become shorter in the postwar period than around the turn of the century, when there was a tendency toward a three-year period between births.

Before the missionaries came in 1909 the Polar Eskimos practiced infanticide during periods of famine in order to save the children from a painful and slow death. This apparently took a toll in both sexes, with a possible slight preponderance of female infanticides. And yet infanticide has never been responsible to any large extent for childhood deaths. When supplies of powdered milk could be obtained in the store (1910) infanticide gradually disappeared in the first decades of the 20th Century.

After the construction of hospitals—to begin with at Ũmánaq (1929) and later at Qânâq (1954) most Polar Eskimos have been born in the administrative town near a physician and the hospital. 236 of the 409 babies born in 1954–1973 (both years incl.) were born in Qânâq (Table 5).

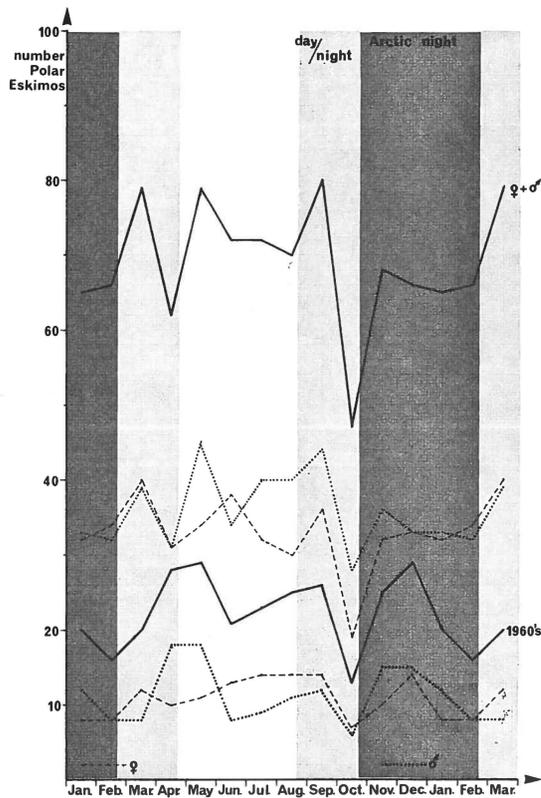


Fig. 4. The month in which Polar Eskimos were born, 1909–1973 and 1960–1969.

Distribution of births by months

Since our material does not include the birth dates of all Polar Eskimos, this investigation is confined to a period of 63 years, namely, 1909–1973, both years included. We know that in this period there were 861 births (stillborn included); the sex of four of the babies is unknown. Of these 857 persons (413 ♀ and 444 ♂) we do not know the birth dates of 39 persons (24 ♀ and 15 ♂) who were born in 1909–1928. The birthdates of the remaining 818 Polar Eskimos (389 ♀ and 429 ♂) are given by per cent by month in Table 6 and Figure 4, where dense hatching indicates the polar night and light hatching the day/night periods. The diagram's curves for both sexes show a more or less uniform course, with the largest number of births during the season with continuous sunlight.

This is especially pronounced with respect to ♂, and the variations from month to month are also greatest here. The decline in October is characteristic for both sexes. In order to find out if the distribution in the 3 uppermost curves in figure 4 was correct other distributions of the material were also made, partly a 14-days' census, partly a distribution shifted by half a month from the middle of one month to the middle of

Table 6. *The month in which Polar Eskimo and Danes are born*

	A: 1909-1973						B: 1960-1969						C: Danes born 1970					
	Female		Male		Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
January.....	32	8.2	33	7.6	65	7.9	8	5.9	12	8.6	20	7.3	2710	7.9	2789	7.7	5499	7.8
February.....	34	8.7	32	7.4	66	8.0	8	5.9	8	5.7	16	5.8	2544	7.4	2759	7.6	5303	7.5
March.....	40	10.2	39	9.0	79	9.6	12	8.9	8	5.7	20	7.3	3097	9.0	3321	9.1	6418	9.1
April.....	31	7.9	31	7.1	62	7.5	10	7.4	18	12.9	28	10.2	3275	9.5	3295	9.0	6570	9.3
May.....	34	8.7	45	10.3	79	9.6	11	8.1	18	12.9	29	10.5	3098	9.0	3232	8.9	6330	9.0
June.....	38	9.7	34	7.8	72	8.7	13	9.6	8	5.7	21	7.6	2937	8.5	3142	8.6	6079	8.5
July.....	32	8.2	40	9.2	72	8.7	14	10.4	9	6.4	23	8.4	2926	8.5	3147	8.6	6073	8.5
August.....	30	7.7	40	9.2	70	8.5	14	10.4	11	7.8	25	9.1	2930	8.5	3115	8.6	6045	8.5
September.....	36	9.2	44	10.1	80	9.7	14	10.4	12	8.6	26	9.5	2879	8.4	2967	8.2	5846	8.3
October.....	19	4.9	28	6.4	47	5.6	7	5.2	6	4.3	13	4.7	2616	7.6	2838	7.8	5454	7.7
November.....	32	8.2	36	8.3	68	8.2	10	7.4	15	10.7	25	9.1	2629	7.6	2947	8.1	5576	7.9
December.....	33	8.4	33	7.6	66	8.0	14	10.4	15	10.7	29	10.5	2779	8.1	2830	7.8	5609	7.9
Total.....	391	100	435	100	826	100	135	100	140	100	275	100	34420	100	36382	100	70802	100
Sex difference.....			+44						+5						+1962			
Average monthly.....	32.6		36.2		68.8		11.3		11.6		22.9		2868.3		3031.8		5900.1	

the next month. Furthermore, similar distributions were studied with respect to dates of birth in the 1960's (table 6B, lowermost 3 curves in Fig. 4). No significant differences could be seen on the various distributions. *A clear minimum in October is typical of all of them.* A similar survey (Table 6C) of Danes born in 1970 shows an even distribution throughout the year, with a maximum in April and a minimum in February.

It is very difficult to explain why the number of births in October is so low but its cause must be looked for nine months earlier, i.e. around January or at the end of the polar night. No doubt the most probable reason for the few births in October is that the vast majority of pregnancies start at the beginning of the polar night. And most of the curves (Figure 4) also indicate a maximum of births in September. Moreover it is possible that the long polar night has a psychological effect on sexual activity, or that the hormone balance changes during four months of darkness.

Cook's view on this matter was: "These people live in a region of constant night for four months. This endless night has a peculiar effect on the secretion and upon the passions. During the whole of this long Arctic night the secretions are diminished and the passions suppressed. The passions of these people are periodical, and their courtship is usually carried on soon after the return of the sun; in fact, at this time they almost tremble from the intensity of their passions and for several weeks most of their time is taken up with gratifying them. Naturally enough, then, the children are usually born at the beginning of the Arctic night, or about nine months from this time" (1894b: 284). Cook's view of the Polar Eskimos' periodicity in their sexual activity requires a further investigation, which no one has made to date.

MALAUURIE also finds a yearly periodicity in the number of births among the Polar Eskimos: "Un caractère saisonnier des naissances semble se dessiner, les 3 mois d'hiver (janvier, février, mars) étant ceux des plus nombreuses naissances. Il apparait ici, tout comme chez les esquimaux canadiens, que la période de conception se situe le plus généralement au printemps, lors du retour du soleil, à l'époque où les ressources se font plus importantes et où les déplacements reprennent" (1952: 682). This observation does not quite agree with our material, yet March seems common to both as a month of many births.

Another possible explanation of the small number of births in October is diet. In the past the end of the polar night was the time when periods of famine most often occurred, when the winter stores were consumed and it was necessary to wait for daylight before hunting activities could be resumed to a full extent.

Table 7. *Polar Eskimo twins*

Id-K	Born	Birthplace	Comments
<u>C</u> 002 & <u>D</u> 002.....	c. 1901		{ Both strangled shortly after birth
<u>F</u> 002 & <u>G</u> 002.....	1907		{ One died, 2 years old, one married, had children
<u>B</u> 068 & <u>C</u> 068.....	23- 4-1928	Pitoravik	{ Both married and have children
<u>B</u> 110 & <u>C</u> 110.....	2- 4-1936		Both stillborn
<u>H</u> 085 & <u>J</u> 085.....	12- 5-1949		{ One died, 14 days old, one living
<u>K</u> 081 & <u>L</u> 081.....	13- 2-1950		Both stillborn
<u>E</u> 163 & <u>F</u> 163.....	9- 6-1953	Savigsivik	Both lived only a few hours
<u>B</u> 160 & <u>C</u> 160.....	28-12-1955	Qânâq	Both living, one in Denmark
<u>J</u> 148 & <u>K</u> 148.....	7-12-1950	Qânâq	Lived 18 and 2 days
<u>D</u> 209 & <u>E</u> 209.....	27- 4-1964	Qânâq	Both living
<u>H</u> 160 & <u>J</u> 160.....	8-12-1968	Siorapaluk	Both stillborn

Twins

The oldest pair of the 11 twins known (Table 7) among the Polar Eskimos was born ca 1911. Physician HOLM was told in 1928 that the two boys were killed shortly after birth. Perhaps they were premature, perhaps sufficient milk could not be obtained for them. HOLM also discovered that two sisters of these boys supposedly also were twins. One of these girls died at the age of two years; the other is still alive and has had children and grandchildren, none of whom are twins.

The diagram shows the genealogy of the 11 pairs of twins. Three of the pairs from a group by themselves (Figure 6). Two of these pairs of twins are siblings and have a grandfather of West Greenlandic descent. The third pair first has ancestors in common with the two sibling pairs as far back as the fourth generation.

The other 8 pairs of twins are related to one another and almost belong in the same generation (Figure 5). It sounds improbable that no twins were reported previously. It would be reasonable to assume that in this respect our data is not satisfactory. The permanent physician first came to Thule District in 1928, and as most twins born before this date were, like the known cases, either stillborn or died in infancy no attention was paid to the matter.

The sex ratio of the 11 pairs of twins is 9 ♀ and 13 ♂, or 144 ♂ per 100 ♀. Of the 22 twins only 8 survived the first year of life, which corresponds to 36 %. The relation between the sexes with respect to infantile survival confirms to the general pattern: the girls seem to be sturdier

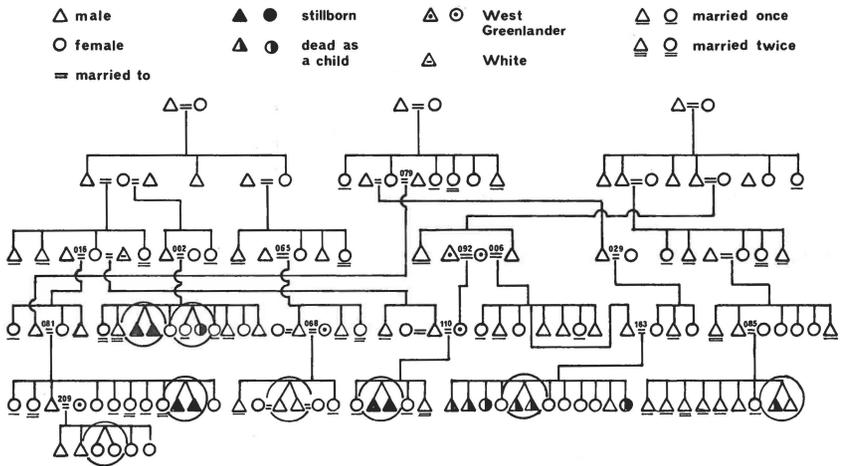


Fig. 5. Twins among the Polar Eskimos, group I.

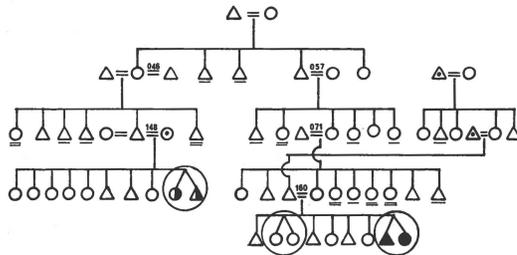


Fig. 6. Twins among the Polar Eskimos, group II.

and more capable of surviving, whereas most of the male twins died within a week. We do not know how many were born prematurely.

