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LEADER: KNUD RASMUSSEN

KNUD RASMUSSEN'S POSTHUMOUS NOTES
ON THE LIFE AND DOINGS OF THE EAST
GREENLANDERS IN OLDEN TIMES

EDITED BY

H. OSTERMANN

WITH 22 FIGURES IN THE TEXT

KØBENHAVN

C. A. REITZELS FORLAG

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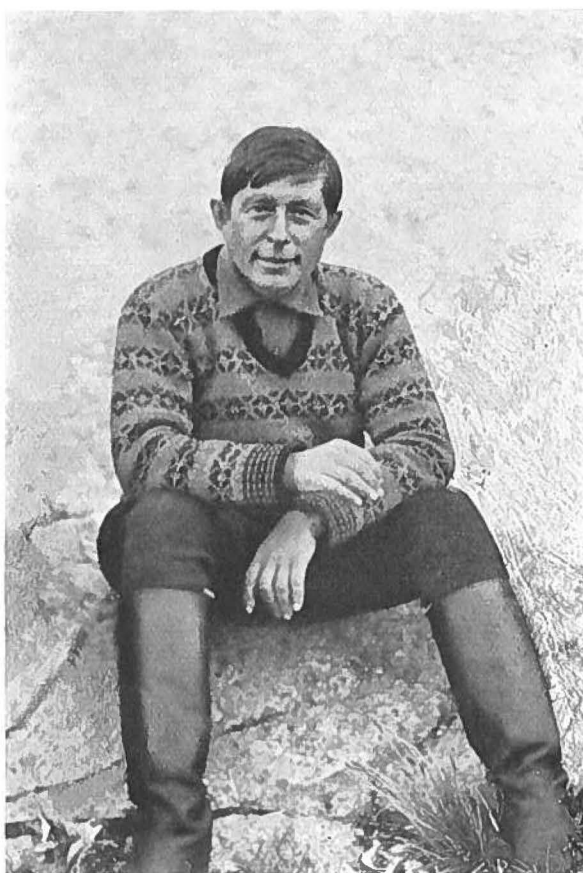


Fig. 1. Knud Rasmussen. Photo. 6th—7th Thule Exped.

PREFACE

It was always KNUD RASMUSSEN's intention to write a book on the East Greenlanders when he had completed the publication of the enormous material he had collected from his other arctic journeys. How often did he not say to me, when we were working on the publication of the great works on the intellectual culture and folk-lore of the American Eskimo tribes. "We shall not be unemployed just yet; when we have finished all this, we shall start on the East Greenland tribe; I am looking forward to it!"

With that in view he began many years back to gather the material together by means of correspondence, both with the Government officials in East Greenland and with the East Greenlanders themselves, first and foremost with the curate KÂRALE ANDREASSEN, an extremely intelligent

man, who as time went on provided him with a host of information of all kinds and evinced an admirable understanding of what KNUD RASMUSSEN was aiming at and knew how to differentiate between the essential and the unessential.

The Fourth Thule Expedition in 1919 went to the Angmagssalik region, its object also being to collect matter regarding the life, material and intellectual culture of the East Greenlanders of yesterday and today, traditions, folk-lore, etc. etc.

And finally, the last two Thule Expeditions, the Sixth and Seventh, also went to East Greenland. On these occasions there were many different objects connected with the expeditions, but not the least important one was to supplement and complete the material already in hand for the long-planned description of the East Greenland tribe.

For the same reason KNUD RASMUSSEN after his last expedition brought KÅRALE ANDREASSEN back to Denmark with him; and when ANDREASSEN and I last went to see him at the hospital, when he was still expecting to recover soon from the illness he had contracted in Greenland, we discussed tentatively the possibilities and procedure of a collaboration whereby the old plan should at last be realized; that discussion was to have been resumed at an early date.

By his death, followed shortly after by KÅRALE's death, the plan came to an abrupt end. The one result so far emanating from KNUD RASMUSSEN's cherished idea, the plan to describe the life and doings of the East Greenlanders, apart from some chapters in "Under Nordenvindens Svøbe", was the book which appeared in 1921 under the title of "Myter og Sagn fra Grønland I". And perhaps the East Greenland film "Palos Brudefærd" may be regarded as a result too.

In deference to the wishes of Mrs. DAGMAR RASMUSSEN the Commission for the Scientific Investigation of Greenland requested me to arrange the remainder of his notes on East Greenland for publication in "Meddelelser om Grønland: 6. og 7. Thule Expedition". Accordingly I have regarded it as my task to make the widest possible use of KNUD RASMUSSEN's collections and particularly his own notes, so that the description will essentially be his, and only to bridge the gaps in the material as well as I could.

I realize quite well that this course, which I consider to be the only right one now that KNUD RASMUSSEN is gone, will mean that much in the following will to some extent be a repetition of what previous expeditions and investigators have already described. In this connection I have principally in mind the following works:

W. A. GRAAH: Undersøgelsesrejse til Østkysten af Grønland i Aarene 1828—31 (Kbh. 1832, re-published by K. Birket-Smith 1932).

G. HOLM: Den østgrønlandske Expedition udført i Aarene 1883—84 (Medd. om Grønl. Bd. 9 and 10).

WILLIAM THALBITZER: The Ammassalik Eskimos (Medd. om Grønl. Bd. 39 and 40).

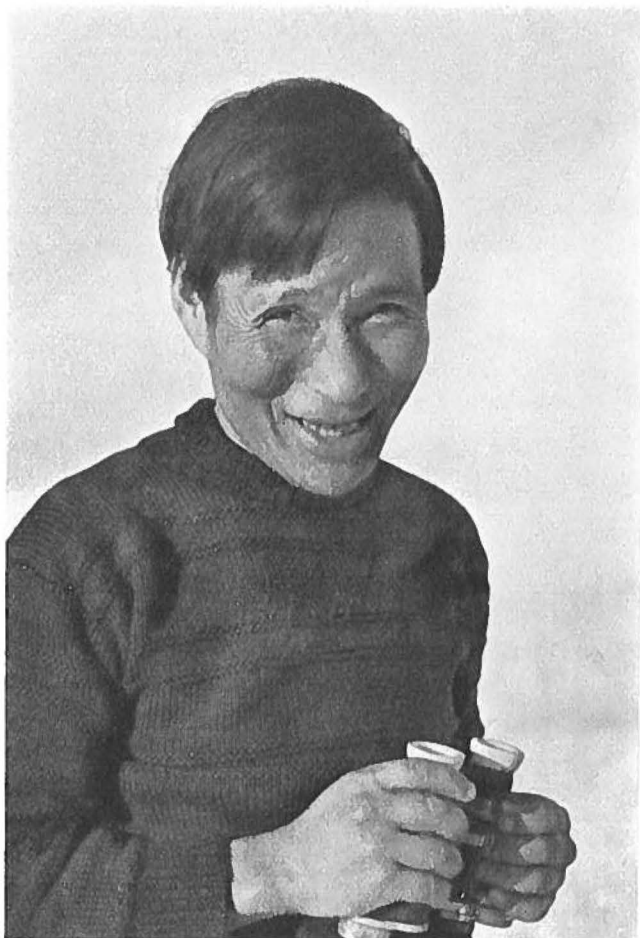


Fig. 2. Kårale Andreassen. Photo. 6th—7th Thule Exped.

THERKEL MATHIASSEN: Prehistory of the Angmagssalik Eskimos (Medd. om Grønl. Bd. 92, No. 4).

— The Eskimo Archaeology of Julianehaab District, with a brief summary of the Pre-History of the Greenlanders (Medd. om Grønl. Bd. 118, No. 1),
all of which works are of great scientific value.

From the Fourth Thule Expedition we have a number of notes, apparently taken down originally from the narratives and com-

munications of the natives and commencing with a description of the settlements, hunting, etc. As this material from KNUD RASMUSSEN'S hand is so arranged that we cannot doubt it was his intention that it should be used in the aforesaid book, I have considered it right to include it, and mainly in its original form, only lightly retouched and supplemented on a few points, for we can see that it was something in the direction of a first draft which was to be made complete later.

H. OSTERMANN.

INTRODUCTION

The unapproachable and inaccessible have always been the loadstone of explorers, not simply because difficulties stimulate the will, but because one is apt to believe that untrodden shores conceal the great surprises.

The south part of East Greenland's coast has always held that fascination, and many are the men who from earliest times have tried to force the barricades of ice which shut in this part of the country¹). Among all explorers the coast became notorious for its ice, its storms and its desolation.

I myself in the summer of 1904 stood on the top of a mountain northeast of Cape Farewell and for the first time looked up over the east coast. I was together with MYLIUS ERICHSEN and JØRGEN BRØNLUND. We had come from North Greenland and Cape York and were now ready to close "The Danish Literary Expedition" with a visit here. But three weeks of unceasing storms compelled us to abandon the attempt, because now it was too late in the year.

Instead, we joined a large camp of men and women who had almost all migrated from the country south of Angmagssalik, and their fantastic accounts of life behind the great ice barrier helped to strengthen the resolution I had made, that some day when the chance offered I would come back again²). That chance did not come till twenty-seven years later, though I was in the Angmagssalik district in 1919.—

¹) Strangely enough it was HANS EGEDE who, though he did not succeed in his endeavour to get round to the east coast, with providential foresight indicated the manner in which it was to be achieved for the first time, viz. in Eskimo umiaks along the coast inside the ice-belt ("Det gamle Grønlands nye Perlustration" p. 20—21). H. O.

²) It is very interesting to see what KNUD RASMUSSEN, under the heading "isumaliüt" (contemplation, plan) dated Igdlukasik 17th September 1904, wrote as the conclusion of his notes during that summer with the East Greenlanders—so to say the programme for the whole of his life's work thereafter:

"I shall make it a point to make the authorities realise that my work in Greenland is nothing like ended—in fact it has only just begun.

"The ethnology of Greenland comprises a material so colossal that it is

High, steep, and naked rises the island of Aluk northeast of Cape Farewell, like a breakwater against the might of the Atlantic Ocean. It is as if this solitary island stands as a picture, indeed a symbol of East Greenland as it appears to the Eskimos. To them it was never the barrenness of the country, its glaciers, the ocean ice or the tremendous swell of the sea that was remembered and feared. All those who had lived up there and built themselves houses in some sheltered cove or other, never would bend to its rigour and inclemency; rather were they gripped by its magnificent beauty and by the idyll—the homeliness of the settlement, which became more intimate as it were, because their environs were so tremendous and wild.

All who have had the slightest to do with Greenland know the legend of the grand old hunter from Aluk, the old man whose heart broke with the joy of recognition when, after many years of absence in parts that were richer and more luxuriant on the west coast, he came back to the old settlement and one morning saw the sun rising out of the sea; so great was the love which bound him to East Greenland's apparently barren and stern coast.

Even a seasoned Greenland-farer, accustomed to the life in this harsh but beautiful arctic land, cannot but be impressed by the east coast; compared with the west coast it is much more wild and grand, to all appearances an inaccessible rocky shore with innumerable fjords down which the shining white tongues of the inland ice make their way and scatter calf-ice and icebergs out over the sea. And between the fjords: the gloomy, skyscraping promontories, glacier-striated, wind-eroded, like Cape Walloe, Cape Tordenskjold, Cape Moltke, Cape Møsting, and many others. And the stretches where there is not even land, nothing but glaciers, such as Puissortoq or what Captain GRAAH called "Kolberger Heide", or the shores around "Køge Bugt", all of them land-

impossible to probe it to the bottom on a single journey—it requires a lifetime, preferably even longer.

"When I return home I must for the present concentrate on the tasks which were detailed as mine when the expedition started: To portray the Greenlanders through themselves, i. e. through their modern narratives and old heathen legend-traditions; I expect it will take me the most of two years to work up this material.

"And then it will be high time for me to come out again, for time is precious. Now I am fit and hard and unencumbered—and I must utilize the physical advantages which youth gives me.

"A man who has to travel in arctic regions under all conditions making every demand of his body—toil, wet, cold, hunger, never knows what day the situation will suddenly call a halt.

"It must be done while there is time—and I'm ready to go out again as quickly as may be. But I would rather not speak of my plans for the present."

scapes that are brilliant in sunshine, their pinnacles bathed in colour, but sinister in storm and gale.

The entire coast from Cape Farewell up to Angmagssalik consists of rock exclusively, and only here and there are there small skerries with harbours providing shelter from wind and weather; otherwise the coast, taken as a whole, is open to the whole might of the Atlantic. Consequently when travelling along the coast one must hurry from harbour to harbour, and preferably in good weather. In July and August the weather seems calm and fairly steady, especially in the fjords; but with the advent of September comes the north-easterly wind, the most fearful of all, causing a tremendous swell in towards the shore from Danmark Strait with its notorious storm centre, moving northeast from the western part of the Atlantic and causing sudden and violent falls of the barometer.

On the way up the coast we succeeded in getting past the Puissortoq glacier in high, still weather. In former days this was the most ill-famed passage¹). The glacier stands right out into the sea, and the Eskimos, who held the belief that the cold radiating from it froze even the bottom of the sea to ice, so that every few moments huge blocks of ice shot up without warning, were often held up there for weeks without being able to make further progress; and when at last they raced past in their umiaks they had not to say a word; one heard only the monotonous sound of the beat of the oars, and all women with small children had to lie in the bottom of the boat and cover their faces; for they believed that the mighty spirit of the glacier would smash the boat if a woman and child appeared to it.

As regards my particular object on this expedition (the Sixth Thule Expedition): the material culture and folk-lore of Southeast Greenland, which was to comprise research on the subjects of the occurrence of game and the hunting technique attached to it, as well as the study of the intellectual culture as expressed in the ancient religious beliefs,

¹) The first mention of Puissortoq glacier I found in an extract dated 3rd June 1752 of the diary of the Greenland writer and merchant at Frederikshaab, Lars Dalager, now in the Royal Library, Copenhagen (Ledreborg 336 4to.). Dalager had recorded news from some East Greenlanders who were out on a trade journey, and put these down in his diary, where he says: "But now came the most difficult part, some days' journey thence, under an overhanging ice mountain which has spread out so wide to the sides that not the least land is to be seen any more; round about it they could not go, for the ice drifted ever hither and thither in the swift current, which became ever stronger they nearer they advanced towards Hoechen (i. e. Cape Farewell or Statenbuk); so they had to shoot in under the stretch of this ice mountain which was like a roof and vault over them. In the evening they could not lie to, but contrary to all usual practice had to 'overnight in the boat with all their baggage, which they moored to the ice.'" H. O.

traditions, legends, songs, etc., I was so fortunate as to have with me a man, CHRISTIAN POULSEN, who not only had lived almost a lifetime in these parts as a hunter of great repute, but who also was a famous shaman, bard and storyteller.