As for foreign ancestors in the group of 8 twins Figure 6 shows that the following groups of children have West Greenlandic ancestors: 002, 007, 010, 015, 027 (2 ♀ and 6 ♂), and that of these 8 children only two survived the first two years of life, one ♀ and one ♂. The 002 pairs are related to Qumangâpik, a Canadian immigrant from the 1860's.

We know of no triplets or other multiple births among the Polar Eskimos.

6. Mortality

Table 8. *The summary death quotient for the Polar Eskimo population (A) and Denmark (B), 1927-1973*

Year	A	B	Year	A	B	Year	A	B
			1959	4.9	9.3	1939	30.7	10.1
			1958	2.5	9.2	1938	19.5	10.3
			1957	15.9	9.3	1937	31.9	10.8
			1956	13.6	8.9	1936	23.9	11.0
			1955	36.4	8.7	1935	32.8	11.1
			1954	17.1	9.1	1934	29.3	10.4
1973	3.1	10.0	1953	20.6	9.0	1933	33.5	10.6
1972	6.3	10.1	1952	12.2	9.0	1932	34.0	11.0
1971	11.2	9.8	1951	6.2	8.8	1931	31.9	11.4
1970	4.9	9.8	1950	9.6	9.2	1930	23.6	10.8
70/73	6.4	9.9	50/59	12.7	9.1	30/39	34.1	10.6
1969	1.7	9.8	1949	33.0	8.9	1929	88.0	
1968	5.2	9.7	1948	29.8	8.6	1928	41.7	
1967	10.7	9.9	1947	16.8	9.7	1927	26.3	
1966	7.5	10.3	1946	17.4	10.2			
1965	9.8	10.1	1945	35.8	10.5			
1964	8.2	9.9	1944	31.8	10.2			
1963	8.6	9.8	1943	21.3	9.6			
1962	13.4	9.7	1942	17.9	9.6			
1961	8.9	9.4	1941	11.0	10.3			
1960	18.6	9.5	1940	18.8	10.4			
60/69	9.3	9.8	40/49	23.4	9.8	27/29	52.0	

Death rate

The number of Polar Eskimo deaths in relation to the size of the population has been on the decline after trading and health services were established about 1930.

“The number of deaths—when epidemics caused by foreign visitors are not taken into account—averages 4 to 5 individuals per year” writes MYLIUS-ERICHSEN (1905: 18). In his day it fluctuated considerably, and the 4-5 deaths per year were doubtless on the small side, even excluding epidemics.

Table 9 shows the summary death quotient of the Polar Eskimo population (Column A) from 1930 to 1973, that is the number of deaths—stillbirths not included—per 1,000 inhabitants per year. For comparison the corresponding figures are given for Denmark (Column B). The Polar Eskimos' death quotient in the 1930's is 34, while that for Denmark is only one third of this figure. It is interesting to note, however, that in the 1960's they are more or less uniform.

Tabel 9. *Number of deaths (distributed by age) among the Polar Eskimos, 1927-1973*

Year	Total no. of deaths			Still-born			Infants 0-1 years			Children 1-14 years			Adult 15 years and more			Infant mortality
	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	
1973.....	1	1	2	.	.	.	0	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	77
1972.....	1	3	4	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	0	1	1	.
1971.....	3	4	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	2	.	.	.	.
1970.....	1	3	4	0	1	1	0	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	77
70/73.....	6	11	17	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	28
1969.....	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	37
1968.....	3	2	5	1	1	2	2	0	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	80
1967.....	4	3	7	0	1	1	2	0	2	.	.	.	0	1	1	65
1966.....	1	4	5	0	1	1	1	2	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	12
1965.....	2	3	5	.	.	.	2	1	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	11
1964.....	0	6	6	0	2	2	0	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	80
1963.....	2	3	5	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	.	.	.	50
1962.....	4	3	7	1	0	1	1	1	2	.	.	.	1	2	3	12
1961.....	1	3	4	.	.	.	0	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	60
1960.....	3	5	8	.	.	.	2	4	6	0	1	1	.	.	.	206
60/69.....	20	34	54	2	8	10	11	13	24	1	1	2	1	3	4	95
1959.....	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
1958.....	1	3	4	1	2	3	.	.	.	0	1	1	.	.	.	.
1957.....	2	4	6	.	.	.	1	0	1	0	3	3	.	.	.	63
1956.....	1	4	5	.	.	.	0	2	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	125
1955.....	5	10	15	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	3	3	2	0	2	111 ep
1954.....	2	4	6	.	.	.	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	125
1953.....	2	6	8	0	1	1	1	4	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	263
1952.....	3	2	5	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	.	.	.	83
1951.....	1	1	2	1	0	1	.	.	.	0	1	1	.	.	.	.

1950.....	2	3	5	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	0	2	2	1	0	1	.	
50/59.....	20	38	58	4	6	10	3	10	13	1	9	10	2	3	5	10	10	20	86
1949.....	6	5	11	0	1	1	2	3	5	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	455 ep
1948.....	2	8	10	.	.	.	0	4	4	1	2	3	0	2	2	1	0	1	200
1947.....	2	3	5	.	.	.	0	1	1	.	.	.	1	2	3	1	0	1	71
1946.....	2	3	5	.	.	.	2	0	2	.	.	.	0	1	1	0	2	2	167
1945.....	3	8	11	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	1	3	0	4	4	1	1	2	167 ep
1944.....	7	2	9	.	.	.	3	1	4	2	0	2	1	1	2	1	0	1	364
1943.....	2	4	6	.	.	.	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	111
1942.....	3	2	5	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	2	2	.
1941.....	1	2	3	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	2	3	.
1940.....	3	2	5	.	.	.	2	1	3	1	1	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	333
40/49.....	31	39	70	0	2	2	9	12	21	10	5	15	4	12	16	8	8	16	180
1939.....	5	3	8	.	.	.	1	1	2	.	.	.	0	2	2	4	0	4	182
1938.....	3	2	5	.	.	.	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	91
1937.....	3	5	8	.	.	.	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	1	1	2	1	3	143
1936.....	3	5	8	0	2	2	1	1	2	.	.	.	0	1	1	2	1	3	154
1935.....	4	4	8	.	.	.	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	3	2	5	83
1934.....	2	6	8	.	.	.	.	.	.	0	3	3	.	.	.	2	3	5	.
1933.....	5	3	8	.	.	.	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	0	2	111
1932.....	12	9	21	0	1	1	.	.	.	5	3	8	0	1	1	7	4	11	. ep
1931.....	5	3	8	.	.	.	1	0	1	0	1	1	.	.	.	4	2	6	143
1930.....	4	2	6	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	0	2	.	.	.	2	2	4	.
30/39.....	45	42	88	0	3	3	4	5	9	9	12	21	4	7	11	29	15	44	94
1929.....	11	11	22	.	.	.	1	1	2	0	2	2	3	4	7	7	4	11	250 ep
1928.....	4	7	11	.	.	.	0	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	3	0	3	3	200
1927.....	3	4	7	.	.	.	1	1	2	0	1	1	.	.	.	2	2	4	133
27/29.....	18	22	40	0	0	0	2	4	6	2	4	6	5	5	10	9	9	18	182
27/73.....	141	166	327	6	20	26	29	46	75	24	32	56	16	31	47	66	57	123	109
Of 327.....		100.0 %			8.0 %			22.9 %			17.1 %			14.4 %			37.6 %		

(ep = epidemic)

Duration of life

Around the turn of the century PEARY (1907: 383) noticed that the Polar Eskimos rarely lived beyond the age of 60, and he was amazed that any of them reached this age, considering the cruelty of nature.

Among the living Polar Eskimo population in 1973 7.2 % (18 ♀ and 28 ♂) made up that part of the population aged 60 or more. Proportional figures (Table 25) for other years were: 1969 – 6.5 %; 1963 – 5.3 %; 1953 – 3.0 %; 1943 – 1.8 %; 1924 – 1.5 %; 1903 – 1.5 %

The two oldest persons (Table 11) were PUALUNA (Abi: 80 years) and his mother (Vbk: 84 years) who was born in Canada a few years before the 1860 immigration. Of the 9 persons in the group (70–79 years) only 4 lived beyond the age of 71, and in the group (60–69 years) 8 of 21 lived beyond the age of 65.

Table 10. *Infant mortality among Polar Eskimos and in Denmark, 1930–1973*

10 year periods	Polar Eskimos	Denmark
1930–1939	94 (182– 0)	69 (82–58)
1940–1949	180 (455– 0)	45 (55–34)
1950–1959	86 (263– 0)	26 (31–22)
1960–1969	95 (206–11)	20 (22–17)
1970–1973	29 (77– 0)	
1930–1973	99 (455– 0)	40 (82–17)

Infant mortality

The rate of infant mortality in a population is based on the number of dead children under one year of age per 1,000 live born infants. Still-born—that is to say, children who are born without distinct sign of life by the end of the 28th week of pregnancy (MATTHIESSEN, 1965: 116)—are not taken into consideration, as they are of no significance with respect to population growth. Because of the small size of the population and the great variation in the number of births per year the table on infant mortality assumes a certain random character (Table 8). The infant mortality is calculated with average over a 10 year period for both the Polar Eskimo population and for Denmark in Table 10. Variations are shown in parenthesis.

More boys than girls die in infancy. While infant mortality has been on the decrease in Denmark in the past 40 years, there seem to be greater fluctuations among the Polar Eskimos; perhaps one can glimpse a very slightly declining tendency over the past 30 years.

Child mortality

During the 1960's child mortality decreased to a considerable extent, a situation which is of great significance to the growth of the population and to the average life expectancy (Table 8).

Adult mortality

It is a characteristic feature of the Polar Eskimo population that so many young people died at about the age of 20 in the 1930's and 1940's, while only a very small number in this age group died in the period 1950-1973. Tuberculosis and drowning were the chief causes of these deaths. In the past 20 years the number of cases of tuberculosis has declined sharply (Tables 8 and 11).

Causes of death

The causes of death among the Polar Eskimos can be divided roughly into two large groups: accidents and illness.

Accidents: The Polar Eskimos are hunters, who live in close contact with nature and are therefore exposed to its vagaries. Many young hunters died (Table 11) while working for their livelihood. Table 8 shows, however, that in the latter half of the 45 years under consideration (1927-1943) only 7 deaths occurred among young men who had not yet produced children. But since young men now have children at an earlier age than in the first half of the period the figures cannot be directly compared. The sharp decline from 24 deaths among young men in the period 1927-1949 to 7 deaths in the period 1950-1973 must probably be attributed to the fact that the conditions under which hunting is carried on today have become better and safer. Table 12 on causes of death moreover shows that 9 out of the 31 succumbed to tuberculosis and influenza; 7 to unknown causes.