One day while we were in that beautiful spot "Dronning Marie's Valley" behind the large island of Skjoldungen, Christian and I climbed up together to where, with a view over the whole valley, he could rally



Fig. 3. Knud Rasmussen in the field. Photo. 6th—7th Thule Exped.

his memories of the days when he lived there. Unquestionably this was the happiest spot on the entire east coast, for here in late summer the people gathered together as soon as they had laid in sufficient stores of meat to live on through the dark days of winter.

All the folks from the camps and settlements round about came there, and down at the beach life was at its gayest; umiak after umiak was set aloft, and tent after tent was pitched in the scrub up the mountain slopes; the hills echoed the sound of laughter and boisterous speech; in the valley along the river banks stood the men catching splendid salmon with the leister, while the women went gathering berries, angelica and sorrel to spice the pickled blubber. And on really warm days one might see the men throw off their clothing to wade out into the shallow water of the fjord, where they lay basking in the sun, a remarkable sight, and a picture of folk-life in Greenland.

Of an evening when the fires flamed by the tents the drums began to appear, and soon their rhythmic strumming gathered all the people together. The busy day ended in song, and when there were accounts to settle, or hostility, between fellow-villagers, they joined issue here at these song-feasts; in lampoons they abused one another and settled their differences. Or they merely amused themselves, singing the praises of the achievements that held the community up and marked the best of the men.

In such fashion had the ancient pagan East Greenlanders lived their lives, a life in which CHRISTIAN POULSEN himself had been a central figure, as both hunter and shaman. Now it was all past; he had left East Greenland under his heathen name Autdârutâ ("umiak"), and here he was back again as a traveller and member of the expedition under his baptismal name CHRISTIAN POULSEN.

Together with what had been collected previously the material I gathered together with his assistance forms the basis of the following record.



Fig. 4. An East Greenland couple of former days. Drawn by the East Greenlander Kårale Andreassen.
From KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Myther og Sagn fra Grønland I.*

THE ANGMAGSSALIK ESKIMOS, THEIR DWELLINGS AND THEIR HUNTING

Angmagssalik is known to the East Greenlanders as Tasiussaq, whereas the name Angmagssalik itself covers the whole of the great fjord which extends far into the country, and the mouth of which may be described as the stretch between Orssuluviak on the west side, and Cape Dan on the east side. This fjord again has its name from a small settlement right in at the head at Qíngo, which is the only place in the whole region of the East Greenlanders where the anmagssaq, a small fish, is found.

Literally, then, Angmagssalik means: the place where there are anmagssat (plur. of anmagssaq).

The trading station, which has now been given the name of Angmagssalik by the Danes, lies inside a small cove in Kong Oscars Havn which, though having a narrow entrance, widens out considerably inwards. As in all parts of the East Greenland region, hunting conditions for the Eskimos who live at the trading station are governed by the winter ice, which usually brings both seals and bears with it.

It would be a difficult matter to give a description which would apply to the ice conditions in all years in general; as a rule, however, it may be said that the winter ice approaches the shore during November, often about the middle of the month. It is a rare occurrence for the ice to come in October, let alone earlier. By the time the winter ice comes in to Angmagssalik itself, Kong Oscars Havn is already frozen over at the head, and one may count upon the entire bay being covered in the course of November. Due to the advanced time of year it is not long before the winter ice itself freezes fast, that is to say freezes together outside of Angmagssalik as well ; but even then it is rarely more than four miles or so out over the ice, and then one comes to drift ice, without very much continuous thin ice.

In November with the winter ice come the fjord seals; the hunters walk over the shore ice with their kayaks to the edge, from which they paddle over to the winter ice.

As the starting point for our description of the district we shall select the trading post Angmagssalik, which lies due west of the mouth of the large, deep fjord of the same name. As already stated, it is a place almost at the head of the fjord, Qíngo, which has given the fjord its name, for there lies the genuine "angmagssalik", the place of the angmagssat, the only locality in the entire region where one can find this small fish, one that is of great importance to the winter supplies of the population. However, it is only in the literature and by the Royal Greenland Trading Company that this bay where the trading station is situated is called Angmagssalik. The people do not accept the name, but call it Tasiussaq: the place like a lake, a name given to it because the entrance to the gulf is very small, whereas farther in it spreads out into a large basin.

This was the place which in 1883 was visited by NORDENSKIÖLD. The expeditionary ship, the s. s. "Sophia", was anchored off there for some hours, and NORDENSKIÖLD called the place Kong Oscars Havn. He encountered no Eskimos there.

The following year G. HOLM came to the district and found that a large Eskimo population was living there. He remained nine months and wintered at Tasiussârssik. While there he not only surveyed the district but made his famous ethnographical collections and studies, and much more.

Here we might examine something of the earliest history of Angmagssalik.

There is a possibility that places near to where the trading station is now may have been visited about a hundred years before Erik the Red discovered Greenland. In BJØRN JOHNSEN'S "Grønlands Annaler" we read that the occasion and cause of Erik the Red's voyage to Greenland was that the rumour circulated among elderly people that Gunbjørn, the son of Ulv Krage, claimed to have seen a jökull in the "Western Ocean" and at the same time Snæfellsjökull in Iceland, while drifting over towards the west after he had set out from his own country, and finally came to Gunbjørn's Islands. This was in the year 877. A hundred years later, says the Icelandic Landnamsbók, Snebjørn Galte and Rolf Rødenes sailed out from the mouth of the Grivisaa in Borgarfjord to find Gunbjørn's Islands—and wintered there. On this point the reader is referred to G. HOLM'S paper "Gunbjørns-Skær og Korsøer" in Meddelelse om Grønland, Bd. 56, p. 288.

The northwest side of Kong Oscars Havn is fringed by tall, sharp, dentated and rugged mountains, whereas on the northeast it is surrounded by mountains with smoother contours, hardly so high and at any rate much easier to climb. At Kong Oscars Havn there are no fewer than three different crossings for sledge or other travellers. One trail

leads a little way north of Mount Amâgâq down to the country just behind the settlement of Íkáteq in Sermilik Fjord; another runs north right up to Akerningnaq and onwards from there, northeast-wards almost up to Sarqaq in the Ingmikêterajik Islands; a third mountain trail leads behind the hills north of HOLM's winter camp Tasiussârssik kitdleq up to Tasiussaq, to the settlement of Quernartussuit. All these inland trails run across low land with large lakes.

The trading station, near which from fifty to sixty East Greenlanders usually spend the winter, is looked upon as one of the most beautiful and luxuriant spots in the entire inhabited part of the Angmagssalik district. But it is not because there are valleys and particularly idyllic surroundings; in fact the scenery is almost wild.

All the houses at the settlement itself lie right up at the top of a hill about a hundred metres above the sea, at a place where the ground is more level; the church alone lies almost right out at the water's edge, where there is also fairly high ground. Round about the houses there is grass, with an intermixture of the small flowers common to these latitudes; the yellow butter cups, however, seem to predominate in the moist soil along by the river which runs down from the mountain lake. The hill sides themselves, right down to the bay, are in many places entirely covered with heath which in September bears ripe crowberries. There are trout in the small river running into the sea just west of the buildings. For about four miles this stream winds its way through the country between green and fertile slopes which are among the most idyllic and summery in the whole region. These grass-clad banks and flower-studded gullies with heath and willow are very rare on the east coast.

"Kong Oscars Havn", which is shut in completely by tall, pointed pinnacles, is simply lovely in summer, especially in the early morning hours and towards evening, when the water with its drifting ice-floes reflects the mighty mountains of the landscape. At such times the water may be as smooth as glass and assume a whitish sheen, with the drift ice a clear blue. Gulls soar everywhere, darting down with a scream to the water to catch fish, while the small birds flutter about chirping and singing among the rocks on land; and when the seals begin to migrate, one can see dark streaks rushing across the surface of the sea—fjord seals bobbing up to have a look round.

That is summer, but the picture is sometimes equally pleasant in winter, though preferably when spring is approaching. One climbs up Vardefjældet to look out for the sledges that are now coming from far and wide, and how thrilling to see them approach from the very top of the border hills, where they simply throw themselves down the slopes and career down towards the ice. The people with sledges coming from the west are always Sermilik folks, whilst those from the south come

from the Cape Dan region or the settlements up Angmagssalik Fjord. Sledges come in through the narrow inlet of the harbour too, loaded with seals shot out at the ice-edge, often in the neighbourhood of Orssuluviaq.

Best of all, however, is the period between spring and summer in years when seals are plentiful. On such days it is grand to stand up on the top of the Vardefjæld, at the time of the day when the sun flames down over the ice at noon and the small seals come and go at their blow-holes, too shy and alert as yet to bask on the ice; but when at last one seal becomes less timid, one can see the hunters moving quickly towards the school behind their white shooting-sails, walking, crawling, creeping, breathless with the excitement of the chase.

All this is to be seen from the hill-top, and it all goes on quite near to the settlement; one is filled with a feeling of happiness and expectancy, being an onlooker at all this life and movement in the warmth of the sun and the scintillating summer light.

Moving outwards right up at the head of Tasiussaq one passes many small points jutting into the fjord. One paddles or walks round about the many small indentations, and at length gets so far out that it is possible to look out through the bay entrance; there are no islands, nothing but the ocean. There lies the winter ice along the coast, its wave-worn sides reflecting sharply in the sea; and should it happen that the ice has drifted out seawards, it looks like a strange white wall of ice which, right out on the horizon, has raised the sea up to the sky.

Almost as far out as at Kong Oscars Fjord lie some small islands on both sides of the entrance. On coming outside of the inlet and turning southwards there is the magnificent Mount Orssuluviaq; viewed from the side it stands like a free, precipitous and mighty rock edifice, seemingly almost unconnected with the land. There are those who consider that the name really should be Ordlunaviaq, the mountain which one should think would easily fall.

Close to this promontory lie some small islands in a line towards the south; there is also an inlet with the name of Anordliuitsq; the place where the wind never blows, for this little bay lies so sheltered from the wind that it is almost always calm. Without doubt Anordliuitsq has always been a favourite spot in spring. Whereas Orssuluviaq rises out of the sea cold and stern, without a trace of vegetation, this little bay is very luxuriant; there is heath which is still bearing crowberries in spring, and it is visited by the women from Tasiussaq when they go berrying.

Viewed from the sea, Orssuluviaq blends with the mountains lying behind it and called by the same name. Here there is a wide ravine which cuts through right to the outer part of the peninsula and falling

right down to the sea on both sides, thus isolating the promontory. In calm weather it is quite possible to land on the steep cliff, though it seems impossible to climb it; but if there is any swell at all a landing is quite out of the question. Often when the winter ice comes down along the coast it catches on the promontory, causing it to collect there in dense masses.

There is a tale that a large fleet of umiaks once came from the north, from Sermilik, to take part in a song-festival. When they found the ice held up and packed round Orssuluviak, they carried their umiaks up through the wide ravine mentioned above. Looking from below up over the place where all those people in their eagerness to get to the festival toiled with their umiaks, it is very difficult to understand how they could do it at all. Another tradition is associated with the spot. Two men from Cape Dan were once shut out by the winter ice and they could not reach the shore. For days they had to remain outside, labouring continuously to carry their kayaks over the massed ice, which was so compressed and packed that there was no water between, and while they worked their way inwards, it carried them more and more to the southwest. So many times did they haul and carry their kayaks up over the ice hummocks and down to the small pools of water here and there, that the woodwork forming the deck of the kayak skeleton was smashed so much that whether they sat facing ahead or astern made no difference. At last one of the men became exhausted through hunger and exposure, and as the other could not help him, he toiled on alone and reached land with a last superhuman effort, arriving at the outermost point of Orssuluviak, starving and dead tired. If he would get in touch with human beings the one way for him was to climb up over the precipitous mountain itself, and in his desperation and last fight for life he actually succeeded in doing it, and with his kayak too, which undoubtedly saved his life, for now he could paddle in to the people at Tasiussaq. No one could ever imagine how he did it, for Orssuluviak is about 200 metres high. Looking up it, one sees nothing that could serve as a path, no rock shelves, no fissures, no holds at all.

The fells behind Orssuluviak rise steadily and have many piles of stones over which it is easy to pass. Down in a depression lies a row of lakes with their streams. This mountain is called "Sailor Mountain" by the Danes. It is about 650 m high.

Just southeast of Orssuluviak is a bay called Qasigissat, the Bay of the Spotted Seals, and into the head of this bay runs a depression which is connected with the large lakes behind Sailor Mountain; it is a popular short cut for people who come seawards from Sermilik when the sea is frozen over.

West of "Spotted Seal Bay" is the entrance to Sermilik Fjord.

Thus the land appears when one proceeds westwards from Tasiussaq. But if one paddles eastwards one enters the mouth of Angmagssalik Fjord, passing some small islands lying quite close to the shore. Here again there is an indentation, called Sarfakajik, the Stream; it is almost as large as Kong Oscars Havn, and there too are some small islands. At a place where "The Stream" is widest three straits run between the islands, and it is these that give rise to the swift flow from which the place has its name. On the northwest side of Sarfakajik lies Amitsiarssik, the Narrow Point, one of the most popular spring hunting places. Farther eastwards is another indentation stretching almost in to the foot of the large mountain Kingigtorsuaq; it is called Sigssarssuit, "The Little Beaches". Behind these two indentations runs a narrow trail which is used by the people of the fjord when proceeding to Tasiussaq and wishing to avoid all the pack-ice which usually freezes together outside the mouth of Kong Oscars Havn.

Still more to the northwest one comes to Tasiussaq kitdleq, where HOLM's uniaq expedition once wintered. The ruins of the expedition's winter quarters are still to be seen, as well as the cairn they built on departing. Now there is also a small earth-hut, lined inside with turf, which at all seasons of the year is used by travellers when sheltering from storms. This locality is also used as a hunting place in summer. A little to the east of it lies Kangigdleq, which is another summer settlement, whereas Kigssalerajivik, "The Small Spotted Seals", which lies a little farther eastwards, is a winter settlement.

The region in which the people of Tasiussaq hunt in winter stretches northeastwards to "The Little Beaches" (Sigssarssuit), southwestwards to "Spotted Seal Bay" (Qasigissat), whereas southwards out to sea no boundary can be fixed. Fjord seals are of frequent occurrence, and bearded seals appear now and then, though the latter species is becoming rare. There is no regularity in the coming of seals, however; there are years when their numbers are large, and others when they are very small, and in such cases the men go out to cracks and openings in the ice and hunt there. Unfortunately, with the introduction of firearms the East Greenlanders have abandoned their ancient sealing methods, which were best, inasmuch as they were more practical under every circumstance. It is true that on occasion more seals can be killed with the use of rifles, but it is seldom that the hunters secure the large percentage of those that are hit, as many are merely wounded and many sink to the bottom. Of course, hunting with a gun is easier than with the old methods, which required long and patient training. In the old days, when the seals clambered up on the ice the hunters would crawl right up to them and harpoon them, the so-called *aorniarneq*-method; now

they use the method of the shooting-sail, which was brought round from the west coast. It is possible that this method embodies better chances of a kill than the old method, but the latter had the advantage that they could always crawl close to a seal if only they had a harpoon or a gun; now, if they are to catch a seal lying on the ice they are entirely dependent on a piece of white shirting.

Hunting at the blow-holes is also falling in disuse, but happily the so-called *itsuarniarneq* is now being reintroduced, thanks to the initiative of the curate JULIUS OLSEN, who was indefatigable in his efforts to persuade the people how valuable this old method really is.

In summer, at the close of June, when the winter ice is cut up by the currents and the floes begin to spread down along the coast, the seal cubs make their appearance, though in no great numbers, and these are still hunted with the harpoon and the bird-dart. In the middle of June come the bladder-nose seals; the young ones appear first, the so-called *qagortat*, one-year old animals which have not yet become spotted—they are quite white; after them come the older seals. The beginning of August, when there is so much open water among the ice that the kayak can be used, is the best time for sealing. And if the numbers from the first are plentiful, there are usually bladder-noses till the sea is again covered with ice. During the course of summer the ice scatters more and more, until in September it is to be seen only here and there. In October the waters are entirely free, and then the swell and the waves grow so violent that hunting from the kayak is quite out of the question. This does not mean that there is no hunting at this time of the year; there are always bold and skilful people ready to take a chance when it presents itself. Together with the bladder-noses come the saddlebacks, which also remain in the region till the ice comes again. The method of hunting these two varieties is that the kayak-man steps out on to a floe and from there keeps a look-out; the moment he sees a seal he fires; but the method has this drawback that most of the animals he hits sink to the bottom in the period before they have become fat and can float with their own buoyancy. Here it ought to be added, however, that only very shy animals are shot with the gun; if a seal bobs up and swims calmly about without fear, the hunter usually goes after it in his canoe to try and harpoon it. In excuse for the use of the gun I should explain that often a harpooned seal gets away among the ice, taking the harpoon line with it, or that the line breaks among the hummocks. Nevertheless, no excuse will reduce the number of seals that are killed to no purpose, when they sink before the hunters can secure them.

From July till the middle of August the people are occupied in laying everything aside for winter supplies. They dry meat, and make

storage-bags of large fjord seals or bladder-nose seals, the skins of which are removed without being slit up, so that the only openings are where fore and hind flippers were, and at the head. These bags are filled partly with "natural" blubber oil, and such a filled bladder-nose skin will hold about as much as a barrel. The method of making a "*pôruseq*", as it is called, after the skin has been removed is to blow it up like a balloon and leave it to dry; afterwards it is filled with blubber cut into small squares to facilitate the running of the oil. Often dried meat is mixed with the blubber, a great delicacy, whereas the oil alone is used for the lamps. A skilful hunter will have as many as ten bladder-nose skins in the form of *pôrutsit*. After the middle of August the air is no longer so warm that the skin bags can be dried, and then the winter supplies consist of whole bladder-noses or saddlebacks, placed unflensed under stone cairns. These stores vary a good deal according to the skill of the hunter, from two or three up to ten seals, though in very good years there may be as many as twenty.

Sailing past Orssuluviag in a westerly direction, on across "Spotted Seal Bay" to the mouth of the fjord, one arrives at the outermost point, the lookout post of the bear hunters in winter. There they keep a constant watch for bears on the surface of the continuous stretch of ice covering the sea. Some way along the coast, which now runs slightly westwards, one comes to a settlement bearing the name of Mángúncersiorfik, "The summer Dwelling Place", because once it was a popular camp in spring. It was formerly called "The Gull", but in recent years it is only in summer, in the month of July, that any hunting is done from there, especially for fjord seals; for bladder-nose seals one has to go seven or eight miles, or even farther, out to sea, and this nowadays, when the people are not so hardy as in the old days, is considered to be rather arduous.

Continuing westwards one encounters some islands that are called Ikerasakitscq, "Narrow Sounds", because lying close together as they do they form a number of narrow waters. On these islands are a number of spring camping places.

Having passed "Narrow Sounds" we are inside Sermilik Fjord proper. On the southeast side of its entrance are some small islands, some of which are winter settlements. Farther up the fjord there are not so many islands, and the winter settlements as a rule are on shore.

The following are the names of winter settlements on the east side of the fjord: Sivinganeq, "The Slope", Igdlutalik, "House Island", Angmâq, "The Island of the Open View of the Fjord" because this spot lies farther out in the fjord than the others; the island Sivinganeq, "The Sloping Place", Ukiverajik, "The Little Winter Settlement", Akerningnaq, "The Middle Place", Ingmikêterajik, "The Small Isolated

Island", Sarfaq, "The Place of the Current", Tiniteqissâq, "The Dry Place at Low Water", Ivnrâssuaq, "The Big Slope".

Sermilik Fjord is a large indentation which once had the Danish name of Egedes og Rothes Fjord. Up at the head in the northwest is a large, productive glacier, from which the largest icebergs in the region come; it is also the reason why no people ever go up to the head of the fjord. Not only does it produce these large icebergs, but especially in spring it is constantly "calving", and this calf-ice comes down packed so close and in such enormous quantities that kayak hunting is quite out of the question.

Behind the fjord head is a nunatak projecting through the inland ice; some have characterised it merely as a large nunatak, others as a gradually sloping mountain with clefts and valleys which seem to shine green with grass and other vegetation. As yet, however, no one has ever visited the place. The opinion has been voiced that there may still be reindeer up there, as old reports say that a dead reindeer was once found not far away. The supposition in itself might easily be correct, for there is no doubt that reindeer once lived in the Sermilik district on both sides of the fjord, especially on the west side and as far down as to the island of Qeqertarssuatsiaq; antlers have been found there, and I myself have seen *talut*, breast-works of stones which were used in reindeer hunting, the hunters concealing themselves behind them while the flock was driven in their direction by beaters. These *talut* have been seen on Cape Dan island, but were so old that they could scarcely be distinguished for grass and turf.

The whole of the west side of Sermilik Fjord, especially the inner part, consists merely of narrow, low banks, and there are only very short stretches from the shore to the inland ice. Almost all the winter settlements lie on the mainland itself, there being almost no islands at all; the main settlements are as follows, in order out towards the mouth:

Qipak, the settlement to which the legendary hero Natâtoq fled; Ivnertalik, "The Place of the Slope"; Qeqertarssuatsiaq, "The Rather Large Island"; it was from the latter that Dr. QUERVAIN and his companions in 1912, after crossing the inland ice from Ege, in the north district of Jacobshavn, came down to the coast; the spot where he reached the coast is called Umigtuarajuit, "The Often Befogged Place". And finally the settlements Kakilik, "The Sticklebacks", and Ajagitâq, "The Pillar".

The southwest mouth of the fjord ends in a mountain, not a very high one and sloping out to the sea at the outermost extremity, but with a smooth form on the inner side. In addition to the usual jagged outlines on the east coast, there is a curious formation which is exactly like the steering-oar of a umiak, for which reason it is called Angit.

Having rounded Angit one can set the course towards Qeqertaussaq, "The Island-like One", a peninsula on which there is a winter settlement of the same name. Otherwise there are not many islands nor any deep indentations; the largest of the latter is called Serpartôq, "The Place of the Many Black Guillemots".

Continuing westwards from Qeqertaussaq one arrives at a prominent cape called Nôrajik; having rounded it, one can follow the coast to the northwest, where there are a few small islands here and there, from which one approaches a narrow channel named Ikerasârssik, "The Little Strait", so called because it lies in a group of two large and several small islands. When out hunting in a umiak the East Greenlanders always row behind these islands. There are two winter settlements on the islands: Torrutat, "The Trout Place", Tugdlerûnat and Isortoq, "The Place of the Muddy Water". The inland ice slopes smoothly down behind these islands, and a sledge-trail runs up over the ice to the bay behind Qeqertaussaq, used especially by people going to trade at the end of April.

Proceeding along the outermost islands towards the southwest one comes to a large island called Sujunerajik, "The Head". Here is a large house, said to have been built by the legendary hero *Kâgssagssuk*; from this place one crosses the wide sea-arm Ikerssuaq. It is very broad but does not cut very deep into the land, and glaciers everywhere run down into its head.

On the whole of the stretch described above the coastland is only narrow, with the inland ice close at hand.

Ikerssuaq itself consists of the stretch from Sujunerajik to Qivdlaq, Dannebrog Island; when travelling by umiak, however, the people go behind all these groups of islands, such as Graah Islands and Ørsted Islands, where the land is very high and almost without headlands. There is nothing to interest the East Greenlander here, nor are there any winter settlements until one gets down to Pikiutdliutâ, which means "The place where on first arriving there was a bird's nest". Pikiutdliutâ itself has the Danish name of Rømer Island, whereas the bay stretching inwards towards glaciers on almost all sides is called "Køge Bugt".

Inside of Pikiutdliutâ there is only very little land, as the ice in several places extends right out to the water. Nevertheless there are several houses on the island. It not infrequently happens that people from the Angmagssalik region spend the winter here; it is said that when the prevailing wind is from the northwest, there will never be any shortage of food.

Continuing from Pikiutdliutâ southwards along the coast, which consists of glaciers almost all the way with isolated patches of land

between, one comes down to Umívik. Very often, however, this stretch is difficult to navigate, the sea often being blocked by calf-ice from the many glaciers.

Hunting along the entire stretch southwards from Inigssalik, the small island northeast of Sujunerajik, does not vary much from place to place; when seals are numerous there is abundance and wealth. But if no seals appear there is no possible chance of procuring food; famine sets in, so much so that cannibalism was not unknown to those who came to live in these parts. The last of those who had taken part in this practice died not many years ago. The same conditions prevail at Torrutat and Isortoq.

Despite the barren, severe surroundings, hunting at Pikiutdliutâ is usually more stable than those places described in the northern part of this district. The seal migration scarcely ever fails, and in addition there are many eider ducks, which breed round about on the small islands. The many glaciers also mean that polar-bears make their way here. The northwest storms are so violent that there is always open water right up to March; this allows good kayak hunting; afterwards field-ice comes into the bay, but it is gone again by the time July arrives. At Umívik the natural conditions are exactly the same, though perhaps with the difference that there is a little more land at Umívik and that the mountains are higher, steeper and wilder in character. As a rule there is good hunting for fjord seals, but in former days it was regarded as one of the best hunting grounds for spotted seals; there are not many of these now. With open water there are often good numbers of saddlebacks, of the kind which keeps to the icebergs in order to seek their food in the current formed in their wake. In winter there is also excellent bear hunting. Some of the Angmagssalik dwellers still come down to Umívik, tempted not only by the seals but by the bears too. They lay in a store of trade goods, especially cartridges and tobacco, enough for a year's stay. In 1915, when people wintered at this spot, two hunters secured between 35 and 40 bears. When summer arrives with open water these people go back to the trading station with whole boatloads of dried meat and bearskins, and with the proceeds they lay in stores for the coming winter. While I was there in 1919 three umiaks sailed southwards, bound for Umívik. If ice conditions were favourable they were prepared to make their way right down to Igdluarssuk.

South of Umívik the settlements lie in the following order: Igdluarssuit, "The Little Houses"; Akorningnaq, "The Midway Place"; Ūmánat "Heart Mountain", and Tingmiarmiut, "The Place of the Birds". It is not a long distance from Igdluarssuit to Akorningnaq, and can be rowed in less than a day; from Akorningnaq to Umívik, however, is reckoned to be a full day's voyage, and also the stretch from Umívik to Ting-

miarmiut. The East Greenlanders reckon with the stretch of coast which they call "The Dead Land", i. e. the barren stretch near Umivik from Igdluarssuit southwards. From there the country is of a much more inviting character; it is true that there are very high and peaked mountains along this coast, but they do not extend right out to the sea; instead, they form a sheltering wall between the inland ice and the settlements. Just to the north of the settlement Igdluarssuit is a large fjord called Kangerdluarssuk, or Bernstorff Fjord; very often large quantities of calf-ice from the inland ice collect in this fjord; the inland ice extends right down to the head of the fjord and almost the entire north shore is covered with it.

The settlement Igdluarssuit distinguishes itself from many of the others, in that the ice never remains there long, because the locality is so windy.

The Eskimos say that if one climbs well up and looks over the coast from a mountain close by, it looks as if the area round about the settlement was an "*angmarsivik*", which means a place that is purposely kept open. An *angmarsivik* is an open, elongated hole cut into the ice for the purpose of fishing for sharks. First the fisherman sinks putrid blubber and meat to the bottom to attract the sharks; as soon as sharks assemble the fisherman sinks a putrefied dog a little way into the water, and when a shark rises to take this bait it is an easy matter to harpoon it and drag it up on to the ice, to provide food for man and dogs. Eskimos engaged in this form of shark fishing often remain out for long periods, regardless of the cold and severe weather. It is told of an old hunter named *Puikaqáiteq*, "the man whose hair is cropped round his head level with his ears", that when he fished for sharks in this manner he would stay out for two days on end.

With kayaks in use all through the winter season at Igdluarssuit, it is considered that the best East Greenland kayak men come from there, for they are compelled to go out hunting on the sea, always with a wind blowing, particularly from the northwest and southwest, whence the gales are very violent. The animals most frequently caught are fjord seal and bladder-nose, whilst bears are plentiful in spring and winter. Of the food that is gathered on the beach the more important varieties are seaweeds: *misarqait* (*eqûtit*) and *kipigssasit* (*suvdluitsit*).

Saddleback hunting is particularly profitable in spring, the method being as follows: the hunter in his kayak takes up his station close up to an iceberg with the stern of his boat towards it. The iceberg drifts slowly with the current and makes a wake, in which the saddlebacks seek their food, as already mentioned. At times there are so many collected round a berg, and so fearless are they when together in a flock,

that a hunter can scarcely utilize all the harpooning the chances given him in the course of a day.

In spring the saddlebacks come close in to the shore to mate, and do not go out again till autumn comes.

This is also the locality where walruses appear more often than anywhere else on the east coast.

The settlement at Igdluarssuit is associated with the legend that strange tribes often came there from the interior, *Arpagait Erqigdlit*, bent on killing all the people there, but it always happened that these strangers arrived just when the flood tide had separated the settlement from the mainland by means of a strait, over which they were unable to get.

The story is also told of a large Great northern diver (*Colymbus glacialis*) that lived north of Bernstorff Fjord at Kangeq, Cape Mösting. This bird was so dangerous that one day when defending its young from molestation by a man, it stabbed him to death with its beak. Since then no one has dared to approach the spot, it being feared that the giant bird is still living there.