Disease: As for disease, in particular the many influenza epidemics which raged in Thule District over the years left deep traces. A population like that of the Polar Eskimos, which in the past had been isolated from the outside world, had no powers of resistance to the new diseases which foreigners introduced to the district; as a result, epidemics readily broke out. In past years, before health services had a regulative effect, these epidemics had a considerable influence on the demographic structure of the population. An account of the most important epidemics and the excessive number of deaths in Thule District follows:

(1) The epidemic around 1880. According to FREUCHEN (1915: 1094) an epidemic broke out at this time at Kap York, the place to which

Table 11. *Age at death of 170 Polar Eskimos aged 15 years and over, 1927-1973*

Age in years		15-19	20-25	26-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	Total
Childless	♀	7	3	0	3	0	2	1	0	0	16
	♂	10	11	3	2	2	2	1	0	0	31
	♀+♂	17	14	3	5	2	4	2	0	0	47
With children	♀	1	11	5	10	15	10	10	3	1	66
	♂	1	2	3	10	12	13	9	6	1	57
	♀+♂	2	13	8	20	27	23	19	9	2	123
♀+♂ over 14		19	27	11	25	29	27	21	9	2	170

Table 12. *Causes of death among the Polar Eskimos, 1927-1973*

Causes of death	Total no. of dead	Infants 0-1 year			Children 1-15 years			Dead aged 15 years or more childless			as parents		
		♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂
Drowning.....	29	0	0	0	1	4	5	1	11	12	3	9	12
Perished on the ice.....	8	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	3	5
Accidentally shot.....	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Poisoned.....	5	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Bitten by dogs.....	3	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Suicide.....	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Suffocated in bed.....	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total accidents.....	52	3	2	5	3	7	10	1	15	16	8	13	21
Tuberculosis.....	64	3	2	5	10	15	25	6	6	12	12	10	22
Influenza/pneumonia.....	46	4	9	13	0	1	1	5	3	8	19	5	24
Other diseases.....	46	10	9	19	3	4	7	1	0	1	5	14	19
Total diseases.....	156	17	20	37	13	20	33	12	9	21	36	29	65
Stillborn.....	26	6	20	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Premature.....	10	4	6	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Died in childbed.....	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Old age.....	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	6
Total other causes.....	46	10	26	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	4	10
Unknown causes.....	71	5	18	23	8	5	13	3	7	10	16	11	27
Causes of death (140 ♀ & 185 ♂)	327	35	66	101	24	32	56	16	31	47	66	57	123

whalers, in particular, brought infections in the last century. Even though the Polar Eskimos on Kap York often fell ill, "their desire, alone, to meet the Scots and to barter with them kept them living there" (MYLIUS-ERICHSEN, 1905: 44).

(2) The epidemic of 1895-1896, with 29 deaths (21 ♀ and 8 ♂). By August 31, 1895 the population numbered 253 persons, by August 31, 1897, 234. PEARY (1898 (1):514) notes that in the intervening period 29 individuals died and 10 were born, but he does not state the nature of the epidemic.

(3) The 1901-1902 epidemic, with 36 deaths (12 ♀ and 16 ♂ and 8 children). The four children were killed, since one of their parents died. From September 16 to November 19, 7 (3 ♀ and 3 ♂ and a child) of those Polar Eskimos who had been with PEARY at Bedford Pim Island in Canada died. They got sick and died, is all that PEARY has to say about it (1907: 335). MYLIUS-ERICHSEN gives the real reason: "Possibly a Scotch whaler brought an infectious disease (typhoid fever?) to the District, when it anchored at Kap York in June, and during the late summer the epidemic spread from there" (1905: 45 and 1906: 326). The reason why MYLIUS-ERICHSEN thinks that it must have been a question of typhoid fever is that at the same time Scots infected Egedesminde District with this disease.

(4) The 1909-1910 epidemic, with 13 deaths, including 5 among the missionaries' families. An American physician believed that it was typhoid fever (FREUCHEN, 1915: 1094). The sickness began with stomach pains and dizziness, as well as irritation of the eyes, so that for a long time afterwards one saw "black spots".

(5) The epidemic of 1920-1921, with approximately 40 deaths from Spanish influenza, an epidemic which had raged in Europe a few years earlier. This epidemic carried off a sixth of the population (KOCH, 1925: 274).

(6) In 1928-1929 12 persons died of tuberculosis (6 ♀ and 6 ♂). In the same period there were also many accidents.

(7) In 1932 there were 21 deaths (12 ♀ and 9 ♂). The majority were caused by tuberculosis (5) and pneumonia (7).

(8) In 1945, 1948-1949 and 1955 the Polar Eskimos had the last large epidemics.

Almost all of these epidemics were influenza epidemics. In earlier years the illness mostly appears to have caused deaths among women, whereby the considerable shortage of women around the turn of the century was extended. Presumably the men, that is to say, the hunters, live better than the women, for at their hunting grounds the men eat food that is exceptionally rich in proteins and as a result have a far greater power of resistance than do women. The latter spend more time at home

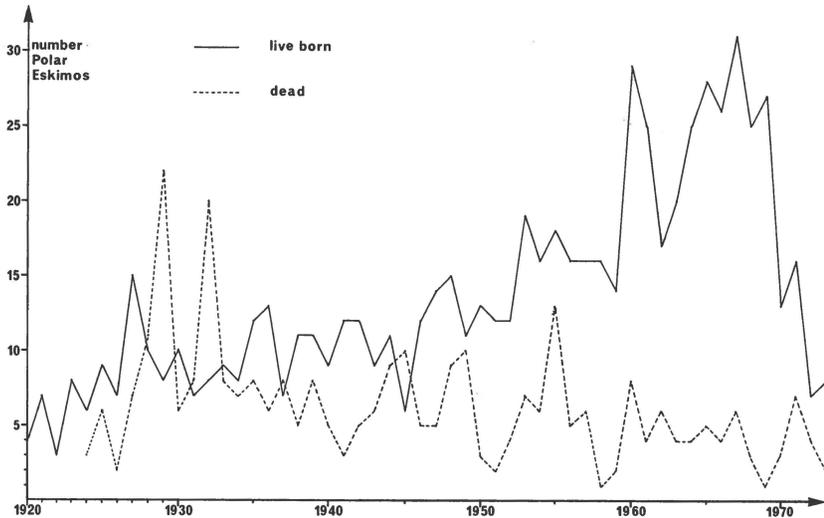


Fig. 7. Relation between live births and deaths among the Polar Eskimos, 1920–1973.

in the house, and thus are more readily infected by epidemics than the men who are out of doors most of the time. In the small houses a great number of people were crowded into a little space.

Tuberculosis: PEARY (1907: 384) already writes that one of the main causes of death was disease of the lungs and bronchia. In the past 40 years most deaths have been caused by diseases. Tuberculosis was the most frequent cause of death in the 1930's and the 1940's, but since then it has been brought down to but a few cases per year in Greenland.

In 1928–1938 (AAGE GILBERG, 1940: 69) 35.2 % of the Polar Eskimo population died of tuberculosis (of which 56 % died of tuberculosis of the lungs, 30 % of tubercular brain fever, and the remainder of tuberculosis of the bones and of various organs). Pneumonia was responsible for 15 % of the deaths.

Table 12 shows the causes of death, as far as they are known, for the 327 deaths which occurred in 1927–1973. Of these 327 persons (141 ♀ and 186 ♂) 26 were stillborn, 56 died in childhood, 47 were over 15 years of age and died without having produced children, and 123 adults aged 15 and over were parents when they died. Disease now seems to be the most common cause of death, rather than accidents, but previously it seems to have been the other way around.

7. The difference between the numbers of births and deaths

A comparison of live births with deaths will give a picture of the population's growth. Figure 7 shows the number of live births and deaths in 1920–1973. The number of live births increases steadily with occasional deviations (1927, 1936, 1949, 1953) from 1920 up to 1960, whereupon it rises sharply to a high level throughout the 1960's. Family planning leaves its traces in the 1970's, when the number of births is again much lower than in the 1960's.

The number of deaths falls steadily on the average during the whole period, apart from some years (1929, 1932, 1945, 1948, 1949, 1955) when epidemics exert an influence.

While in the beginning of the period under investigation the two curves coincide, the distance between the curves steadily increase after 1950, and particularly in the 1960's. Thus a distinct population growth takes place in the 1960's. On the other hand, growth is not so large in the 1970's, and apparently the size of the population is about to recover its balance.

8. Sex ratio

Polar Eskimo sex ratio

In all populations are found 3–10 % more live born boys than live born girls. The world average for live births is 102 ♂ per 100 ♀ for populations with a relatively low standard of living (TAYLOR, 1966: 216).

The sex ratio among live born Polar Eskimos in the period 1924–1973 is shown in Table 1. Because of the very small figures for births per year and the large fluctuations from year to year a pattern cannot be arrived at. The sex ratio fluctuates—from 20 ♂ per 100 ♀ in 1924 to 600 ♂ per 100 ♀ in 1947—an approximate average for the 50 years of 113 ♂ per 100 ♀, which does not differ significantly from what might be expected, when the margin of error is placed at 5 %. As the numbers are very low, too great an importance should not be attached to individual years' fluctuations.

The sex ratio for the entire population, that is, not only among the live born, but of all living persons as of a specific date in a specific year in the period 1897–1973 (both years incl.) is represented graphically in Figure 8 and data in Table 1. It should be pointed out that the material for the period 1897–1926 is inadequate, as information is available for only 7 years; as the curves indicate, it is unfortunately in just this period that the difference between the number of men and the number of women is greatest.

PEARY's census (August 13, 1895) shows that there were considerably more males (140 ♂) than females (113 ♀) in the population. This corre-

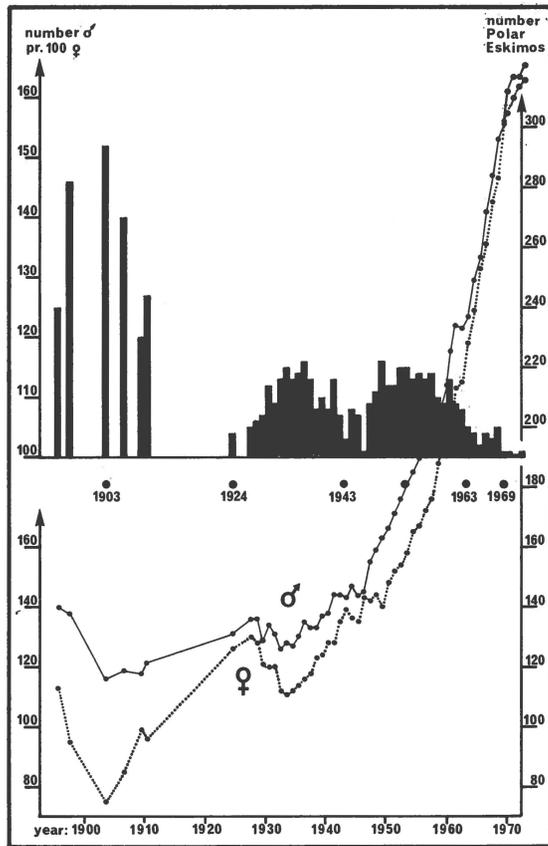


Fig. 8. Sex ratio among the Polar Eskimos, 1895-1973.

sponds to a sex ratio of 124 ♂ per 100 ♀. BESSELS also called attention to the surplus of males in the population, and several other authors (PEARY, 1898 (1):497; STEENSBY, 1910:368; HOVEY, 1918: 371; WRIGHT, 1939:128; FREUCHEN, 1962: 67) have since commented on this situation, which is unique in Greenland, where women usually outnumber the men.

It is unlikely that this excess of men among the Polar Eskimos is due to female infanticide. How many girl infants disappeared shortly after birth or during their first year of life is not known (this statement concerned only the pre-1930 years) but the scant literature on the subject of infanticide among the Polar Eskimos gives no indication that a large number was involved. Perhaps it is more reasonable to assume that the epidemics which ravaged the district before and around the turn of the century could have been responsible for the large distortion of the sex ratio. It reached a peak in 1903 with 154 ♂ per 100 ♀. Thus PEARY (1898 (1): 511-514) relates that out of the 29 victims of the 1895-1896 epidemic 21 were women. About half of the persons who died in the 1901-1902

epidemic and more than half of the 40 who succumbed to the Spanish influenza in 1920–1921, were women.

After the establishment of the mission station (1909) and the increased contact with the southern part of Greenland there occurred a small, but slightly rising immigration of women, mainly from Upernavik District in West Greenland, to Thule District. They became part of the Polar Eskimo population by marriage. The diagram of the sex ratio (Figure 8) shows, however, that through the whole of the investigated period men have outnumbered women among the Polar Eskimos.

The sex ratio of other Eskimos groups

For purposes of comparison with the rest of Greenland, HOLM (1914: 185) gives the following list of the Greenlanders' sex ratio as of 1884: Angmagssalik 88 ♂ per 100 ♀. Southeast Greenland 63 ♂ per 100 ♀. Southwest Greenland 84 ♂ per 100 ♀. Central Greenland 88 ♂ per 100 ♀. The Disko Region 92 ♂ per 100 ♀. Northwest Greenland (Thule District not included) 89 ♂ per 100 ♀. In regard to the single significantly different (from 102) result, HOLM believes that it is a matter of chance that in Southeast Greenland there are only 63 ♂ per 100 ♀. HANSEN (1914: 154) arrives at a result similar to HOLM's, but thinks, despite the small numbers on which the results from Angmagssalik are based that the difference between the numbers of men and women is more due to "a particularly characteristic racial trait" than to differing death rates for the two sexes. This "racial trait" view has not been substantiated by any other authors' statements.