Conditions at the next settlement, Akorningnaq, or Akorning-narmiut¹⁾ as it is mostly called, are quite the reverse of those just described. There is always firm ice in winter, and strong winds are rare. The settlement lies a little way in from the open coast, and as it is a long distance to the inland ice, and the mountains lie well inland, there are many luxuriant valleys which recall Angmagssalik fjord itself. Many edible plants and herbs are to be found, including angelica. On account of the calmness of the atmosphere a lot of snow falls, which never blows away; and as there never are any gales to blow the ice away in summer and autumn, it does not disappear until it has been cut up by the current and the heat of the sun. Contrary to what is the case at Igdluarssuit, there are plenty of cod and halibut to be had. Out at the fishing places the people usually employ snow huts, where they can be in comfort while fishing through a hole in the floor. These snow huts sometimes last all through the winter, and the fishermen make large store-houses of stones in which to keep the fish. And as many are caught, the custom here, in contrast to what is the case elsewhere along the coast, is to feed the dogs on both cod and halibut, especially when winter "has turned towards spring".

The people here are also in the habit of packing all the seals to be kept for winter supplies in these stone sheds, one over the other, whereas elsewhere they make a cache for every seal separately.

There are never any large pieces of field ice drifting about the bay or in the fjord, because the current is always out from the fjord, in which there are many salmon rivers.

¹⁾ That is: the inhabitants of A.

Of marine mammals there are bladder-nose seals, which migrate not far from the shore, and good numbers of saddlebacks and fjord seals. On the other hand there is never any sealing at the settlement itself in summer. This is of no great moment, however, as fishing and sealing supplement each other so well that there is always sufficient food. In spring, at the time when the surface of the ice begins to melt by day, so that a firm crust of ice forms on which one can walk, sealing at the blow-holes is usually very profitable. The hunter goes out early in the morning and covers the hole with loose snow; then about noon when the sun begins to be warm and the seals come up to the holes, they are harpooned while working to get rid of the snow again. There is also good *ūtoq* hunting, and at times plenty of bears.

A curious point about the people here at Akorningarmiut and district is that in certain respects their clothing differs from that of the Angmagssaliks. At Angmagssalik the preference is for garments of light-coloured skins without too many spots, whereas here they think the quite dark skins are more handsome, and although they never lack bear skins, they edge their sealskin jackets with sealskin only, never with bear-skin as the Angmagssaliks do.

At the head of the bay on which Akorningarmiut lies are broads, whereas the stream running from them is very narrow. These broads are associated with the following legend: At the settlement there once lived a man by the name of *Takakivat*. He was up in years and yet no bigger than a child. Once he had hunted the bearded seal at the blow-holes. On one occasion he had harpooned such a seal, and when he was dragging it to him by means of the harpoon line, the line got twisted round his hand and cut off all his fingers at the root. He was able to get the wound healed so that it no longer troubled him, by treating it as they do on the east coast. All loose flesh is scraped away from a piece of skin, leaving only the fibrous base, which is laid over the wound and covered with a piece of hide. When the bandage becomes too old it can be renewed. In this manner all wounds soon heal.

This *Takakivat* was once sealing at the blow-holes together with his son, having come from the broads, and, on their way home came to the place where the river narrowed, where *Takakivat* caught sight of something like a tent out in the middle of the ice. He told his son to remain where he was, while he himself approached the object to examine it. Suddenly he came running to his son and told him to flee with all his might towards the shore; but scarcely had they approached the shore when they discovered that the large, tent-shaped object had already passed them and now stood barring their way. As they had no other chance of escaping they then ran back over the ice towards the sea and thus just saved their lives. *Takakivat* later said that it was an

evil animal, a kind of *tupilak*, a very rare being, an *avsseq*, i. e. cover behind which an evil animal hides to avoid being observed by human beings before it is near enough to attack them.

We now come to the settlement of Ūmánaq, where the mountains are not so high as at other places and where there are fertile patches here and there. The southwest wind here blows with great violence, so that firm ice rarely forms, nor does the snow become so deep as at the last settlement. The field ice does not come till spring, and with it come numbers of bladder-noses, which lie basking on the ice floes and sometimes drift with them close to the shore. On such occasions they are caught in such quantities that the people have food supplies enough to last them till winter comes. Young seals arrive in such large herds that many hunters make tents of their skins alone, though such skins are usually considered to be the nicest of all for clothing. There are many bears, and the area is looked upon as one of those where fjord seals come in most abundant numbers. In addition there are many salmon rivers, in which sometimes the salmon are so large that they cannot be caught in the usual manner with the bird-dart, as they swim away with it. For that reason the fishermen have to use the larger bladder-dart, which is furnished with a bladder-float.

As no snow lies here, owing to the frequent gales, berries can be gathered almost throughout the winter season. The pickers place the berries in a kayakman's half-jacket, and when it is full, empty them into his complete kayak suit, which soon becomes filled to capacity, so many berries are there.

It is said that on the Ūmánaq island, Griffenfeldt Island as it is known to Europeans, there are two high and steep cliffs not far apart. In former times white men used to stretch ropes across between the two cliffs and then get the Eskimos to clamber from one cliff to the other; then, when they were midway across, the white men would jerk and pull the rope so violently that the poor Eskimos fell down and were drowned in the sea.

Tingmiarmiut is a settlement where conditions correspond to those at Akorningarmiut. The wind is scarcely ever from the southwest, and therefore the ice which forms has to thaw or be cut up by the current. As a consequence of the calm weather, and especially because there is never a southwest wind, there is no field ice either. At this settlement the people rarely suffer from famine, because large herds of bladder-nose come down the coast and, as there are usually plenty of fjord seals too, the people generally have good winter supplies.

Tingmiarmiut is the southern limit of the areas that are known as hunting grounds for the people of Angmagssalik.

From Tasiussaq to the North.

In describing the stretch from the trading station eastwards and northwards we got as far as the winter settlement of Qêrnertuarssuit, "The Little Black Ones", a name taken from some small islands which look very dark and which are frequented by large numbers of cranes.

Hunting here is principally for fjord seals; there are also bears occasionally.

Just to the west of the settlement a broad strait cuts in and separates Angmagssalik Island from the mainland; it is known as Ikerasagssuaq or Ikerasârssuaq, "The Large Strait". It extends from Angmagssalik Fjord over to Sermilik Fjord, where it terminates near the aforementioned Tiniteqissâq. The entire north shore consists of tremendous mountains which, the people say, are inhabited by strange beings called Aluggsat, "The Boot Soles", for that is how they look. They are said to be very dangerous, for they eat everything; no matter what it is one throws into the sea, they swallow it at once. Up in the north-west part of the strait is the mountain Neriniartuaraq, "The Young Bladder-nose". Almost right opposite is Paornartuarssuk, "The Place of the Berries". In the bay which runs in from this point is a glacier terminating in the sea itself. From there is a long stretch where there are many mussels, many of which have pearls inside them.

The south shore of this strait is fringed with mountains which are less turbulent in form, not so peaked and pinnacled as those on the north side. The Eskimos say that on the south side of the strait there is a hot spring which never freezes over, and which is so hot even in winter that several lumps of ice can be melted in it immediately. In years when seals are plentiful these animals are fond of passing through "The Large Strait", and every spring there is an abundance of "ûtoq's". The land at the northeast end is called Qârtuluk, "The Ravens", because it is so dark-coloured, and a little to the north of this, out on a small point, is a winter settlement which passes under the name of Qêrnerajivit, "The Little Black Ones". On the way northeastwards is a narrow but very deep indentation called Ikerasaussaq, "The Strait-like One". People from Angmagssalik come down here to catch spotted seals, which are considered to have the handsomest skins; in recent years, however, they have been very rare.

Sailing round about the east end of Ikerasârssuaq one turns into another arm, longer and narrower, passing two small islands, the tngmikêrteq Islands, and so in to Qingo, where the angmagssats are to be found. This angmagssat fishing place lies below a mountain over 300 metres high. The scenery here is very beautiful, with views both outwards and inland. The fjord arm extends right in to Qingorssuaq,

"The Great Fjord Head", surrounded by high mountains, where a large river empties; this river comes from quite a series of lakes which form the sledge-trail in winter over to Sermilik Fjord.

On the angmagssat grounds a very strong wind blows every day up the fjord, and even at times when the main fjord is like a sheet of glass, the storm whips up the water on the angmagssat grounds and causes quite a heavy sea. The wind dies down in the evening, so that one can sail in and out by night. It is a cold place to stay, however, on account of the wind, while the sun quickly goes down behind the high summits, leaving gloom and chill.

Large numbers of people gather there in the angmagssat season, some with, some without umiaks, and it is no uncommon sight to see more than a score of large tents, besides many small ones. More than half the population of the district assemble here from the end of May or beginning of June till into July; sometimes they number more than two hundred at a time. There are quantities of angmagssat here, though they do not come in enormous shoals as on the west coast, and unfortunately it sometimes happens that this little fish, which is such a vital supplement to the winter supplies, occurs only in small numbers. As a general rule, then, the quantities put aside for the winter are a good deal smaller than those to which the people on the west coast are accustomed. When the angmagssats have been dried, which is done in the usual manner by spreading them over the rocks, they are not packed into skin bags as on the west coast; a sharpened bear bone is used for piercing a hole through the tails, whereafter they are strung on a thin thong, tail against tail and heads turning in different directions. When the line has reached a suitable length it is rolled up and pressed into a bundle, and then the angmagssats are ready for the store-chamber, which is built up of stones. The thongs used for stringing the fish are cut from the skin of fjord seals.

As a rule, those who have collected most will have from seven to ten bundles of fish; the less enterprising get much less, sometimes only one bundle. At the beginning of July the colony leaves the angmagssat grounds and moves back to its winter settlements, close to which the bundles of fish are cached.

Sailing out from the angmagssat grounds along the north side of the fjord the first winter settlement to be reached is Ilerfit, "The Graves". From there at frequent intervals lie the following winter settlements: Simiutaq, "The Stopper", i. e. an island lying in the mouth of a fjord or channel like a cork in a bottle; Kùngmiut, "The River Dwellers"; Inorpiagssat, "The Old People's Village". These settlements are usually inhabited, Kùngmiut always, as it now has a curate and a school where regular divine services are held.

There is good sealing at all these places, in winter too. It is said that in olden times there were Norsemen living at Kùngmiut, but that they were all killed¹).

The country here is fertile and well covered with grass, but no ruins of any dimensions have been found there. On the other hand it is said that people who build houses there have often found fairly large pieces of iron and the ribs and vertebrae of whales. It has become the residence of a curate, because this settlement lies centrally for a number of inhabited localities. From them one can travel northeastwards as a rule through the southern channel, which is called Ikerasak, "The Sound", through which one comes to the large and widely ramified Sermiligâq, "The Fjord with Glaciers at the Head".

This fjord is the most northerly one of the great complex of indentations along which the chief part of the population of East Greenland lives. On the way to Sermiligâq is the large island of Ingmikêrteq, "The Solitary One", with which is associated the legend of "The Jealous Ghost".

For the present, however, we shall not follow the channel leading over to Sermiligâq, but turn southwards to the settlement of Quinarmiut, "The Worm People", on a small island, which, however, is not always inhabited in winter. Keeping on southwards in the direction of Cape Dan we arrive at the settlement known as Umivik, i. e. North Umivik, which lies below some high mountain cliffs on a large island just north of the Cape Dan country. On the inside of the settlement are broads, called the Umivik Sea. On the far side of these broads is another settlement, Akerningnarajik, "The Little Mid-way Place", whence one goes on to Kingigterajik, "The Mountain Place", and Siorarteq, "The Sandy Place", which is both a winter and spring settlement. All the islands lie direct north of Cape Dan and are often mentioned in the legends. On the whole there is a long line of islands both north and south of Cape Dan. The chief settlement on Cape Dan island, which lies on its north side and which is also the residence of a curate, is called Kulusuk, "The Bird Carcase". The strait running north about Cape Dan Island has a very strong current. The sealing grounds at Kulusuk are reckoned to be among the best in all Angmagssalik district. In spring especially, when the swell begins to rise, the hunters can paddle out, sheltered from the Atlantic, or rather from Denmark Strait, by the length of Cape Dan Island. In summer too it is a good place for sealing, particularly not far from the settlement, as seals often make their way through the strait in both directions.

In the way south from Kulusuk we come to the settlement of

¹) Cf. W. THALBITZER: "Om Nordboruiner i Østgrønland" in the periodical "Atlanten" No. 7, pp. 253—62, Copenhagen 1912. H.O.

Kornârssik, "The Naze" and also "Sujunerajik, "The Head". Close by is a narrow channel, with a very lively seal traffic in summer in open water. In Ikerasatsiaq Strait a single hunter will often catch several bladdernoses in one day. The water is so shallow that it is of no consequence if the killed animals sink to the bottom, for it is easy to fish them up again. To the south of this channel lie two winter settlements: Pulôrtussoq and Nôrsit, the latter name meaning: Those on the outermost point. Both settlements lie right out to the open sea, sheltered only by a few small islands.

All these settlements have good hunting, even in winter, as one can go out to sea to both north and south. They are looked upon as the best localities for bottlenose seals, and there are many bears about the entire Cape Dan area. It is the true bear hunters of the Angmagssalik district who live here. But as the settlements lie facing the sea, only the most skilful kayakmen, and the most hardy among them, can hope to take up the struggle for existence in so exposed an outpost.

We now return to Sermiligâq Fjord, where again there are many settlements. In former times the whole fjord was populated, but only relatively few have wintered there in recent years. Conditions for sealing are not especially good, and if people settle here for the winter it is because it is a good base for bear hunting. Nevertheless, there are two settlements in the fjords which are great favourites to this day, Nunakitsit, "The Little Country", and Qijerfik, a name which means: the cutting-board of wood or bone used by the women when cutting out skin clothing with their ulos. Mention should also be made of Utorqarmiut, "The Old People's Settlement", whose name has become known because it was the first place on the east coast where a hunter built himself a house entirely of wood, like the buildings at the colony.

Northwards from here the land again narrows off and becomes more barren. The glaciers come nearer the shore, in many places right out to the sea; and most of the cliffs which lie between the glaciers drop so steeply down to the water that one cannot land there. Indeed, only in very few places can a landing be made from a boat. On the whole it is a wild and unproductive land that runs northwards here and in along the sides of this fjord.

We shall now confine ourselves to mentioning the places that are better known: Iggavik, "The Fire Place"; Aputitêq, "The depth of snow"; Qavdlunât, "The White Men's Country"; Qujutilik, "The Place of the Small Stones", and Amâgâq, "Heart Mountain", where there is a settlement that is populated sometimes.

Nor must we forget to mention Uigerdlerssuaq, "The Place Which One Must Pass Round", the outermost point, three sharp and craggy mountain formations rising right out of the sea off Erik the Red Island;

and finally, there is Anâna, "The Mother" lying on a point on the mainland and known for its many bears¹).

We have now reached the large fjord known as Kangerdlugssuatsiaq, which is so barren that no vegetation is to be seen anywhere. There is a red tint about the land, and many of the mountains cliffs are naked and mouldering. Here lies Upernivik, "The Spring Settlement".

In the fjord lie many icebergs which have grounded and been unable to get away. Round these are often schools of narwhals. The highest of the mountains north of the fjord is Sarqarmiut, 1800 metres. The coast northwards from there consists of mountains all the way, but there are many seals — the common fjord seal and the bearded seal, whilst bears are very abundant.