BIRKET-SMITH (1928) believes that the excess of women in West Greenland is the result of the hunters' dangerous occupation; many men drowned in kayaks. MILAN states that the sex ratio in Greenland for 1961 was 94 ♂ per 100 ♀ (Godthåb even 86 ♂ per 100 ♀), and "... suggests that these differences are more probably due to a large number of stillbirths and abortions than are reported by vital statistics, rather than a case of meiotic drive, and illustrate the lower viability of male zygote in general" (1970: 94).

RASMUSSEN relates (1931) about the Netsilik Eskimos that in 1923 out of 96 births (58 ♀ and 38 ♂) 38 girls were killed at birth; and MILAN (1970) states that the sex ratio in Wainwright, Alaska, for 1968 was 108 ♂ per 100 ♀.

9. The family

Reproduction rate

The reproductive period comprises those years in which the woman is capable of bearing children, and is reckoned from and including the 15th year up to and including the 49th year. An examination of Polar Eskimo

Table 13. *Number of children born to Polar Eskimo women who survived beyond age of 50*

Number of children		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total	%
Number of women		11	3	4	7	4	3	5	6	0	3	4	1	2	53	
Number of children of 53 mothers	♀	0	1	2	12	6	7	17	21	0	11	16	6	16	115	48.9
	♂	0	2	5	9	9	8	12	20	0	16	22	5	8	116	49.4
	?	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	1.7
Total		0	3	8	21	16	15	30	41	0	27	39	11	24	235	100.0
Of these survived 15 years & older	♀	0	1	2	11	5	4	12	16	0	6	11	3	12	83	35.3
	♂	0	0	4	8	5	3	11	18	0	11	15	2	3	80	34.0
		0	1	6	19	10	7	23	34	0	17	26	5	15	163	69.3

? = abortion and sex unknown.

Table 14. *Number of Polar Eskimo matings distributed by total sib size*

	Number of children in a mating														Total	Children pr mating
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
A.....	54	81	22	16	9	8	12	5	1	4	2	1	1	0	216	2.1
B.....	10	5	3	6	3	1	0	3	3	4	2	0	2	0	43	4.0
C.....		25													25	1.0
D.....	4	7	11	8	5	5	2	7	4	3	6	1	0	1	64	4.7
E=																
A+B+C+D..	68	118	36	30	17	14	14	15	8	11	11	2	3	1	348	
F.....	26	131	29	26	16	6	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	247	
G=E+F.....	94	249	65	56	33	20	25	16	9	11	11	2	3	1	595	
No. of children in E	0	118	72	90	68	70	84	105	64	99	110	22	36	13	951	2.7
No. of children in F	0	131	58	78	64	30	66	7	8	0	0	0	0	0	442	1.8
No. of children in E+F	0	249	130	168	132	100	150	112	72	99	110	22	36	13	1393	2.3

For explanation, see text, pp. 35-36.

women aged 50 or more reveals that no woman had given birth after the age of 49. The material comprises 53 women aged 50 or more about whom exact information regarding their children is known. The distribution of these 53 women's children by sex is shown in Table 13. 11 of the women are childless, even though several of them have been married more than once. The average number of children per woman is 4.4; the 11 childless women excluded, the average number of children per mother is 5.6

children. The largest number of children a mother has had is 12, but in this connection it should be noted that younger women (i. e. under 50 years of age and not included in this investigation) have had 13 children. Table 13 also indicates how many of the children survived the age of 15. Out of the 48.9 % ♀ 35.3 % survived, and out of the 49.4 % ♂ 34.0 % of the total number survived. In general the 42 women gave birth to equal numbers of boys and girls, and the same number of both sexes survived their 15th year of age. The average number of children per adult woman (i. e. aged 15 or thereover) is 3.1 children. Childless women excluded, the average is 3.9 children per mother.

Family size

The information given in the literature concerning the size of the Polar Eskimo family varies somewhat, as can be seen from the following quotations:

BESSELS: "Die Zahl der Kinder einer Familie beträgt bei den Smith-Sund-Inuit durchschnittlich zwei; was darüber ist, wird meistens getötet, inden die Mutter das Kleine entweder stranguliert ..." (1875: 112).

PEARY: "The Eskimos do not have many children, two or three being the usual number. In no family will be found more than six children..." (1907: 386; 1910: 60).

HANSSON: "The largest Esquimo family known among the North Greenland tribe numbers six. As a rule, an Esquimo family rarely outnumbers three" (1912: 192).

MYLIUS-ERICHSEN: "The tribe is not fertile. When a married couple has more than four children, admiration and amazement are expressed", MYLIUS-ERICHSEN & MOLTKE, (1906: 253).

HOVEY: "Large families are not found in the tribe, but many that we knew comprised four children, while several had five little ones in the igloo" (1918: 361).

The notion that the Polar Eskimos were infertile seems to be contradicted by their subsequent development. The turn of the century's authors happened to observe a few small families whose membership was curtailed by high infant mortality. Moreover, two other factors seem to have been responsible for the reduction of the number of children in the period concerned. One factor was the tendency towards having two to three year intervals between childbirths. The epidemics and famines of the day which suddenly dissolved marriages upon the death of one spouse constituted the other factor.

The survey of pregnancies (Table 14) in the 595 matings about which information is available (GILBERG *et al.*, in prep.) also includes stillbirths and the small number of known abortions; twins are counted individually. Column (A) comprises the matings which have ceased having

children because one of the spouses: (1) is deceased; (2) has left the district permanently; (3) has remarried; (4) the couple has divorced. Column (B) comprises matings in which both parents are alive but are too old to have additional children. Column (C) comprises single mothers, a phenomenon not known before the 1950's. Column (D) comprises matings in which both parents are living and are young enough to have more children with one another. Column (F) comprises those matings—the majority from the oldest part of the *Polar Eskimo Genealogy*, i. e. mainly from the past century—concerning which information is inadequate. These families (*U-sib size*: which means that there is no information whether the children are recorded in proper order nor whether there were more children than known) are thus minimum figures.

The theories of the authors at the turn of the century about small-sized families accordingly seem to be correct, on the whole (Column F). The figures (Table 14F) are total ones. As many of these children died when small, the family size was actually a good deal smaller than stated. In later decades (the 1920's and 1930's) there is a tendency (Column A) toward more large families, which is due to the circumstance that along with gradually smaller intervals between children, child mortality decreases.

Families with many children accordingly emerged in the 1940's and 1950's (Columns B and D). Mortality had then become low. But there still were many small families. From the end of the 1960's family size is again on the decline.

Sterility

In the Polar Eskimo society childless couples have always been regarded with general compassion, for without children to support them they could not look forward with much pleasure to their old age. Therefore the childless couples also tried to acquire foster children or adoptive children from families having many children. One could often take over children of relatives of one of the spouses. Before the missionaries came an exchange of wives was another solution to the childless couples' problem. Childlessness could also cause the dissolution of a marriage.

For practical reasons, in investigating sterility couples who had been married in church are selected, as this would enable control of the durability of the marriages in question. According to Thule's Church register 190 couples, consisting of 299 (145 ♀ and 154 ♂) different Polar Eskimos were married in church, each person counted only once (West Greenlanders excluded). Of these 190 married couples 41 couples were childless. 30 of these couples had lived together for more than 5 years, that is, long enough

Table 15. *Number of childless spouses in wedlock*

Spouse	Number of matings				Total	
	1	2	3	4		
Wife.....	11	2	1	0	14	No children
	0	7	5	1	13	Children by others
Husband.....	8	2	0	0	10	No children
	0	11	6	0	17	Children by others
Total.....	19	22	12	1	54	

to permit a reasonable assumption with respect to childless marriages. 6 of the 60 spouses were West Greenlanders. The remaining 54 (27 ♀ and 27 ♂) childless Polar Eskimo spouses are classified in Table 15 as to whether they have had no children at all. The couples are furthermore classified by sex, and also as to whether they have had children in other instances than in the childless marriage concerned. 24 Polar Eskimos (Table 15) (14 ♀ and 10 ♂) had had no children at all; 30 (13 ♀ and 17 ♂) had had children with other spouses in other matings. The 24 childless couples make up 8% of the total of 299 married Polar Eskimos.

Of the 348 matings in Table 14 E 68 were childless, which corresponds to 19.5%. MALAURIE finds something similar in his Polar Eskimo material from 1950: 16% (1952: 682). FREUCHEN also mentions 20% (1915: 1101) for the Polar Eskimos. When taken as a reflection of sterility in the Polar Eskimo population this percent (16–20%) is too high, as many of the spouses have had children in another mating different from the childless marriage concerned.

Among the 136 spouses of the 68 childless couples 9 (6 ♀ and 3 ♂) are West Greenlanders. 67 of the remaining 127 Polar Eskimos (33 ♂ and 34 ♀) have had children by persons other than their spouses in the childless mating. The final 60 spouses actually amount to no more than 49 (22 ♀ and 27 ♂) different persons, when each is only counted once. Among these Polar Eskimos who have not had children with anyone in any kind of relationship, 20 are married to one another in a first and only marriage. Since the sterility of but one spouse is enough to cause childlessness, we must in practice reckon with a lower number than 49.

In order to give a more correct comparison, the 49 persons should not be compared with the 348 matings' 696 members, since several of these 696 spouses appear several times. The reduced number, which comprises the 348 matings' spouses, is, when non-Polar Eskimos are excluded and the rest are only counted once each, 527 Polar Eskimos (250 ♀ and 277 ♂). The percent of sterility, i.e. the 49 persons relative to the 527, thus becomes 9.3% (♀: 8.8%—♂: 9.7%).

Table 16. *Number of non-Polar Eskimo members of the Polar Eskimo gene pool*

Period	Canadian Eskimos		West Greenlanders		Caucasians		Negro		Total		
	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀+♂
1800-1899.....	9	7	0	2	0	?	0	0	9	9	18
1900-1909.....	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	4	4
1910-1919.....	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	4
1920-1929.....	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
1930-1939.....	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	5
1940-1949.....	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	4
1950-1959.....	0	0	4	4	0	2	0	0	4	6	10
1960-1969.....	0	0	13	6	0	9	0	0	13	15	28
1970-1973.....	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	4	6
Total.....	9	7	32	18	0	17	0	1	41	43	84

This table does not include childless marriages.

Adoption and family planning

In the 1960's, when the number of unmarried mothers has become considerable—the size of the population taken into account—more and more of their children were placed in foster homes or adopted. In the few cases in which the father was a non-Polar Eskimo it was common practice to have the child adopted out of the district, most frequently in Denmark.

Family planning cannot be called a new idea as far as the Polar Eskimos are concerned, for in the last century they practiced infanticide as a means of regulating the family size to make it adaptable to the difficult conditions of life.

Contraception was introduced on a large scale in the 1970's, with the insertion of a spiral in the uterus as the preferred method. The result of this campaign can already be seen in the marked decline of the birth rate that is characteristic of the 1970's.

10. Migration and admixture with other ethnic groups

The immigration in the 1860's of Canadian Eskimos to North Greenland has been of great significance to the population of Thule District, both culturally and genetically (GILBERG, 1975). The immigration ended by increasing the population by a total of 16 persons (9 ♀ and 7 ♂). They were gradually absorbed by the Polar Eskimo population through marriage. 36 % of the total Polar Eskimo population by December 31, 1969 included these Canadian immigrants among their ancestors.

HANS HENDRIK,¹⁾ a West Greenlandic interpreter, lived among the Polar Eskimos in 1853-1861 and 1871-1872 (all years incl.). He married

¹⁾ (BNC)

a Polar Eskimo and they had 6 children, all of whom went south with him. Only one daughter returned to Thule, in 1910.