All this inhospitable and barren coast in itself speaks of the hard struggle for existence of those who have lived there. It is no uncommon occurrence to find human remains that tell of cannibalism, for the bones are gnawed, and marrow bones are broken in pieces.

Mention must also be made of the fairway at Sioraq Sound, which is shallow and muddy. Here are the names Sarfarsivik, "The Current Opening", and Nigertussoq, "The Place of the Strong West Wind", where there is a house ruin as at Tugtulik, "The Place of the Reindeer", just to the north of it. Then come Angmatitajik, "The Place that is Kept Open", where there is a landing place, Nasigpik, "The Look-out", and the isthmus which connects the latter with the mainland and is called Itivdliarssik, "The Crossing Place" where there is a house ruin. Then Aqautâ, "The Lullaby", a place famous for its many bears; here a glacier extends far out into the sea; Itivdlisalik, two islands with a wide stretch of water between them, just south of "The Bay of the Spotted Seals". Here too is a house ruin. Then we come to Sivinganeq, "The Quiet Place", lying just north of the aforesaid bay or Kialineq Fjord, where there are houses and excellent hunting; from an island, Alue, narwhals can be taken, and also from the island of Orssuluviaq when a landing is possible. Then comes Nákarfik, "The Falling Place", Nákakajugtoq is "the place where something is always falling down"; the glacier is said to lie high up on a cliff and extending out over it, and at times pieces of it fall down with a noise that is deafening. At Nûgârssik there are usually plenty of bears and narwhals and the usual seals. As the inner part of the fjord is completely filled with glaciers, the calf-ice often forms a serious obstacle to hunting.

¹) Regarding the following description of the coast from Erik the Red Island and to the north, see also G. ANDRUP: Carlsberg Fondets Expedition til Østgrønland 1898—1900 (Medd. om Grønland. Bd. 27) and G. ANDRUP: The Former Eskimo settlements on the East Coast of Greenland between Scoresby Sound and the Angmagssalik District. (Medd. om Grønland. Bd. 28). H.O.

In the interior of a fjord lying close by the ice never breaks up, so that it is possible to run sledges across even in summer. There are said to be extraordinary numbers of bears there. The last East Greenlanders to travel that part say that when they scaled a mountain side in order to "get a view" they immediately saw now fewer than seven bears in different directions.

The settlements named above lie on what is called the Kialineq land, which is far to the north of Angmagssalik and where in 1919—20 five or six umiak crews spent the winter.

It often happens that there are intervals of many years between occasions when the Kialineq land is inhabited. It is remembered that it was there that the well-known shaman Maratse once settled with his family when he was quite young. When he reached the age of about 60 no one wintered so far north. In 1912 he went up there again and spent a winter. It was an extremely successful season, the number of bears killed being especially high.

And again in 1919 it was this same old shaman who was the leading spirit of the great hunting voyage up there.

As a rule, conditions for hunting are very good, but the routes from Sermiligâq northwards to the place are both dangerous and laborious. The mountains drop so steeply into the sea that usually there is not even room to draw a umiak on shore; it has to remain moored in the water. Nor are there many camping places on the entire stretch; it is not always that one can reach a place to land, let alone put up a tent. Travellers must therefore be prepared to sleep in their boat, even under risky and critical circumstances.

It is only when they reach the site of their winter quarters that the Eskimos take their umiaks ashore. Then they build a winter house, and once the ice has formed in the autumn, it usually lies almost till the following spring, and there is open water only for about a month in the year.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS, AND HUNTING CONDITIONS IN SOUTHEAST GREENLAND

On the basis of information supplied by CHRISTIAN POULSEN, an East Greenlander who had migrated to the southern west coast, KNUD RASMUSSEN in 1932 gave a description of these settlements, with the remark that the information was built entirely on personal knowledge, for POULSEN as a hunter had lived at all the places mentioned. For these latter places this description forms a supplement to the foregoing.

Lindenow Fjord.

Winter ice scarcely ever forms in this fjord; on very rare occasions it may lie till the month of March. The causes are, firstly, the very powerful fjord winds, and secondly calf ice coming down from very productive glaciers in the interior of the fjord. It is true that these masses of calf-ice freeze together, often very early in the season, but when they are blown out of the fjord in large floes they clear the fairway of newly-formed ice at the same time. Only in coves and certain sheltered channels and straits near the south side of the mouth does winter ice form.

Field ice hardly ever gets into the fjord, usually stopping outside the mouth. From January the fringe of ice grows in width, till at last it is impossible to see open water, even from mountain tops. After the avyoff-shore winds, however, the so called *avangnaq*, which sometimes blow so violently that everything is hidden, the ice may leave the shore, so that even in the field-ice period one can get through open water southwards through Prins Christian Sound and to the west coast.

Snowfall causes no difficulty to overland travelling, as the strong winds quickly blow it away.

Conditions for hunting in general are as follows:

The bladdernose comes with the approach of spring and remains in these waters all the summer. It does not come in herds, but individually, especially out at the mouth of the fjord and at Nanuseq.

The bearded seal comes singly, too, most frequently towards autumn, rarely in winter; it is best caught in spring when basking on the ice in the small coves that freeze over.

The Greenland seal comes in August, and is then in good condition; nowadays its occurrence is rare, but it remains in the district until the field-ice increases in dimensions, when it disappears.

The fjord seal is the commonest quarry of the Eskimos; in winter it keeps mainly to the small coves where the inner part freezes over. They are shot from the edge of the ice and picked up from kayaks. During the period when the days are short, young seals, called *terituat* or *nukardlit*, are numerous and easy to hit. In spring, too, they are to be found in large numbers on the ice of frozen coves.

Narwhals, white whales and whales are never seen here.

Fishing is unimportant. Most of the fish actually caught by the Eskimos are sea scorpions and trout, the latter at Narssaq, Kùgârmiut and some way inside the mouth of Nanûseq Fjord.

Sea-perch are found in the stomachs of bladdernose seals; there must be many of them, but as they frequent great depths, the old East Greenlanders were unable to fish for them.

Sharks appear in considerable numbers when bearded seals are being flensed and the water is full of blood.

With the exception of eider-ducks on Dronning Louise Island no aquatic birds breed here; the varieties that are most common are: guillemot, black guillemot, little auk, gulls and Brent's goose. Migrating ducks and geese are seen in spring and autumn.

There are no great numbers of ptarmigan; their best season is in winter.

Only one single hare has been seen within living memory—the only one ever seen on the southeast coast.

Up in the fertile valleys angelica and various berries can be gathered, especially black crowberry and marsh whortleberry.

From Lindenow Fjord the Eskimos sometimes sail up to a small island just north of Cape Walløe, which is a breeding ground for spotted seals.

Another favourite "excursion" is to Ingerdlarsietit at the mouth of Kûteq Fjord, where many fjord seals, old and young, foregather in spring and summer. Eider ducks are also numerous there.

Ilivileq.

This settlement lies out on the large island of the same name which fills the mouth of Danell Fjord. On the outer point of the island are two fairly recent houses and an ancient ruin, while there are two old ruins on a small island just off the aforesaid settlement; finally, there is a

house ruin on the west side of the large island, opposite the entrance to the strait that separates it from the mainland.

Here the winter ice forms rather early in the year, usually before Christmas, and remains till March, when generally it is broken up by gales which press the field ice into the fjord. Normally there is good sledge-going from the mouth of the fjord inwards. The Eskimos cross the ice to seal at the blow-holes in the strait behind the larger island, but here the ice goes out early, carried away by the swift current.

Pâtusôq Fjord lies to the south of Danell Fjord and freezes over at the same time. In spring there are many seals on the ice.

Field ice rarely or never gets up into Danell Fjord, as the winter ice is already firm when the field ice comes round about December.

Calf-ice in the fjord, which has many glaciers, is rarely an obstacle to sealing with the kayak, except on a few days in spring or early summer, for the prevailing fjord wind soon blows it outside.

The most dangerous wind to this settlement is the *nigeq*, a northeaster, which sometimes comes with a tremendous swell from the outer ocean.

Snowfall is never embarrassing to the traveller, for the wind sweeps over and makes the snow firm.

Of seals the most frequent is the fjord seal, especially on the ice when the sun begins to gain power. There are also many bearded seals at all times of the year. Bladdernose and Greenland seals are seen mostly in late summer, but never in any great numbers. The bladdernose usually have their stomachs full of sea-perch, and the bearded seal has large shrimps.

Of birds there is the ptarmigan in winter, but never many; guillemots and black guillemots are pursued with the kayak in autumn until the ice forms. There are also eider ducks, which are most numerous in spring. And on the lakes, especially those on the small islands, which are full of lakes, there are many loons.

Auarqat.

Inside this fjord winter ice forms at the end of November or the beginning of December, as a rule before the field-ice has actually started to appear; and it remains there until May. Snow causes no trouble, despite considerable precipitation, as the winds blow it firm. Here again the prevailing and feared wind is the *nigeq*, the northeaster, which at the place where the settlement lies comes with violent gusts through a gully. The winds down the fjord are not particularly strong.

Field-ice appears normally with the dark period in December, increases as spring approaches, and by the end of July the sea is usually free of ice.

The animals hunted are the usual species, with fjord seal and bearded seal all the year round. In spring a number of young bladder-noses arrive, and these are hunted in open water with the kayak. In autumn there is usually a quantity of Greenland seals on migration behind the high, steep island of Qeqertarssuaq.

Next after Orqua this place is known as one of the localities where arctic foxes are most frequently met with, both the blue and the white varieties.

On a point on the other side of the fjord, almost right opposite to the main settlement of Auarqat, lies Tâterait, a popular spring settlement. Here the gull and Brent's goose breed on a bird-cliff which, however, is not particularly high or large. Here, too, is an old settlement in a fertile plain, where some distance behind the Eskimo settlement there is said to be an ancient ruin that is not of Eskimo origin. Despite a careful search, however, the expedition did not succeed in confirming this tradition.

In addition to the usual seals there are some of the spotted variety here. Sharks, too, are numerous. On fertile stretches on both sides of the fjord there is not only unusually fine angelica but also the berries common to this coast.

Anoritôq.

The fjord on which the settlement lies may freeze over now and then, but the ice is quickly torn to pieces by the wind and heavy swell. As a rule, however, there is firm ice behind the islands to and including Napassorssuaq.

A very productive glacier up Anoritôq Fjord sends down quantities of calf-ice; in good weather, when the ice is not massed together, the kayak can also be used for hunting.

Field ice comes late in the autumn or early winter, and it is this that makes it possible for the ice behind the islands in this otherwise very open region to freeze together into smooth floes, so that some hunting can be done from there.

The northeaster often blows and on the whole is the prevailing wind. No other wind is of any importance. Although there is heavy precipitation, the climate is too windy for the snow to be an obstacle to those who wish to move about the country.

Anoritôq, "The Very Blowy One" is not reckoned to be a good hunting place. There are not many fjord seals in the late summer, a few bearded seals, no Greenland seals. Spring is considered to be the best time, and there is profitable hunting in connection with the so-called *aviortut*, i. e. bearded seals in the mating season. At the same time migrating fjord seals are obtainable in good numbers.

On the island of Qutdleq there is a breeding ground for spotted seals.

In autumn there are many eider ducks, gulls and terns, in spring time black and other guillemots.

Sharks occur, but are not caught; there are fair numbers of bears.

Tingmiarmiut.

Field ice arrives here in autumn, sometimes before the winter ice has actually established itself. In this large fjord system the north-easter has no power, with the result that winter ice forms early, i. e. in November, and rarely breaks up before the birds have started nesting.

The region is good for kayak hunting because there is so little wind. The fjord winds have no force.

A good deal of calf-ice comes down from the many glaciers.

Much snow falls and is very inconvenient; or rather, the snow remains lying and is not swept firm by winds.

In summer the bladdernose, bearded seal and common fjord seal are hunted from the kayak.

The deep water outside the main settlement of Tingmiarmiut seems to be a favourite resort of bladdernoses, which arrive after moulting at the end of June or the beginning of July. Normally they decrease in numbers when the berries ripen, i. e. after the middle of August.

The bearded seal is seen everywhere in open water. In winter, when the ice forms, it becomes more rare, but comes again in spring when the sun is gaining power, when it is fond of coming up on the ice to sleep. In spring time there are swarms of fjord seals on the ice, especially in behind the large islands and close to the inland ice. On the whole, fjord seals are most frequent inside the fjord. Of fowls there are the eider-duck, long-tailed duck, the gull, tern and black guillemot; guillemots arrive on migration in autumn but are of no economic importance, as the winter ice forms early.

There are large numbers of sharks, and they are caught in a special manner, the so-called *angmaivik*-method. A floe four to five metres is cut out of the ice, and through the hole is sunk a rotting seal carcase weighted with stones. The hole is cut well out on the fjord where the water is deep and there is some current.

The floe of ice that was cut out is pushed in under the ice edge so that it is below water and only a piece of it projects. On this "shelf" they place an *aqajaroq*, i. e. a seal stomach filled with putrefied blood; this is made fast through a hole in a piece of ice placed above it, so that the blood-bag cannot be reached from above or the sides by the sharks or by ravens. Through a small hole in the bag the blood now drips on to the floe and spreads its odour into the water. Putrid blubber is also thrown in, in fact anything that smells. All this attracts the sharks, whose numbers rapidly increase.

Along the edge of the ice the hunters place the stomachs of caught sharks; then when the quarry comes up from below to eat these, they are stabbed with the seal harpoon and caught in the same manner as seals.

The shark meat, of which one can always get as much as one desires, is laid in snow and allowed to remain there till spring comes. Then all the salt and water run from it, and it forms excellent dog feed. If it is to be used for human food it is hung on steep cliffs and dried.

Some sharks are so large that the hunters do not venture to harpoon them.

Ūmánaq.

Here, where the three settlement of the district, Alángoq, Ituvssálik and Qeqertâraq, are grouped about the two steep Ūmánaq cliffs, hunting conditions are governed by the fact that outside of these cliffs there is the open sea, with no reef, whereas inland there are many narrow fjords with bays and coves. In the many indentations there is good hunting for fjord seal, in summer from kayaks, in winter at the blow-holes in the ice, and sometimes by "smooth-ice hunting". All these narrow waters and coves freeze over rather early, not uncommonly before Christmas. Outside the two Ūmánaq cliffs winter ice never forms, so that the kayak can be used for sealing in open water all the year round, or, if the field-ice should mass together, from cracks. Next after fjord seals, bearded seals are the principal quarry, whereas bottlenoses are irregular in their appearance. In autumn old spotted seals come ashore at some places, when numbers are killed.

On the ice it was possible to drive by sledge not only to Tingmiarmiut but to the Skjoldunge district as well; from there up to Cape Moltke and on to the small islands south of Igdlularssuit, crossing the glaciers behind Cape Moltke.

There were trout in the fjords, in abundant numbers and in good condition.

Finally, the region here was famous for its good berries, sorrel and angelica for pickling blubber.

With this and the previous chapter an endeavour has been made to draw a continuous picture of the occurrence of the various game animals in the southern part of East Greenland.

The picture shows that conditions for hunting on the whole must be said to be as good as, if not better than most places on the west coast, and that for this reason it must be possible for a much larger Eskimo population to live there than actually is the case.

That a larger population did live there is proved by the many deserted settlements and house ruins¹⁾, apart from the traditions. In Lindenow Fjord alone the 6th Thule Expedition excavated no fewer than 25 of these.

The Dead Houses.

Along the coast one comes across a number of these, which tell their own gloomy story.

"The Dead Houses" are house ruins which have collapsed over the skeletons of the people who once lived in them, but who died of starvation at a time when there was no food to be had.

It is strange to see these large common tombs of people who once perished from famine and whose poor tortured bodies have manured the soil, so that now the vegetation is always most luxuriant and most colourful above the situation of the platforms which hunger made their death-beds.

In behind Skjoldungen alone there were no fewer than three "dead houses".

The old settlements are distributed as follows through the various districts, usually with only two houses at each place except in Lindenow Fjord:

From Qeqertaulaq to Umivik 42 settlements with 62 houses; from Igdluarssuit to Uivfaq 30 settlements with 50 houses; from Ūmānaq to Puissortoq 9 settlements with 15 houses; from Anoritôq to Lindenow Fjord 10 settlements with 12 houses; in Lindenow Fjord 8 settlements with 25 houses; from Lindenow Fjord to Aluk 2 settlements with 4 houses.

In all this makes 101 settlements and 158 houses²⁾. If we assume that in every house there were 15 people, which is a very low figure for East Greenland, there would, if all the settlements had been inhabited at the same time, have been over 2000 people on this coast—and these in settlements that lie very scattered.

This has scarcely been the case, but I consider it beyond question that there would be room for many more. Here is a reservoir, ready for use in the event that a migration from West Greenland should ever be necessary.

¹⁾ According to GRAAH, a total of 581 people lived in 1829 on the stretch from Lindenow Fjord to Umivik. H. O.

²⁾ This calculation, which thus appears among KNUD RASMUSSEN's notes, is not sufficiently well-founded, for more thorough investigations have shown that there are many more houses than recorded here; see THERKEL MATHIASSEN: *The Former Eskimo Settlements on Frederik VI's Coast* (Medd. om Grøn. Bd. 109, No. 2) and the same author's *Prehistory of the Angmagssalik Eskimos* (Medd. om Grøn. Bd. 92, No. 4). H. O.



Fig. 5. Ruined house by the sea. Photo. 6th-7th Thule Exped.

Among KNUD RASMUSSEN's diary notes for the 6th Thule Expedition there is a list of the settlements, houses and house ruins on the first of the stretches of coast enumerated above: from Qeqertaulaq to Umivik. This list is as follows:

At Qeqertaulaq (Qeqertaussaq), 2 houses.

At Natsivik a little to the south of the above, 2 houses, one of them very old.

At Ivtorigsoq (Ivssorigsoq), 2 very old houses.

At Narssârtuk (Narssârssuk), 2 houses, old.

At Íkátuaq, one old house.

At Tovqulâq (Tovqussâq), 2 houses.

At Inigssalik 2 houses, of which one is old and not in use.

At Isertoq 4 house ruins, two of them in use.

At Akiliariteq (Akuliaruseq), one old house.

At Sapangaq, one old house.

At Qeqertaq, one old house.

At Sujunikajik, 2 houses, only one in use.

At Itugtuluk, 1 old house.

At Orte (Orsse), one house ruin.

At Igtit (Igdlut), 2 house ruins, one occasionally in use.

At Tasiulâjuk (Tasiussârssuk), one old house.

At Ukiverajik, one old house.

At Avqusiâjik, one old house.

At Nunârtik (Nunârssuk), one old house, still in use occasionally.

At Âlue, one old house.

At Manivitsoq, 2 houses, one old, the other still in use.

At Aqitsoq, 2 houses, one old, inhabited by Mikael and Jakob with their families about 20 years ago.



Fig. 6. Ruined house, with kayak-supports of upright stones. Photo. 6th 7th Thule Exped.

At Pamiagdhluk, 2 houses in use twelve or fifteen years ago.

At Igtit (Igdlut), one house, now inhabited.

At Tiarqigsoq, one old house.

At Nuerniangatôq, one house.

At Ikermiut, one old house.

At Ukiverajik, one old house.

At Pamiagtussoq, one old house.

At Umiviutâ, one old house.

At Iligtaq, 2 houses.

Round about Âluit: at Pukúngaq, one, and at Nunakitsut one house.

At Ikerasak one house, and just south of it at Kûk, one house.

At Kiataq, 2 houses.

At Igtutalik (Igdlutalik), one house.

At Tasilâjik (Tasilâjuk) close to the glacier, one house.

At Patsâjik (Pâtâjuk), 2 old houses, one in use.

At Utermiut, 3 houses, and at Qeqertat close by, one house.

At Upernagssivik, one house.

At Qusêrtalik, one house.

In all, 62 house ruins.

IN KNUD RASMUSSEN'S diary-notes mentioned above is an account of his visit to one of these settlements:

Patsâjuk.

We sailed in to the Umivik glacier, where NANSEN made his way up on to the inland ice.

We keep along by the land, our eyes staring out of our heads, bare, barren land. I hear one of the others say to a companion: no chance of human habitation, no life, no vegetation! Then suddenly we catch sight of a red tuorak jumping gaily about on the cliff side—a little girl; then we see the house, and in a short time are standing beside it.

The house is inhabited by the "personnel" of two umiaks.

One consists of the master of the house *Nikodemus*, whose Eskimo name is *Nusugkalivat*; his wife *Augusta*, Eskimo name *Ilerilârtoq*; their daughters *Christiane*, Eskimo name *Qingátâneq*, *Martha*, *Rebekka*, Eskimo name *Qârmat*, the women *Lucie* and *Elitta* and the men *Enok* and *Peter*, the latter a young hunter.

The second umiak crew consists of *Robert* with his wife *Alina*. Their companions are their sons *Jakob*, *Esaja* and *Ejâno*, the latter only 16 years old, their daughters *Julietta*, *Tippo* (Debora) and *Igpaq*.

Of dogs *Nikodemus* has seven, good animals and very fat; he has sold a bitch with three pups to "*ujaragsiortoq*" ("the stone seeker", the mineralogist Professor VOGT). *Peter* has seven dogs too, and *Robert* eleven.

From the 22nd July to 9th September the results of their hunting have been:

Nikodemus: 12 bearded seals and about 50 common seals.

Peter: 11 bearded seals and about 30 common seals.

Robert (from 10th August only): 8 bearded seals and about 40 common seals.

In addition, Rebekka has caught 5 common seals, and 2 bottle-noses have been caught from the house.

We remain two days, 9th and 10th September, at Patsâjuk.

The house is large and well-built, and is on the following plan:

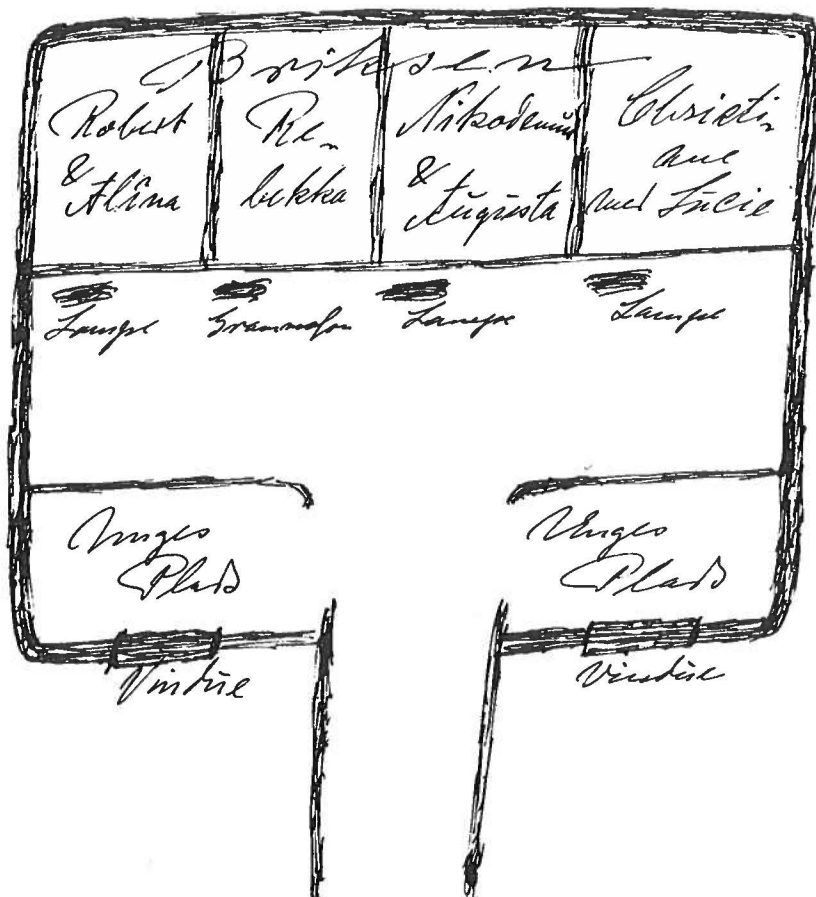


Fig. 7. Plan of house at Patsâjuk.

The floor is paved with large, flat stones. The walls are of stones and turf built up in layers, and the roof consists of tent-poles, over which are skins with turf and stones to weight them down.

Our host and hostess, Nikodemus and his wife, are pleased to see us and give us the best of entertainment. There is a drum dance on both nights in this large, warm house, where there is both comfort and humour.

We try singing Danish songs, but it seems that the acoustics are not quite right for the melodies; the sooty stone walls, the floor, the

entire "cave" atmosphere, seem as if created for the monotonic strophe on which the drum-songs are based; they were born here, this is their true environment, they sound genuine with their blend of sadness, humour, yearning and joy.

The daughter Christiane, a 33 year old widow, is well versed in the history of the entire coast, very intelligent, and understands our map at once. She knows all the houses and ruined settlements between Sermilik and Ingdluarssuit, and to some extent Tingmiarmiut. Her husband was drowned, and she herself was dragged into the sea and almost perished in her efforts to get his body ashore.

She is a good story-teller, and among other tales told us of two men who quarrelled, for they each suspected the other of wanting to kill him. In the end one actually did shoot the other.

The widow of the dead man became mute with sorrow, ate only very little, and when the others were leaving the settlement she refused to accompany them. So they made a small couch for her up against a rock and left a small store of food.

They thought she was mad, though she did not behave like a mad-woman, except that life together with other people was a matter of complete indifference to her.

They left her, and she remained on shore, sitting there unconcerned. They camped at a sealing place not far away, and when after three days they went back to see how she was getting on, she had disappeared. Though they searched and searched, she was never found again.

Strange Events and Strange Mentality.

A kayak-man, young, in the prime of his life, apparently happy and coolheaded, disappears and never returns to his home.

His kayak is found in the vicinity of Kiataq. Everything is in order, paddle, harpoon, lances, bladder, etc. In addition, it is laid ready, with the bow out towards the sea, but the man is gone, disappeared without trace, taken by the great solitude!

II A. WINTER SUPPLIES, AND HOW THEY ARE STORED

When describing angmagssat-fishing at Qingo we explained how this fish is dried and afterwards prepared so that it can be cached. Here we shall merely say that angmagssats are caught in the same manner as on the west coast, i. e. by scooping them up in hand-nets, but that these are made differently; they consist of a wooden frame, of narrow, bent pieces of wood put together in racket-shape and joined together with thongs plaited in the form of a net, with meshes so small that only the water can escape when the net is lifted out. The handle of the net is not so long as on the west coast, and yet these nets are heavier and more clumsy. Nor is it usual that all those engaged in the fishing have their own nets; the one borrows from the other, taking turns at using them, unless the owners forbid it.

The angmagssat-fishing season lasts over a month, whereafter the supplies caught are sailed down to the storage places close to the winter settlements; this done, the people can go back to their summer quarters in order to be where they can hunt the seal on the sea from their kayaks.

Most of the people at Sermilik do not take part in the angmagssat-fishing, preferring to go higher up the fjord where the ice lies longer and where they can thus pursue their *ũtoq*-method of catching seals. Meat caught in this way is dried for winter supplies.

The *ũtoq*-method in this period is also employed for catching bearded seals, which are used especially for providing the skin coverings for kayaks and for boot soles. Only when there is open water do they proceed to the summer-hunting places, one particular rallying point being the island of Angmâq, one of the innermost islands in the fjord, though people also go to Igdlutalik, Akuliariseq, Akagteq and Sivinganârssik. In years when seals are numerous a large number are caught here, especially bladdernoses, which in summer are always cut up and dried on the rocks. When dry the meat is gathered into bundles, each representing a whole seal; such a bundle is called *qivdlartaq*.

This meat-drying process, however, can only be practised in one month of the year, from the end of July to the end of August. There-

after the weather is so damp in East Greenland that drying is impossible. After the end of August the Eskimos store all the bearded seals and bladdernoses whole and unflensed for the winter. As soon as a seal is caught and intended for winter supplies, it is stabbed just under the fore-flippers. This thrust penetrates right into the animal's vital parts, whereby all the blood flows into its interior, and the hunter quickly places wooden plugs in all the harpoon and bullet holes. The seal is then dragged to a place suitable for making a cache; large stones are placed over head and neck and the hind flippers to prevent the dogs from eating them; the other parts of the carcass are merely covered with skins, which are likewise weighted down with stones.

It is very hard to say how many seals the best hunters can accumulate for the winter, for everything depends on conditions; the largest number known to have been achieved was a store of 40 whole bladdernoses by one man; otherwise they usually vary between 20 and less down to two or three; on the other hand, some hunters do not succeed in putting anything away for the winter. Fjord seals caught in this season are usually consumed from day to day, but those that can be spared are also cached whole for later on.

Often these whole seals become very old before they are eaten; for example, a bladdernose caught in August may not be consumed until March or April, so it is not so remarkable that they are in an advanced stage of putrefaction; they may be so far gone that the portion of skin which rests on the ground is entirely decomposed. Happily, the more putrefied a seal is, the more do the Eskimos like the flavour!

When the large seals are cut up for drying, the blubber is removed and placed in skin bags, in most cases made of bladdernose skin, though fjord and bearded seal skins are used too. When the blubber in these bags has run into oil the pieces of dried meat are placed inside and become soaked with oil, making it both nourishing and good to eat. In the same manner the blubber bags are filled with *tugdlerûnat*, i. e. spoonwort, which from the moment it comes "in pickle" receives the name of *qujuut*. Crowberries are also preserved in the same manner in autumn.