The literature contains some accounts of the whalers taking part in the Polar Eskimos' wife exchanges even though the strangers had no women to exchange; but they probably had other good things such as wood and iron in the form of knives and sewing needles. It is hard to say how many children resulted from these contacts. The literature and the Eskimos' own statements to the family data collected reveal only a few cases of mixings in the last century and up to 1910, when the contact with West Greenland grew livelier. In a few cases abortions were actually provoked in order to avoid having unwanted children (BESSELS, 1875: 112). The whalers' stays in the area were always of very short duration, only a few days. The visits of members of the various scientific expeditions in Thule District were, on the other hand, not brief.

The list of non-Polar Eskimo persons who have become members of the Polar Eskimo gene pool (Table 16) shows that 84 persons (41 ♀ and 43 ♂) of non-Polar Eskimo origin have had children with Polar Eskimos. Of these foreigners 22 persons entered the gene pool from 1900 to 1949; and 44 persons from 1950 til 1973. This increased admixture in the past 14 years should be seen against the background of the improved communication, among other things established by the airfield at Thule Air Base, most of the 17 caucasians being Danes.

In 1950-1973 19 West Greenlandic women immigrated, the majority coming from Upernavik District by dog sled. All married Polar Eskimo hunters. These hunters and their West Greenlandic wives settled in particular at Savigsivik and Moriussaq. Tradition and family ties are reasons why certain hunters seek a wife among the Upernavik people rather than among the Polar Eskimos. Of the 32 West Greenlandic women who have joined the Polar Eskimo population only four have left the district; the rest either died in Thule District or still live there.

Four of the 18 West Greenlandic men (Table 16) have never been in the district, and eight have left it again. Four of the 17 Caucasians have not been in the district, and none has lived there for more than a few years. The three persons who stayed there for the longest time are FREUCHEN,¹⁾ HENSON²⁾ and PEARY;³⁾ all stayed for more than ten years.

In the 1970's several families from Upernavik District, West Greenland, moved to Thule District. These families are not included in the survey of the Polar Eskimo population, and will only be included when there is a biological connection.

1) (Bgg) 2) (Uzz) 3) (Uwz)

11. Population structure

The population on December 31, 1969

The native Polar Eskimo population of Thule District comprised on December 31, 1969 603 individuals (302 ♀ and 301 ♂). The sex ratio was 100 ♂ per 100 ♀. On the census day 48 of the 603 persons resided outside the district; of these 20 (9 ♀ and 11 ♂) were under the age of 15, and 20 (11 ♀ and 9 ♂) were between the ages of 15 and 35. The remaining 8 persons (6 ♀ and 2 ♂) were 36–51 years of age.

The official census for Thule District—which should not be confused with the Polar Eskimo population—was on December 31, 1969 as follows:

Town (i. e. Thule):	288 (142 ♀ and 146 ♂), including 260 (125 ♀ and 135 ♂) born in Greenland
Settlements:	340 (170 ♀ and 170 ♂), all of whom were born in Greenland
Dundas Radio St.:	59 (26 ♀ and 33 ♂), including 19 (8 ♀ and 11 ♂) born in Greenland
Station Nord:	31 ♂ none born in Greenland
Thule Kommune:	718 (338 ♀ and 380 ♂) including 619 (303 ♀ and 316 ♂) born in Greenland

(Source: *Statistisk Årbog* 1971).

The reason why the official census figure of 619 born in Greenland numbers 16 more than the Polar Eskimo population figure of 603 is that these 16 persons are Greenlanders who are not genetically connected with the Polar Eskimos.

41 households (consisting of 217 persons) of the Polar Eskimo population's 111 households lived in Qânâq, where an additional 28 Polar Eskimos lived at various institutions. The distribution of the households by size and residence is given in Table 17. A household generally consisted of father, mother, and children, at times grandparents or grandchildren as well, or one or two other relatives.

The distribution of the 1969 population by sex, age and marital status is shown in Figure 10, and the distribution by percent appears in Table 18. An age pyramid based on a distribution by percent in 5-year age groups is also given in Figure 10. It is remarkable that 49 % of this population is under the age of 15. The Polar Eskimo population can thus be described as a "young" population like that of all Greenland, in contrast to Denmark, which is described as an "old" population, with half of its members under the age of 35.

Table 17. *Number of Polar Eskimo households on December 31, 1969*

Settlements	Number of household members												Total	Polar Eskimos in all households
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
Qânâq.....	1	7	4	4	8	3	3	6	3	2	0	0	41	217
Siorapaluk.....	1	5	3	3	2	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	19	84
Qeqertarsuaq.....	0	2	4	4	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	13	57
Qeqertat.....	1	0	2	1	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	10	54
Moruisaq.....	1	0	1	1	3	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	11	59
Dundas.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	12
Narssârssuk.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	11
Savigsivik.....	2	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	14	81
At institutions....														28
Thule District.....	6	14	16	15	16	10	7	8	8	4	4	2	111	603

Table 18. *Marital status of Polar Eskimo population on December 31, 1969*

Sex	Single			Married	Divorced	Widowed
	0-14 years	15 years and more	Parents			
♀	148 (24.5 %)	25 (4.1 %)	23 (3.8 %)	92 (15.3 %)	2 (0.3 %)	12 (2.0 %)
302	173 (28.7 %)			129 (21.4 %)		
♂	145 (24.0 %)	38 (6.3 %)	19 (3.2 %)	92 (15.3 %)	0 (0.0 %)	7 (1.1 %)
301	183 (30.3 %)			118 (19.6 %)		
Total	293 (48.6 %)	63 (10.4 %)	42 (7.0 %)	184 (30.6 %)	2 (0.3 %)	19 (3.1 %)
	356 (59.0 %)			247 (41.0 %)		
	603 (100.0 %)					

The distribution of the population by percent shows that 41 % are parents and/or married. 59 % are unmarried and childless. Remarkable for a hunting society is the large number (7 %) of single (= not married) parents. As Figure 10 shows that this chiefly concerns young women aged 17-19 (10 ♀) and around the age of 25 (8 ♀). In regard to the young men, it applies to the 20-30 year-old age group (17 ♂), primarily the 21-22 year-olds (8 ♂). Children born out of marriages, who are not adopted outside the district (mostly to Denmark) are cared for by relatives (usually grandparents) in most cases.

Out of the total 1969-population (603 persons) 38 % (117 ♀ and 113 ♂) were at or between the ages of 15 and 49. 13 % (37 ♀ and 42 ♂) of the population were 50 years old or more. The ratio of the 15-49 age group

of the population and the rest of the population is shown in Table 20, where a comparison with corresponding figures for Denmark and Wainwright is given. The Polar Eskimo population number of the 15–49 age group is halfway between that of Denmark and Wainwright; the percent of the latter is only half of that of Denmark.

The distribution of the admixture of the 1969-population with non-Polar Eskimo groups is given in Table 19, in which Column A represents that part of the population in which as far as known there is no foreign admixture. This amounts to 21 % of the total population of 603 persons.

The rate at which the population renews itself is expressed by the age at which persons have their first child (Table 21). In regard to the 1969 population women generally give birth to their first child between the ages of 17 and 21. 87 women (73.7 % of 118 ♀) with an average age of 18.9 fall within this group. 7 girls (6 %) are mothers under the age of 17; one is only 14 years old. In contrast to the fact that three-fourths of the women have their first child in the course of 5 years, the men are spread out over a longer period of years. Thus 84 men (77.8 % of 108 ♂) with an average age of 23.8 years over a 9 year period had their first child at the age of 20–28.

By comparing the 1969 distribution with the corresponding distribution for 1934 (Table 22) it will be seen that on the whole the women give birth to the first child at the same age, perhaps somewhat earlier in 1969 than in 1934. In both years 74 % of the women have their first child when they are about 19 years old. There is a similar tendency among the men in both years, with 78 % having the first child at the age of 24–25.

The current generation depth is about 20 years for women and 24 years for men, so that the average generation depth for the population is about 22, with a variation of up to 8–10 years.

The 1969 population included 36 women aged 50 years or more. Six of them were childless. 15 of the remaining women, or 50 %, gave birth to their last child at the age of 30–44 (average age 41.7). Only one woman was older (49), whereas the age of the last 15 women at the birth of the last child varied from 19 to 36 (average age 27.0).

The mothers in the 1969 population (Table 23) gave birth to 566 children (267 ♀ and 299 ♂), or an average of 5 children per woman. With respect to the children who were living on December 31, 1969 there were 4 children per woman. Ca 80 % of the children produced were living in 1969. There is still a considerable loss per woman, even though the situation is far better than that around the turn of the century.

94 of the 106 women (married, divorced and widowed—Table 18) had been married once, 8 twice, 4 three times. 11 of the 23 unmarried women had had a child by one man, 6 had children by two men, 4 by three men, and 2 by four men.

Table 19. Degree of admixture with non-Polar Eskimos in the Polar Eskimo population on December 31, 1969

Polar Eskimos	Mixed with	♀	♂	Total ♀+♂		♀	♂	Total ♀+♂	♀	♂	Total ♀+♂	% of total population	
8/8 *		67	59	126	} A				67	59	126	21	
		38	48	86					*38	48	86	14	
7/8	1/8 WG	34	15	49	} B	49	27	76	} * (65) (66) (131) (22)				
	1/8 N	4	2	6									
	1/8 W	11	10	21									
6/8	2/8 WG	49	58	107	} C	54	71	125					
	1/8 WG + 1/8 N	1	4	5									
	2/8 N	0	5	5									
	2/8 W	4	4	8									
5/8	3/8 WG	9	2	11	} D	14	10	24					
	2/8 WG + 1/8 W	4	7	11									
	1/8 WG + 2/8 W	1	1	2									
4/8	4/8 WG	23	49	72	} E	30	54	84					
	3/8 WG + 1/8 W	5	1	6									
	4/8 N	0	1	1									
	4/8 W	2	3	5									
3/8	5/8 WG	5	1	6	} F	5	10	15					
	4/8 WG + 1/8 N	0	1	1									
	4/8 WG + 1/8 W	0	3	3									
	3/8 WG + 2/8 W	0	5	5									
2/8	6/8 WG	7	3	10	} G	11	11	22					
	4/8 WG + 2/8 W	2	6	8									
	2/8 WG + 4/8 W	2	2	4									
1/8	6/8 WG + 1/8 W	10	6	16	H	10	6	16					
	Father unknown	7	4	11	U	7	4	11					
	8/8 WG	17	1	18	V				17	1	18	3	
	Total	302	301	603	T				302	301	603	100	
						Of these			* (103)	(114)	(217)	(36)	

* Related to the Canadian Eskimo immigrants of the 1860s.

WG = West Greenlanders, N = Negro, W = White.

Table 20. *The ratio of 15-49 age group in Thule District, Denmark and Wainwright (Alaska)*

	Polar Eskimos 1969	Denmark 1965	Wainwright 1968
0-14 years old	48.6 %	23.8 %	55.7 %
15-49 years old	38.1 %	47.6 %	29.6 %
50 years old and more	13.3 %	28.6 %	14.5 %

Table 21. *List of ages of Polar Eskimo parents of the 1969-population at births of first and last child*

December 31, 1969	of these number of childless	Average age by years and annual variation at			
		first born	number of parents	last birth, but only parents of several children	number of parents
129 women	11	19.7 years (14-37)	118	31.2 years (18-49)	100
118 men	10	24.2 years (17-36)	108	34.6 years (21-62)	86

(See table 18 for distribution).