As far as possible the Eskimos allow all these preserves to stand till winter arrives, when hunting becomes more difficult. They are only resorted to when it is impossible to obtain fresh meat, but in any case not before the month of December. If in October and November there are bad hunting periods, and too much snow does not fall, they obtain their daily food by taking a piece of blubber and climbing up the mountain side, where they eat sorrel, spoonwort and the roots of the dandelion "washed down" with blubber; thus they avoid having to starve. Crowberries are of course also eaten in such periods.

The manner in which the East Greenlanders store their winter supplies away differs materially from what is customary on the west coast; this is mainly due to the fact that so many people live together in one house, for all the population of a settlement usually live together and regard themselves as one household, even if they may not be mutually related. A large house can hold as many as fifty people in one room. And accordingly, as meals in such a house are always shared in by all, even a large seal does not go very far when it is brought home. Consequently, a whole *imigaq*, either filled with dried meat, spoonwort or berries, is usually all consumed the day after it is brought into the house, because all, not only the owner and his family, have their share of it. It would be looked upon as most undignified to bring home food and eat it alone without offering one's neighbours some of it. Such people receive the opprobrious name of *amigagdlit*, "the greedy ones", and no one would willingly suffer that disgrace. It will be understood that very heavy demands are made on the supplies of the skilful hunters who really have meat enough to last the winter through, for the result is that all have the same and nobody gets more than another; what is brought home is shared equally among all.

If *angmagssats* or dried meat should be brought in from the cache, it is the duty of the hunter's wife to share it among those in the house, grown-ups and children; and if the settlement consists of more than one house, the other or others must also be given some. As a consequence, if there are for instance only two houses in a settlement, a large seal will go no farther than a single distribution.

If a large sealskin bag of blubber containing preserved spoonwort or berries is brought home, it is the custom to leave it outside the house until all the hunters have come in. Then the skin is opened, and all eat at the same time. The meal assumes the character of a "feed", and the owner gets only what may be left over.

Before a large seal is brought home it is customary for the entire settlement to be advised, and the word goes round from mouth to mouth: "So and so is bringing a big seal home tomorrow". During the day the large stones placed over the seal are removed after first getting rid of the snow. Then in the evening, when the men are all in and the owner considers the time has arrived, he says: "*amukoriartorniarsiuk!*", "Now drag it in", and all the young people go out to pull the large carcase into the house. As soon as it is inside, all the men come from the other house or houses if there should be more than one in the settlement. They all have knives, and all the inhabitants of the house itself have their knives ready. The men stay out on the floor, whereas all women and children sit half naked, or at any rate bootless, on the platform and take no part in the flensing operations.

When all are present, the owner of the animal says "*tauvala!*", "Let us begin", after which one of the guests (never the owner himself) steps forward and cuts the breast piece from the seal. As he carves, the others must help him to get the breast piece raised so that the seal's organs are exposed and all the blood which has run into the carcase becomes visible. The breastpiece itself goes to the man who is giving the feast and is at once laid on the platform for him. It is not customary for him to take part in the feast, however; he merely looks on and shouts encouragingly to the others to eat their fill. The first to be eaten is the blood, for of course the entire carcase is frozen stiff. Then they begin on the inner organs, consuming the flesh last of all. During the meal the men cut off pieces of the organs and meat and blood and hand them up to their women and children sitting on the platform. All the while the host looks on, smiling and happy, calling out at short intervals: "*tauvala oqaluasautigalugo neriniarsiuk!*", "Go on, eat, and tell us something while you do so!"

No wonder that all these happy people make use of the opportunity to recount their doings, especially when the feast falls at a time when supplies are scanty. All present know exactly what they may take and what must be left for the host as his share, and no one ever trespasses on his rights in that respect.

Among the first cuts to be taken is the *akuamernga*, the abdominal piece; another cut is the *kujak*, the loin piece, which is distributed by the guests themselves. After these have been taken the hostess approaches and cuts up the entire seal, dividing it equally among all her neighbours and all the people of the settlement; it is astonishing to see how quickly such a large frozen seal can be cut up and eaten. If it has been stored long it has a strong smell, but—the stronger the better, says the Eskimo.

In winter, one of the most frequent occasions for bringing home a cached seal is the arrival of travellers. Often they come solely for the purpose of starting a feast. Actually these gatherings are very festive and amusing, and as such are fully justifiable. But on the other hand of course they often mean that large quantities of winter supplies are eaten up in a relatively short time, for, apart from the share which everybody receives at the feast, the guests usually leave with meat for their families. Thus it is not surprising that visitors are frequent, especially when hunting in winter is poor and the people in the settlement sit about half starved. At such times it is tempting to go visiting other settlements where everybody knows there are well-stocked caches. Custom demands, however, that a man who has had visitors and put up a whole seal for their entertainment, may pay them a return visit and be received in the same manner—provided they have anything

there! In former days, in the rousing days of song-contests and versed lampoons, these occasions always began with a feast.

The East Greenlanders previously had very few fixed feasts or festival days. Now they hold Christmas, but formerly at about the same time they had a winter feast, which was celebrated when two stars, which they call *agtit* and *ávssít*, appeared in the northeast, a sign to the East Greenlanders that now the days would grow longer. Great was the quantity of meat eaten on that day, and it was also the custom to celebrate the day by wearing new clothes.

We have now described how the East Greenland Eskimos handle their winter supplies, and it would perhaps not be out of place here to see how they deal with the seals that are taken in winter itself.

It may be taken for granted that only few seals were secured in winter before the natives procured guns. Sealing proper on the ice began in spring, when the animals came up to bask in the sunshine. Hunting at the blow-holes was difficult on account of the deep snow lying on the ice, which makes it almost impossible to get close enough to the seals, for it crunches under one's feet, no matter how cautiously one treads. Nowadays the hunters armed with their rifles can go out to the edge of the ice and shoot seals from there. In winter these animals never sink, so that the hunter almost always gets his kill home.

Under fairly good conditions, when it is at all possible to get out to the ice edge from a good settlement, scarcely a day goes by without one or more seals being taken. This, however, depends on the seal migration, as of course there are periods, sometimes lasting weeks, when no seals are to be had. An ordinary fjord seal does not go far in a large household, but all the same it has to be shared out so that all get some of it, the one as much as the next, even the hunter himself receiving no more than the others. Here again it is his wife or his mother who shares it out. She boils the entire seal and distributes the boiled meat to the neighbours; only when her cooking pot is unable to hold all the meat will she allow other women to assist in the cooking.

The seal is not divided out till it has been cooked. Each platform section in a house must have a piece of meat, and if there are neighbours in another or other houses, they are to have their part too. Often there is nothing left for the children, who must be content with the viscera. The blubber is divided out among all, and this custom must be maintained throughout the winter months until spring arrives and the families move out to their summer camps and separate. It is a custom that has been kept up strictly from very early times.

In principle this custom has its very good sides, of course, but in practice it cannot be denied that its consequences may be very incon-

venient. All too often it means that the lazy stay at home and let the industrious feed them. This, however, must not be regarded as being at all usual, as hunting occupies the minds of all East Greenlanders so much that it is their supreme pleasure and passion. But there is something wrong in the fact that the man who works hardest and goes out on the longest hunting trips and has to fight his quarry, expending all his strength, and spends a whole long and arduous day at the hunt, gets no more out of it than a man who either could not be bothered to go out, or another who, owing to bad luck, has simply been out for a long walk. It is not uncommon to hear a clever hunter, one who has been alone at feeding all the occupants of his house, say: "If only there were another to bring a catch to the house tomorrow, for if I don't make the catch, my share will be larger than the one I get if it is my own seal." And it is unfortunate that the children of such a hunter receive no meat, but merely a piece of intestine.

This of course is not a matter that means much in times when seals are plentiful; but in winter, when often there is only one seal to be brought into the house, it becomes a serious problem, and it is remarkable that more consideration is not given to the children.

The rule that they must only have viscera to eat may, however, be evaded: at their birth some magic words are spoken over them, and this spell gives them the right to receive a certain piece of meat of every animal killed by their father; this, however, is by no means a common custom.

These usages with regard to the household arrangements are naturally based first and foremost on the desire of the Eskimo people to stand by one another when times are hard; the smaller is a community, the better is their "team spirit" as a rule; but on the other hand it is only human that this is blended with ambition and hunter's pride which, to the detriment of his family, may be manifested by his taking less food than the others.

The Field Ice.

The field ice—*sikorssuit*—comes from the north and spreads southwards very quickly, especially when it comes with the *nigeg*, the north-east wind.

When it arrives early it appears in November; otherwise it comes most frequently in December.

At Igdlularssuit it rarely gets right in, for it is kept out by the many icebergs stranded here.

Normally it does not come till the winter ice lies firm in the fjords.

When it does arrive, it is usually very dense, and so far out to sea that open water cannot be seen even from hill tops. At times it freezes

together far out, but it is unsuitable for crossing on account of the deep snow and the pack-ice.

In calm weather there is scattered ice along the shore. The current takes it out some distance, and only with an on-shore wind, *kigángaq*, or sometimes the *nigeg*, is it taken close in again and sometimes into the fjords, where it breaks up the winter ice—*navdlordlugo*, i. e. "crushing it"—until it can go no farther.

On the whole the field ice has not much tendency to lie close to the land, even in spring, if only it is calm weather, which always tends to spread it.

The rule is that as long as there is no wind the field ice never hinders kayak hunting, though umiak rowing is impossible.

From spring-time (the month of May) it spreads more and more. This spreading continues in June, but still not enough to permit the herds of seals to make their appearance. With July it is possible to see open water all the time, the ice scatters more and more, until at the end of the month it has all gone.

August and September are usually icefree months, with the exception of calf-ice.

October and November are the months of ocean swell, with calf-ice frozen in masses which are dangerous to all kinds of craft.

In former days the field ice brought the bladdernose seals with it. As far as right round on the southern part of the west coast it used to be possible to see so many bladdernoses that all the ice looked black.

One scarcely ever sees bladdernoses on the ice now. Instead come whole floes of ice covered with the carcasses of bladdernoses from which merely the skin and blubber have been removed. The odour of all these carcasses keeps the seals away and prevents them from lying on the ice. This happens in the months of May and June.

Driftwood is to be found lying all along the coast, especially during the time of the field ice. It is this ice that brings the driftwood, sometimes wreckage too, with nails and iron.

III. EAST GREENLANDERS' UMIK VOYAGES TO THE WEST COAST

Their Trading Voyages and Successive Settlements There,
and the Causes of Same.

The Angmagssaliks say that they "journeyed northwards", *avung-nardlutik*, when they travelled south to the trading stations to barter¹⁾.

They used to journey to Pamiagdlok, sometimes to Narssaq, more rarely as far as to Nanortalik. These journeys were undertaken when they fell short of certain necessities, and in the days before the trading station what they lacked most was iron, pieces of iron and guns, and it was mainly in order to get these things that they went south.

Having determined to make a trade journey, they would never collect a store of goods for barter. They would "suddenly feel a desire to travel", and then they paddled away at once, without preparation, without thinking of provisions or barter; these "would come of themselves". They would procure them on the way. And for that reason they would always make a halt here or there, one wintering place especially being in the vicinity of Nanuseq, to which they often returned during the same summer in which they had arrived at the trading station; they never wintered on the west coast.

If a party decided to travel from the east to the west coast and back in the same summer they would travel "almost without nights", i. e. without resting for the night. They gave themselves no time to pitch a tent; when it became dark, they drew in to the shore and merely covered themselves over. Sometimes they would drag the umiak on to the beach, turn it upside down and sleep under it. Often, however, they did not take time for that but slept in the boat, which they moored by means of a seal-thong to a rock or anything else handy.

¹⁾ The East Greenlanders' trade journeys to Julianehaab began as soon as the colony was established (1774) and were the cause of a post being opened at Nanortalik (1796). Long before then, however, East Greenlanders used to go round to the west coast to trade with their kinsmen there. It is known that as early as in 1752 people from the Angmagssalik region wintered south of Julianehaab. H. O.

Many East Greenlanders tell that this was hard and toilsome and the voyages anything but amusing when they had to take part in them as children; scarcely had they lain down to sleep when they had to start off again, often with the children crying, for they wanted rest and sleep. In such fashion they hurried on till they arrived at the place they wanted to reach, and only then did they rest.

One of the reasons for this hurry, especially on the way back, may be that they often fell sick after a short sojourn on the west coast.

The currency they used consisted of bear skins, seal skins (both common and spotted), sole-skins and thongs. The principal commodity, however, was bear skin, both whole and pieces. The fine spotted seal-skins were intended specially for their West Greenland kinsmen, not for the shops.

The West Greenlanders were not at all embarrassed by these travelling traders. In fact they were often forward and impudent. East Greenlanders who have been on the west coast have often told of how the West Greenlanders took all the trade goods out of the umiaks as soon as they reached the shore. They fought among themselves for the goods, and the East Greenlanders were unable to find out who got what. They did not know the people, and therefore were unable to remember what each one had taken. Consequently they had to wait for people to come and pay for the goods they had received. As soon as their tent was pitched and they had moved into it, numbers of women used to come, all talking together, taking no notice of their hosts in the tent, and looking for themselves for trade goods, regardless of the people who owned them.

When the barter they had with them for the manager of the trading station represented sufficient value, they would buy guns and a plentiful supply of ammunition. They were very fond of these guns, and were very painstaking in their care of them, as long as there was ammunition; but when it was all used they tired of the guns. Often they pulled them to pieces and sawed them into short lengths, which they employed in various ways for harpoons, etc.

As a matter of fact, a commodity in great demand was iron and pieces of iron of every kind; in addition, saws, knives, files, round-iron for the points of bird-darts, sewing-needles, thimbles, and beads. When they returned home from a trading trip they would make presents to all their relations.

The saws they bought were cut up for *ulo's*, the knife used by the women. These were rather different from those used on the west coast, being foursided in shape and having two small pieces of bone on the back of the blade fastened to the handle, which was of wood or narwhal tusk. They could utilize a saw so well that so many knives were cut out

of it that the remainder of the saw itself was quite narrow. When a piece of a saw had been cut out for an ulo, it was for the woman to make the knife as she wished to have it. This she did by rubbing it on a stone till it acquired the desired shape.

The women also made sewing needles of all sizes from nails and pieces of iron. The head of the needle they hammered slightly flat, whereafter they dexterously drilled a hole through it. It took a long



Fig. 8. Ready to start out. Photo. 6th-7th Thule Exped.

time to make a needle, for it was made by rolling the piece of iron or nail backwards and forwards over a smooth piece of rock till it assumed the shape. When the hole was to be drilled the needle would be made red hot over the lamp.

Once upon a time the favourite trade goods were small beads. Such beads were in great demand among the women, who sewed them on their hair-bands or made necklaces or other ornaments of them. Sometimes, however, they plaited beads and bead ornaments in their hair by means of sinew-thread; such ornaments had an outer border of small pieces of tin or small white china buttons. Beads were also used for edging anoraks. The beads held highest in favour were all milk-white or blood red with a white hole. With a string of beads of this sort, even if it were not very long, one could even buy an umiak. Beads were also used by men, who plaited them into their hair or placed them as a kind of hairband to prevent the hair from falling over the eyes.