Table 22. *Parents' age at birth of first child in 1934 and 1969*

	Number of parents	Most frequent age by years at birth of first child number persons	average age and variation
Women-1969	118	87 (73.7 % of 118)	18.9 years (17-21 years)
Women-1934	43	32 (74.4 % of 43)	19.5 years (17-22 years)
Women-1934	43	28 (65.1 % of 43)	19.1 years (17-21 years)
Men-1969	108	84 (77.8 % of 108)	23.8 years (20-28 years)
Men-1934	40	31 (77.5 % of 40)	25.0 years (22-28 years)
Men-1934	40	37 (92.5 % of 40)	24.3 years (20-28 years)

Table 23. *Number of children born to Polar Eskimo women of the 1969-population*

Total number of children pr mother	Number of mothers		Total production of children			Alive in 1969	1969 children in % of total*	♂ pr 100 ♀**
	total	not married	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀+♂		
0.....	11	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	—
1.....	18	10	8	10	18	16	88.9	125
2.....	17	7	12	22	34	29	85.3	183
3.....	16	3	25	23	48	43	89.6	92
4.....	16	3	27	37	64	53	82.8	137
5.....	8	—	20	20	40	29	72.5	100
6.....	6	—	16	20	36	33	91.7	125
7.....	10	—	34	36	70	59	84.3	106
8.....	6	—	18	30	48	36	75.0	167
9.....	10	—	41	49	90	64	71.1	120
10.....	7	—	37	33	70	58	82.9	89
11.....	1	—	6	5	11	5	45.5	83
12.....	2	—	16	8	24	15	62.5	50
13.....	1	—	7	6	13	6	46.2	86
Total.....	129	23	269	299	566	446	78.8	112
A.....	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I

* G in % of F. ** E in % of D.

The population on December 31, 1973 (Tables 24 and 25)

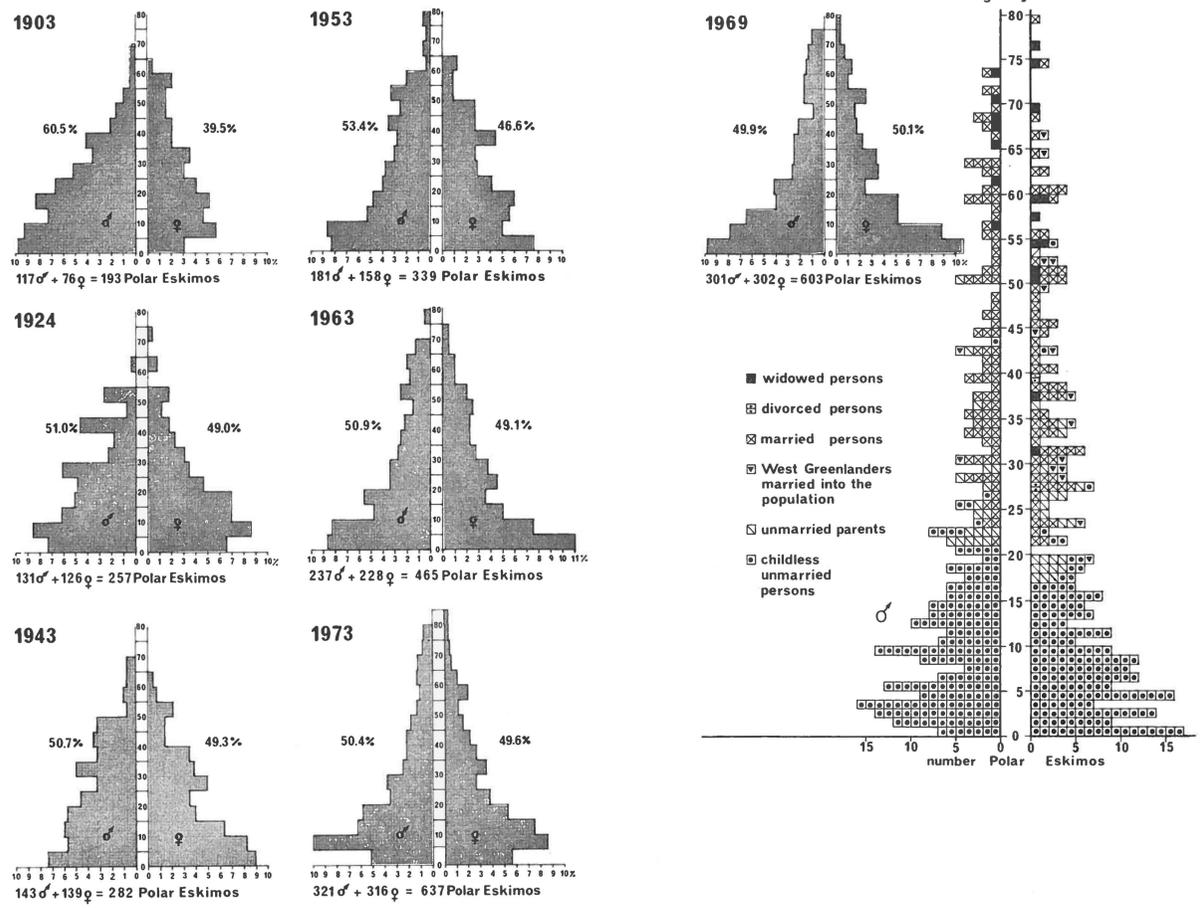
The family planning program which was started in the late 1960's had an effect as early as in the beginning of the 1970's, when the number of births steadily decreased; this can clearly be seen in the age pyramid of 1973 (Figure 9; see also Figure 3 and 7). Figure 9 also shows that more Polar Eskimos lived longer than before: 7.2 % (3.0 % ♀ and 4.2 % ♂) are 60 years of age or more. The oldest was a woman of 82 years. It is typical of the Polar Eskimos that there again are more men (321 ♂) than women (316 ♀). The sex ratio is 102 ♂ per 100 ♀.

Comparison of the years 1903, 1924, 1943, 1953, 1963, 1969, 1973

A comparison of the age pyramids (Figure 9, Tables 24 and 25) for these years gives a more detailed picture of the development of the Polar Eskimo population in this century. The sources of information concerning the 1903-census were one of KNUD RASMUSSEN's diaries (unpublished: Det Kongelige Bibliotek) and one of MYLIUS ERICHSEN's diaries (unpublished: Arktisk Institut). Information based on a survey made by Reverend JENS OLSEN is responsible for the selection of 1924.

The irregularities of the age pyramid reflect the political, social and economic events of earlier times to the extent that they have influenced

Fig. 9. Age pyramids of the Polar Eskimo population: 1903 - 1924 - 1943 - 1953 - 1963 - 1969 - 1973.



the demographic components. A balanced proportion of the sexes is expressed by the symmetrical structure of the age pyramid. Asymmetries can be caused for example by the high death rate among males during wars, or by the scarcity of women in countries with a high immigration rate.

The 1969-population in Thule District was a typical "young" population, but the Polar Eskimo population has not always been like this. If we look at the 1943-distribution it is more reminiscent of an "old" population. 1903 and 1924 are not quite as pronouncedly so. In contrast to 1969, when ca 50 % were under the age of 15, in the 3 previous years the same age group amounted to ca 40 %. A corresponding increase in the number of old people has taken place. The 7 age pyramids show that more persons have grown older; thus today duration of life has become longer.

12. Development of the Polar Eskimo population

The growth curve of the Polar Eskimo population (Figure 10) in the period 1893–1973 falls into 6 phases:

Phase I (1893–1903)

The technological changes that the Canadian immigrants in the 1860's brought with them improved the Polar Eskimos' utilization of their hunting grounds. But at the same time a climatic change set in, and the decades prior to 1900 were unfavourable (VIBE, 1967: 99). The population size was decreasing rapidly, partly as a result of epidemics brought from outside, against which the population had but small powers of resistance.

Phase II (1903–1922)

The unstable and damp climatic period (ca 1860–1910) was replaced by a milder and drier climate which was accompanied by a falling off of sealing and whaling along the central west coast of Greenland. On the other hand the sea mammals had migrated farther north, that is to Thule District's waters (VIBE, 1967: 99).

The new technology which PEARY had introduced first became really important upon the establishment of the store (1910) which, in view of its supply activities, could maintain the flow of a constant stream of materials and tools which gradually became part of each hunter's equipment. Along with the establishment of the store and of the mission station (1909) PEARY's demanding expeditions stopped, and the whalers also vanished from the district. A quiet stabilizing period now began for the Polar Eskimos, a time in which they could concentrate on working towards an intensification and improvement of their own conditions of life.

Table 24. *The Polar Eskimo population distributed by sex and age on December 31, 1903, 1924, 1943, 1953, 1963, 1969, 1973*

Age groups	0- 4 years	5- 9 years	10- 14 years	15- 19 years	20- 24 years	25- 29 years	30- 34 years	35- 39 years	40- 44 years	45- 49 years	50- 54 years	55- 59 years	60- 64 years	65- 69 years	70- 74 years	75- 79 years	80- 84 years
1903	76 ♀ + 117 ♂ = 193 Eskimos										%: 39.5 ♀ + 60.5 ♂ = 100.0 %						
♀.....	6	11	9	10	8	6	7	4	4	3	3	4	1	0	0	0	0
%	3.1	5.7	4.7	5.2	4.1	3.1	3.6	2.1	2.1	1.6	1.6	2.1	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
♂.....	19	18	14	16	13	10	7	8	4	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0
%	9.8	9.3	7.3	8.3	6.7	5.2	3.6	4.1	2.1	1.6	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	25	29	23	26	21	16	14	12	8	6	5	5	2	1	0	0	0
%	12.9	15.0	11.9	13.5	10.9	8.3	7.2	6.2	4.2	3.2	2.6	2.6	1.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
1924	126 ♀ + 131 ♂ = 257 Eskimos										%: 49.0 ♀ + 51.0 ♂ = 100.0 %						
♀.....	17	22	18	18	12	9	8	6	5	3	5	0	2	0	1	0	0
%	6.6	8.6	7.0	7.0	4.7	3.5	3.1	2.3	1.9	1.2	1.9	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
♂.....	19	22	16	13	12	16	6	5	12	2	7	0	1	0	0	0	0
%	7.4	8.6	6.2	5.1	4.9	6.2	2.3	1.9	4.7	0.8	2.7	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	36	44	34	31	24	25	14	11	17	5	12	0	3	0	1	0	0
%	14.0	17.2	13.2	12.1	9.3	9.7	5.4	4.3	6.6	1.9	4.7	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
1943	139 ♀ + 143 ♂ = 282 Eskimos										%: 49.0 ♀ + 50.7 ♂ = 100.0 %						
♀.....	25	23	18	11	10	14	11	10	4	4	6	2	1	0	0	0	0
%	8.9	8.2	6.4	3.9	3.5	5.0	3.9	3.5	1.4	1.4	2.1	0.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
♂.....	21	16	17	16	13	9	14	9	10	9	2	3	2	2	0	0	0
%	7.4	5.7	6.0	5.7	4.6	3.2	5.0	3.2	3.5	3.2	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	46	39	35	27	23	23	25	19	14	13	8	5	3	2	0	0	0
%	16.3	13.9	12.4	9.6	8.1	8.2	8.9	6.7	4.9	4.6	2.8	1.8	1.1	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

1953	158 ♀ + 181 ♂ = 339 Eskimos											%: 46.6 ♀ + 53.4 ♂ = 100.0 %					
♀.....	26	17	19	20	14	10	9	15	9	9	3	3	4	0	0	0	0
%	7.6	5.0	5.6	5.9	4.1	2.9	2.7	4.4	2.7	2.7	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
♂.....	28	29	18	16	14	13	10	9	12	8	11	7	1	2	1	2	0
%	8.3	8.6	5.3	4.7	4.1	3.8	2.9	2.7	3.5	2.4	3.2	2.1	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	54	46	37	36	28	23	19	24	21	17	14	10	5	2	1	2	0
%	15.9	13.6	10.9	10.6	8.2	6.7	5.6	7.1	6.2	5.1	4.1	3.0	1.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.0
1963	228 ♀ + 237 ♂ = 465 Eskimos											%: 49.1 ♀ + 50.9 ♂ = 100.0 %					
♀.....	51	35	23	16	21	17	13	10	10	11	9	4	4	2	2	0	0
%	11.0	7.5	4.9	3.4	4.5	3.7	2.8	2.2	2.2	2.4	1.9	0.9	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
♂.....	40	38	22	26	16	16	13	12	10	7	12	8	9	6	0	2	0
%	8.6	8.2	4.7	5.6	3.4	3.4	2.8	2.6	2.2	1.5	2.6	1.7	1.9	1.3	0.0	0.4	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	91	73	45	42	37	33	26	22	20	18	21	12	13	8	2	2	0
%	19.6	15.7	9.6	9.0	7.9	7.1	5.6	4.8	4.4	3.9	4.5	2.6	2.8	1.7	0.4	0.4	0.0
1969	302 ♀ + 301 ♂ = 603 Eskimos											%: 50.1 ♀ + 49.9 ♂ = 100.0 %					
♀.....	64	53	31	31	14	21	20	13	10	8	15	6	8	4	2	2	0
%	10.6	8.8	5.1	5.1	2.4	3.5	3.3	2.2	1.7	1.3	2.5	1.0	1.3	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.0
♂.....	59	47	39	24	25	16	15	15	13	5	10	10	9	8	6	0	0
%	9.8	7.8	6.5	4.0	4.1	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.1	0.8	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.0	0.0	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	123	100	70	55	39	37	35	28	23	13	25	16	17	12	8	2	0
%	20.4	16.6	11.6	9.1	6.5	6.1	5.8	4.6	3.8	2.2	4.2	2.7	2.8	2.0	1.3	0.3	0.0
1973	316 ♀ + 321 ♂ = 637 Eskimos											%: 49.6 ♀ + 50.4 ♂ = 100.0 %					
♀.....	36	55	48	34	24	17	22	17	14	10	8	13	7	4	3	2	2
%	5.6	8.6	7.5	5.3	3.8	2.7	3.5	2.7	2.2	1.6	1.3	2.0	1.1	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.3
♂.....	33	64	40	37	23	24	16	14	14	12	9	7	9	8	6	5	0
%	5.2	10.0	6.3	5.8	3.6	3.8	2.5	2.2	2.2	1.9	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.0
♀ + ♂.....	69	119	88	71	47	41	38	31	28	22	17	20	16	12	9	7	2
%	10.8	18.7	13.8	11.1	7.4	6.4	6.0	4.9	4.4	3.5	2.7	3.1	2.5	1.9	1.4	1.1	0.3

Table 25. *The Polar Eskimo population in 1903, 1924, 1943, 1953, 1963, 1969, 1973*

Year	Aged 0-14 years			Aged 15-64 years			At and over 65 years old			Total ♂ per 100 ♀	No. ♂ per 100 ♀		
	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂	♀	♂	♀+♂		0-14 years	15-64 years	65 + years
1903.....	26	51	77	50	65	115	0	1	1	154	196	130	-
%	13.5	26.4	39.9	26.0	33.6	59.6	0.0	0.5	0.5				
1924.....	57	57	114	68	74	142	1	0	1	104	100	109	-
%	22.2	22.2	44.4	26.5	28.8	55.3	0.3	0.0	0.3				
1943.....	66	54	120	73	87	160	0	2	2	103	82	119	-
%	23.4	19.1	42.5	25.9	30.9	56.8	0.0	0.7	0.7				
1953.....	62	75	137	96	101	197	0	5	5	115	121	105	-
%	18.3	22.1	40.4	28.3	29.8	58.1	0.0	1.5	1.5				
1963.....	109	100	209	115	129	244	4	8	12	104	92	112	200
%	23.4	21.5	44.9	24.7	27.8	52.5	0.9	1.7	2.6				
1969.....	148	145	293	146	142	288	8	14	22	100	98	97	175
%	24.6	24.0	48.6	24.2	23.6	47.8	1.3	2.3	3.6				
1973.....	139	137	276	166	165	331	11	19	30	102	99	99	173
%	21.8	21.5	43.3	26.1	25.9	52.0	1.7	3.0	4.7				

As a result of the better hunting potential and the store the annual periods of famine became very rare, but selection was still a strong process, as the greater contact with the outside world brought disease along. Yet all things considered, a steady increase of the population took place. Since we lack sufficient information about the period 1910-1922 our knowledge about these years is limited. The curve for this period in Figure 11 is therefore dotted and indicates that about 1920 the population must have been larger, for the Spanish influenza carried off 40 persons and thereby abruptly interrupted the steadily growing number of people.

Phase III (1922-1934)

Once again there occur a set of coincident changes which were important to the society. The warm climatic period culminated in West Greenland around 1930, in Thule District around 1940. After 1930 the number of harp seals increased in Upernavik and Thule districts, where it was formerly rare (VIBE, 1967: 202). Around 1930 the first real administrative town, Thule, shot up in Thule District at the Ūmánaq settlement. The settlement pattern changed but slightly, and yet the settlements having a store, of which only three existed in the 1930's, began little by little to absorb the population. Although many people were attracted by the store settlements, the majority tried to maintain their annual immigrations; the old and the weak preferred, however, to settle in the administrative town in order to be near the hospital's physician and the stored provisions. Attempts were made to avoid this accumulation of

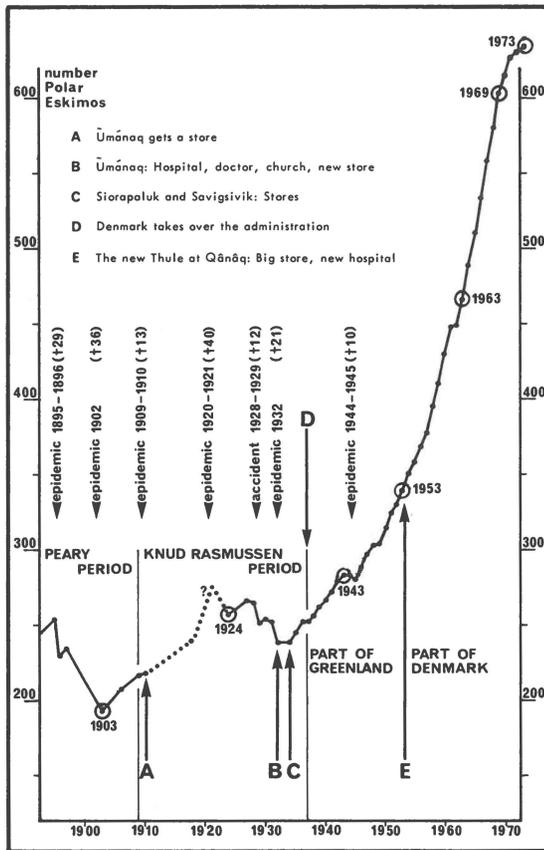


Fig. 10. The growth of the Polar Eskimo population, 1893-1973.

people in one place by means of the Hunters' Council's legislation. Periods of famine disappeared entirely. The Health Service System fight against diseases began to have an effect. The declining tendency in the population growth was turned into stability. The sex ratio became more balanced.

Phase IV (1934-1953)

The efforts of the Hunters' Council and the administration first achieved their intended results in Phase IV, when the population size shows a steady increase of $1-1\frac{1}{2}$ ‰ per year. The corresponding increase in Denmark in the same period is 0.8-1.1 ‰. An epidemic around 1944-1945 caused a slight decrease in population growth, but was of no significance to developments in Phase IV.

Phase V (1953-1969)

In the 1950's a series of changes again affects the life of the Polar Eskimos. The temperatures were declining. As a result of cold winters

(1954–1960) the ringed seal once more began to multiply in the central parts of West Greenland, which meant a commencing decrease in its occurrence in Thule District's waters. When the Cold War in Europe set in the large Thule Air Base was constructed (1951–1955) in the valley next to Ũmánaq settlement, and the game rapidly left the area. Therefore, the hunter families and the administration were moved north in 1953 to a wholly new town, Thule, at Qânâq settlement. During the 1950's the Polar Eskimos acquired new, coal-heated wooden houses all over the district. They became still more dependent on the outside world, and the Polar Eskimos settled permanently at places having a store.

Most children were born in the hospital. The intervals between children became shorter than the three-year periods which were typical of the early years of the 20th century. The Polar Eskimo population doubled in numbers during the 1950's and the 1960's. In the 1950's it increased by 3 % annually (Denmark in the same period by 0.7 %); in the 1960's by 4 % annually (Denmark 0.8 %), and in 1967 even by 5 %. The population growth was among the largest in the world: Chile (1962) 2.2 % yearly; Mexico (1962) 3.5 %; U.S.A. (1962) 1.3 %. At the end of Phase V 50 % of the Polar Eskimo population were under the age of 15, and there were more old people than ever before, as life span had increased.

Phase VI (1969–1973)

A sharp decrease in the birth rate apparently resulted from the family planning program which began at the end of Phase V. The annual growth decreased as follows: 1970: 2.3 %; 1971: 1.6 %; 1972: 0.5 %; 1973: 1.1 %. The number of children under the age of 15 amounted in 1973 to 45 %. The life span rose simultaneously, and the number of old people increased accordingly.

13. Conclusion

In the nineteenth century the Polar Eskimos were a small, isolated, self-sufficient hunting society. Utilization of resources by the technology of the time and the size of the population were apparently kept in balance by a strong selection, particularly by epidemics and famine. Considerable mortality prevented the Polar Eskimo population from increasing up to 1930. But outside influences gradually lowered the large mortality rate, whereupon a population growth took place. During the 1950's and the 1960's the Polar Eskimo population doubled from ca 300 to ca 600 persons and seemed to be on the way to over-population, hunting technology and resources taken into consideration. Once more, however, outside influences—family planning—changed the growth development in the Polar Eskimo population; this seemed to become stabilized during the 1970's; in other words, the size of the population and the utilization

of the resources in Thule District again seem to have achieved a balance. This is characteristic of the Polar Eskimos' ability to adapt themselves to changes in their Arctic environment.

Acknowledgements

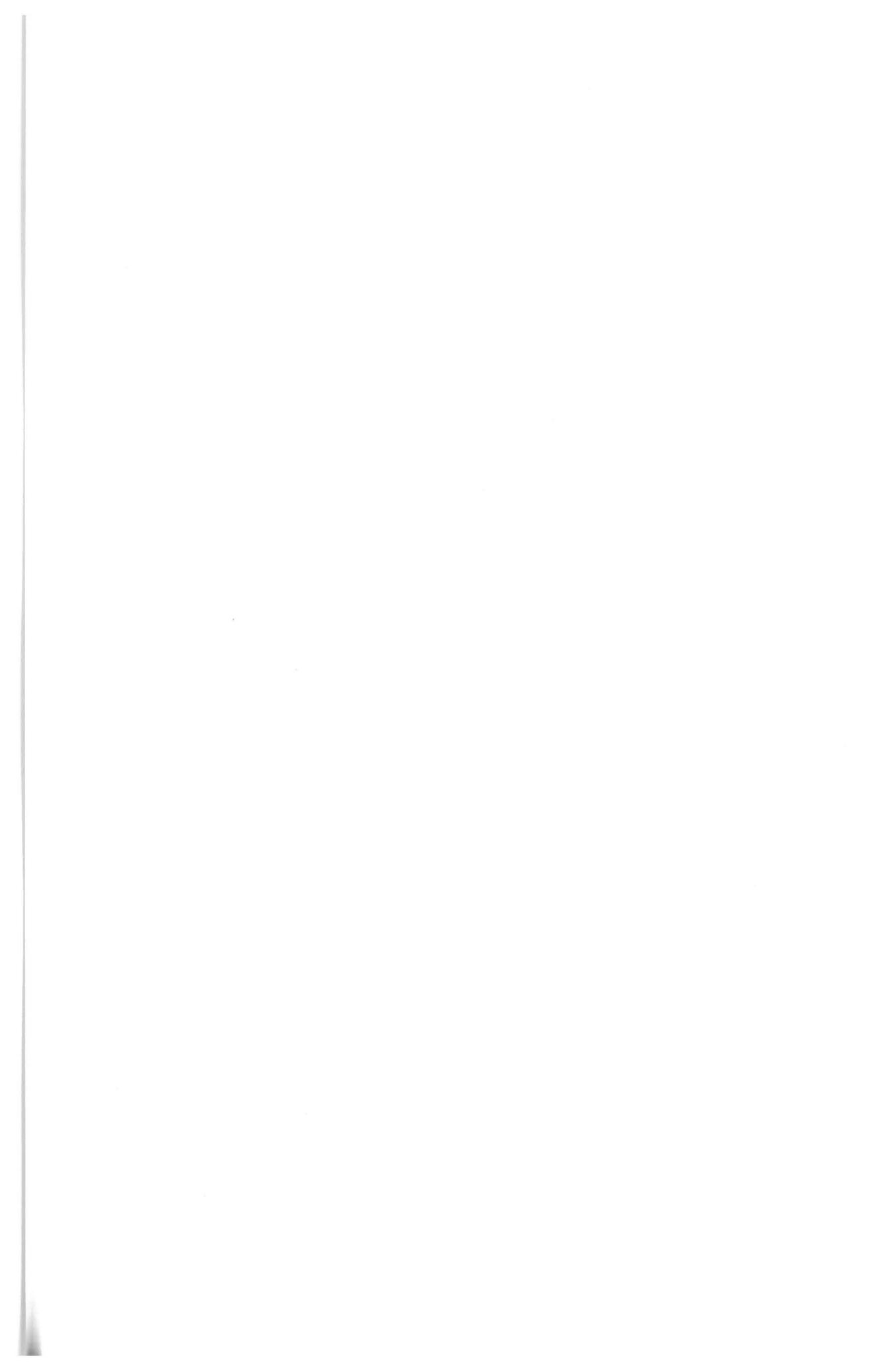
The good results obtained from the collection of data in 1963 and 1969 are due to a large extent to the Polar Eskimos' understanding, kind attitude and great helpfulness. Thanks to the Polar Eskimos. Thanks, too, to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs for its positive attitude towards my work. I am grateful to Mrs. INGE THORBORG for permission to study her father's, KNUD RASMUSSEN's papers, and to Professor ERIK HOLTVED, who so generously allowed me to draw on his experiences with the Polar Eskimos. I also want to thank Dr. med. J. BALSLEV JØRGENSEN for the inspiration I received through innumerable conversations with him. I am thankful to Dr. MOGENS HOLM for profitable collaboration, and to my parents, LISBET and AAGE GILBERG, for invaluable help and support.

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Appendix

Polar Eskimo bibliography

This bibliography is mainly concerned with the Polar Eskimos and their society, history and culture, and all aspects which help the understanding of the life of the Polar Eskimos in the Thule District, North Greenland.

Publications where "Thule" and "Polar Eskimo" are mentioned in one sentence or where there are found only a few pictures of Polar Eskimos are not included. All reviews of books on Polar Eskimos have also been left out. Not all editions of a particular book or paper are included; only the first edition in the original language and the English translation thereof, if such one exists. When a second edition is very different from the first one in contents, it is also included. For editions in other languages than the original and English, only town and year are mentioned. All references are given to published material, only a few exceptions are made from that rule. The number in front of an authors' name refers to the *Arctic Bibliography*.

This is not a bibliography on North Greenland as publications dealing with subjects as: Botany, geology, glaciology, meteorology, oceanography, zoology, etc., are only included in the bibliography when they contain relevant information for the understanding of the Polar Eskimos. Papers on the non-Polar Eskimos at the Thule Air Base are not included in this bibliography as they have no influence on the Polar Eskimo situation. Neither are all publications on the North Pole expeditions and the controversy about who came there first, included, but only when Polar Eskimos are mentioned.

The reader interested in North Greenland should also look up references under the heading: "North Greenland", "Thule District", "Thule Air Base", "Thule", "North Pole", etc. in:

(1) *Arctic Bibliography*, vol 1-16 (1953-1975) (Montreal).

(2) General Index to *Meddelelser om Grønland*, vol 1-150 (1969) (København).

Not all references to the work of KNUD RASMUSSEN are included, even when dealing with some Polar Eskimo conditions, as HANNE and NIELS RASMUSSEN have prepared an excellent "Bibliography of Knud Victor Rasmussen's authorship" (in prep.), which the reader can consult to find more information on KNUD RASMUSSEN and the Thule Expeditions.

In spite of the above-mentioned this bibliography does not pretend to be complete, not to comprise all published material about the Polar Eskimos.

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 — (1975 c): Tre grønlandere blandt 1300 på Thule Air Base / kalátldlit pingasut sulissunit 1300-nit Thule Air Base-me. 115 (23): 7–8, 12 June.
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 — (1975 h): Sådan arbejder præsten i Thule / Thulime palasip suliá. 115 (24): 8–9, 12 June.
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 — (1964): Amerikansk-Dansk Grønlandsk Fond skaffer snowmobile til Dr. Ole Skov. 11 June, p. 11.
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- (1968e): Sort fortid. 31 March.

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1918–1922 (1924): Skrivelse nr. 43, pp. 1920: 250.

POLAR ESKIMO FILMS:

Verdens Nordligste Læge (1939): 16 mm/black-white+colour/silent/60 minutes.

Camera: Aage Gilberg. Production: Aage Gilberg.

Inuit (1939): 16 mm/colour/silent/76 minutes.

Camera: Jette Bang. Production: Grønlands Styrelse.

Thule – Polareskimoernes Land (1943): 16 mm/black-white/silent/20 minutes.

Camera: Mogens Holm. Production: Grønlands Styrelse & Dansk Kulturfilm.

Hunters of the North Pole (ca. 1950): 16 mm/black-white/tone.

Polar Eskimo Trommesange (1962): 16 mm/colour/tone/11 minutes.

Camera: Jette Bang. Production: Dansk Folkemindesamling.

Ref., see: HAUSER, 1969.

Knud (1965): 16 mm/black-white/tone/31 minutes/Danish.

Camera: Jørgen Roos. Production: Nunafilm & Jørgen Roos.

En Fangeramilie i Thule Distrikt (1967): 16 mm/black-white/tone/20 minutes/Danish.

Camera: Jørgen Roos. Production: Statens Filmcentral.

Grønlandske Dialekter og Trommedanse fra Thule Distriktet (1967): 16 mm/black-white/tone/10 minutes.

Camera: Jørgen Roos. Production: Jørgen Roos Film & Kortfilmrådet.

Ultima Thule (1968): 16 mm/black-white/tone/26 minutes/Danish.

Camera: Jørgen Roos. Production: Kortfilmrådet.

En sommer hos verdens nordligste folk (1971): colour/tone/95 minutes/TV.

Camera: Lars Åby. Production: Ivars Silis & Lars Åby.

POLAR ESKIMO GRAMMOPHON RECORD:

Kalâtdlit Ivngerutitoqait / Gamle Grønlandske Sange / Traditional Songs of Greenland: North Greenland, Polar Eskimos. Danish Folklore Archives DFS 8-458 & DFS 8-459. (Copenhagen).

POLAR ESKIMO SLIDES:

BENT GYNTHNER (1975): Vandringsfolk ved Nordpolen. Spring/summer and fall/winter. Photos: Ivars Silis. Dias-series from AV-Media (Copenhagen).

MUSEUMS CONTAINING POLAR ESKIMO ETHNOGRAPHICA

The American Museum of Natural History

Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, N. Y. 10024, USA.

(1) Peary collection from 1895-1896 (about 1000 catalogue entries).

(2) Crocker Land Expedition 1913-1917 (about 620 catalogue entries).

Collection contains mainly: ca. 100 hunting impliments, ca. 10 sled parts, ca. 130 tools, ca. 50 household utilities, ca. 70 costume parts, ca. 50 toys & models, ca. 150 carvings, ca. 1500 archeological items, ca. 50 miscellaneous.

Ref.: see KROEBER, 1899a; WISSLER, 1918.

Australian Museum

6-8 College Street, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000 Australia.

Collection contains mainly: 5 sea mammal hunting impliments, 5 tools, 1 costume, 1 toy, 3 carvings. All belong to the Peary collection 1895-1896.

Ethnographical Department

National Museum of Denmark, Ny Vestergade 10, DK-1471 Copenhagen, Denmark.

(1) Thomas Thomsen collection 1909 (about 160 catalogue entries).

(2) Thule Trading Station collection 1916-1925 (about 130 catalogue entries).

(3) Peter Freuchen collection 1919 (about 105 catalogue entries).

(4) Knud Rasmussen collection 1928 (about 40 catalogue entries).

(5) Erik Holtved collection 1938 (about 90 catalogue entries).

Collection contains mainly: 31 sea mammal hunting implements, 35 harpoon-heads, 1 kayak, 13 fishing tools, 51 land hunting implements, 3 sleds, 27 sled runner parts, 73 tools, 78 household utilities, 1 tent, 90 costume parts, 71 toys, games & models, 170 carvings, 15.250 archeological items, ca. 20 miscellaneous.

Ref.: see: HOLTVED, 1967; STEENSBY, 1910.

Guide to the National Museum the Ethnographical Department: Arctic Peoples and American Indians (1955) – Polar Eskimo, pp. 49–52.

Nationalmuseets vejledninger til Den Etnografiske Samling: Polarfolk og Indianere (1960) – Polar Eskimo, pp. 48–51.

Field Museum of Natural History

Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60605, USA.

(1) Peary collection 1891–1892 (about 200 catalogue entries).

Collection contains mainly: 35 sea mammal hunting implement, 1 fishing tool, 40 land hunting implements, 5 sleds & parts, 38 tools, 23 household utilities, 34 costume parts, 35 toys, games & models, 6 raw material, 8 miscellaneous.

Ref.: see VANSTONE, 1972 a.

Hermitage Museum

M. Dvortsovaya naberezhnaya 34, Leningrad, USSR.

(1) Peary collection 1895–1896 (about 40 catalogue entries).

Collection contain mainly: 6 sea mammal hunting implements, 2 land hunting implements, 1 sled part, 2 tools, 2 household utilities, 27 costume parts, 3 miscellaneous.

Museum of the American Indian

Broadway and 155th Street, New York, N. Y. 10032, USA.

(1) Peary collection 1895–1896 (about 15 catalogue entries).

Collection contains mainly: 1 sea mammal hunting implement, 2 kayaks, 1 household utility, 11 costume parts.

Museum of Mankind

Ethnography Department of the British Museum, 6 Burlington Gardens, London W1X 2EX, England.

(1) Peary collection 1895–1896 (about 20 catalogue entries).

Collection contains mainly: 4 sea mammal hunting implements, 5 tools, 4 household utilities, 9 costume parts.

National Museum of Natural History

Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC. 20560, USA.

(1) I. I. Hayes 1860's (12 items).

(2) E. Bessels 1870's (10 items).

(3) H. G. Bryant 1900's (14 items).

(4) J. Ciganek (10 items).

(5) others (8 items).

Collection contains mainly: 3 sea mammal hunting implements, 2 kayaks, 5 sled & parts, 10 tools, 12 household utilities, 4 costume suits and 7 parts, 8 toys, games & models, 3 miscellaneous.

The Provincial Museum of Greenland

Godthåb, DK-3900 Greenland, Denmark.

University Museum

33rd and Spruce Streets, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA.

Collection contains mainly: 2 kayaks from 1890s.

ARCHIVES CONTAINING IMPORTANT POLAR ESKIMO DOCUMENTATION in form of expedition, diaries, reports, photos, etc.:

Arktisk Institut

L. E. Bruunsvej 10, DK-2920 Charlottenlund, Denmark.

The Danish Royal Library (Det kongelige Bibliotek)

Christians Brygge 8, DK-1219 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

The Danish National Archive (Rigsarkivet)

Rigsdagsgården 9, DK-1218 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

Polar Section of National Archives

USA General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service,
Washington DC. 20408, USA.

National Geographical Society

17th and M Street, NW, Washington DC. 20026, USA.

Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum

Hubbard Hall, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, Walker Art Building, Brunswick,
Maine 04011, USA.

GREENLAND MAPS from Geodetic Institute, Rigsdagsgården 7, DK-1218 Copenhagen K. Denmark.

Thule District 1:250.000, sheets 77 V 1, 77 V 2, 76 V 1 and 76 V 2. (1967).

1:300.000, sheets 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. (Lauge Kock's map 1917-1923).

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