Another very important trade article was tobacco. A very large quantity of tobacco was consumed, smoked in pipes, chewed or snuffed. Even quite young men were taking snuff as late as about 1905, but the women were the greater addicts. The use of tobacco now seems to have become more moderate, and even among the old people only few take snuff, whereas many chew tobacco. From the West Greenlanders they learned how first to smoke the tobacco they were to chew afterwards. They cut a piece of ordinary twist tobacco and unroll it; then they fill the unrolled leaves with pipe tobacco and roll them up again in the form of a thick cigar. The entire upper end of this cigar is then moistened with spittle, and it is smoked either as a cigar or placed in a long pipe and smoked that way. The cover leaves have to be kept wet all the time to prevent them from burning. When this big cigar has been smoked out (only the middle portion is consumed, the outer part being wet) there is a hole right through it, and the chewing tobacco is then "ripe". The Eskimo puts it all into his mouth at once and chews it. My observation was, however, that this method is not on the increase. Quite a number of young people do not use it.

That these long trade voyages were not without their dangers is shown by the following narrative by CHRISTIAN POULSEN, a characteristic tragedy enacted on one of them.

After wintering at beautiful Tingmiarmiut, which is just as famous for its calm, fine hunting weather as it is notorious for its deep snow in winter, a party had decided to go to Nanortalik on the west coast in order to buy guns and ammunition, iron and knives, in exchange for the skins of bears killed in the course of the winter. Christian was then young and unmarried.

The settlement had consisted of four umiak crews, but only three of them voyaged south; the fourth, which was steered by the old shaman *Kunigsarfik* ("Kiss-mouth") proceeded northwards to Skjoldungen. As a shaman he was only second-rate, but he was dangerous, because he was a man of difficult temper and was well versed in magic spells. When pushing off from shore he had shouted in farewell to the others: Those who have no powerful helping spirits have nothing to expect but death! And with these ominous words the boat had disappeared round a point.

The ice was difficult that summer. The winter ice had been late in going out, and immediately afterwards the field ice had come and extended right to the shore. The voyage of the umiaks therefore made very slow progress, and by the time they reached the settlement of Anoritôq, they had had to abandon the trade journey, because it had then become too late in the year. Autumn was early that year, and with it came the terrible northeast gales which prevented all hunting. As the whole of

the brief summer had been spent on the voyage they had no winter supplies, and in a state of great wretchedness they tried to sustain life by eating bear skin, the skin of the umiaks and kayaks. But though they softened these dry skins in water or tried to boil them tender, they contained no nourishment, and one by one they died of hunger.

Then suddenly one man recalled the old shaman's parting words: "Those who have no powerful helping spirits have nothing to expect but death". They all realised at once that the shaman was to blame



Fig. 9. On the way. Photo. 6th-7th Thule Exped.

for their trouble; he it was who had cast a magic spell over the settlement.

Now people believed that if evil was not avenged it would persist. Among the people in the settlement was a man named *Avijâja*, a brother of the old shaman; they could take vengeance for his wickedness on the brother. And so, one day, quite secretly, they murdered him.

To prevent his haunting them they severed the head from the body, put it in a harpoon-bladder and threw it into a lake. The eyes were taken out and placed in a lamp of soapstone, where they were to remain during the rest of the winter; this was in order to blind the dead man's soul. Then each limb was cut through, and only then were they buried under stones.

Avijâja's wife knew nothing of the murder and sought in despair for him when he did not come back that night. It was not till the next day that she came wailing into the settlement and found his mis-handled body.

She knew that superstition would prevent the people of the settlement from helping her, and therefore she chose to die together with her five children rather than starve to death. She explained her resolution to her five children, and those of them who were old enough understood her. The two eldest threw themselves into the sea, but the two middle ones dared not, and the mother had to throw them in herself. But the youngest little son, who had just begun to walk, understood nothing of what was happening. He simply cried because the others were crying, and when his mother explained that he was going home to his father in "The Land of the Dead", where all were happy and always had enough to eat, he jumped into the waves and disappeared. But the mother climbed on to a high cliff, turned her back to the sea and allowed herself to fall backwards into it.

Thus died Avijāja and all his family; shortly afterwards the storm abated and the men could go hunting again and find food for their women and children. But half of the fifty-seven people of the settlement had starved to death.

Kunigsarfik, who had tried to bring evil over the travellers, fared no better. Later he was found together with his companions by some young people who chanced to pass by the settlement. They went into the house and there saw them all lying dead. The entire household was lying on the platform. The old shaman in bearskin trousers sat alone by the passage-entrance, with a gnawed dog's head beside him. They had died of starvation after eating all their dogs. The umiak lay on the beach, but had blown down from its supports after its lashings had rotted away.

It was a desolate and sinister place of death, which the young people left as quickly as possible.

People said their death was the result of the repercussion of the shaman's evil doings, for, once they had understood his mortal threats and had taken revenge on his brother, the fate he had intended for the others overtook him and his family, and so they had all died of hunger.

This and similar happenings which could take place on the way, and on the whole the danger of the long trade voyages to the west coast, which with time had become a necessity when once the people had become dependent on shop goods, in the end were the cause of the migration of all Southeast Greenlanders either to the district of Julianehaab or to Angmagssalik.

Now that there is a trading station at Angmagssalik the people can obtain the things they desire or need. Iron and nails they love to buy in large quantities. All the things which used to be tied or lashed together are now nailed together; even sledges, of which the cross-slats always used to be lashed on with seal-thongs, as they still are on

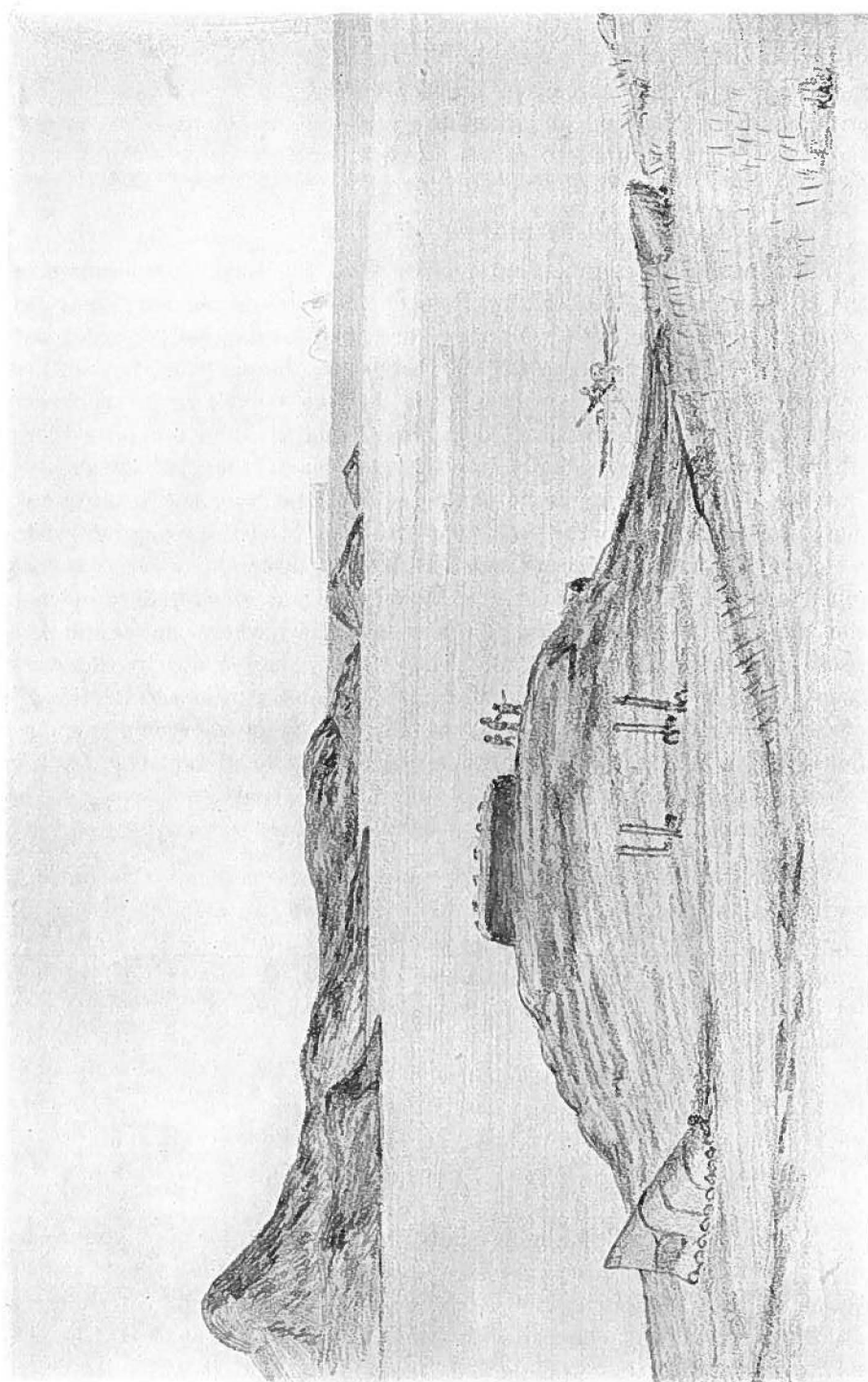


Fig. 10. A tent-camp at an inhabited place. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

the west coast of North Greenland, are now nailed on; and kayaks, of which the ribs always were lashed together, are secured with nails nowadays. This can scarcely be called progress, for these things become stiffer and less yielding and therefore are more liable to go to pieces, especially when exposed to rough usage among ice, which can hardly be avoided.

Memories of Graah.

Among his notes of his intercourse with the East Greenlanders in the late summer of 1904, KNUD RASMUSSEN tells of a seventy-year old woman, "Old Rosine", who was born at Akorningnaq on the east coast and from there came to the west coast about 1840. Her mother had met "*nâlagarajik*", GRAAH, when he was travelling on the east coast and had told her a great deal about him. She had not been there where he wintered, as he had camped farther north than her settlement. But the following summer he came again on his way south and took her sister with him to the west coast to be baptized, as was her wish.

Old Rosine's mother missed her sister greatly and at last almost pined away with longing for her. When she had recovered somewhat she therefore made her way to the west coast, where she found her sister and became baptized too. Thus Rosine had come to the west coast with her mother. She insisted that she had a clear recollection of her childhood "over on the other side", and, where her own memory failed her, it was helped out by what her mother had told her, for the latter died only after many years on the west coast.

Her mother had told her the following about GRAAH:

At first we were afraid of him, because he was a *qavdlunâq* (European), and when we first saw him many of us hid away in fear. However, all soon came to be fond of him; he was kind to all the *inuit*'s and gave many things away. He gave so much that at last he had nothing left for himself, and when winter came he had no more of his "*qavdlunâq* food".

We were often very astonished at what that man could overcome. He could make his way in many different ways, and when he came back from a long *umiak* voyage, he could at once climb a mountain to look around; he wanted to see everything and learn to know the country.

When winter came he suffered much. He yearned for his "*qavdlunâq* food", and this food-yearning of his turned into a sickness which almost cost him his life. In the end he lived solely on seal soup; when others ate the meat, he was content with a small piece no larger than a finger. At first he had been very fond of "*inuit* food", and it was only when his longing for the food of the *qavdlunâq*'s had become very great that

he could hardly bear to look at "Inuit food". He became very thin and at last was nothing but skin and bone. Sometimes he mixed blood in his soup—but how could he get fat on that?

When he left for home he became weaker and weaker from sheer longing for food. "If only I get a little qavdlunâq food", he would say, "I shall be well again". But he was afraid that he should be unable to reach the west coast.

It was then said that when he came to Nunagssuk, north of Prins Christian Sound, he could go no further and had ordered his kayak men to hurry down to Narssaq (Frederiksdal) to get some "qavdlunâq food" as quickly as possible—"they were to hurry all they could, otherwise he would die." And the kayak men had gone, travelling night and day, and had arrived at Narssaq without resting on the way. There they had received food for nâlagarajik from the missionaries, and had hastened back after only a very short rest.

When nâlagarajik was told that the kayak posts were in sight he jumped with joy and ran "like a little impatient child" to and fro on the beach. Now he knew his life was saved.

When the kayak men came ashore he dipped down into their kayaks and got hold of a ship biscuit, which he at once started to gnaw. When the men had moved their kayaks up from the water edge he again put his arm down into a kayak—"ai, in the few moments it took to carry the kayaks up he had eaten all the biscuit and took another."

Then he ordered food to be cooked, and hot drink—coffee—and all the while he walked up and down, eating biscuits. When he had eaten hot food and coffee, he suddenly began to sing—it was with joy over the "qavdlunâq food", which had saved his life by his merely tasting it.

Only when he had eaten did he give himself time to read the letters from the missionaries.

This was what they told of nâlagarajik who travelled on the east coast. He suffered much on his journey—but it was worst of all when he nearly died with longing for "qavdlunâq food".

It was only after GRAAH's journey that the East Greenlanders began in earnest to go westwards to settle and be baptized. GRAAH had urged them to do so, and several umiak-loads followed him. Rosine's boat was one of the first. There were two boats together. The leader of one of them was *Oqaluartât*, the other *Erngaisivik*, Rosine's stepfather.

It is true that before GRAAH's time voyages to the trading stations were common enough, said old Rosine, but hardly anybody settled there. Now almost all the southern East Greenlanders were settled on the west coast and had been baptized. But at the time when Rosine left the east coast it was still thickly populated. The people lived in

large houses capable of accommodating several umiak crews. They lived a very sociable life together; in winter they entertained themselves with shaman performances, drum-songs and story telling.

Rosine also remembered—or had heard—that people from Angmagssalik had gone down to Ũmánaq to trade with the people there when the latter had been to the trading stations.

Before GRAAH's journey the East Greenlanders used to go to Nanortalik to barter, but often the umiaks waited at Nunagssuk while the kayaks went farther on.

In those days it often happened that East Greenlanders at Nunagssuk met people from Julianehaab who had come hunting in umiaks to the east coast. At that time the whole family, wife and children, could make such a hunting trip; "now they dare not" (her own words). "Yes, in the old days people could travel, and they travelled far."

Note: Regarding this chapter the reader is referred to Captain EINAR MIKKELSEN's book "De østgrønlandske Eskimoers Historie", pp. 33—39.

IV. GAME SCARCITY, STARVATION AND CANNIBALISM

The principal source of food to the Greenlander is the seal; bears simply signify a change of diet now and then (*avdlatut ajornarpat*, i. e. when there can be no other).

Seals are not merely food, however. They provide clothing, and the skins are also employed for covering kayaks, for tents, and for bed-clothing in the houses.

Seals do not occur in the same numbers every year, and perhaps it may be said that if the number should be greater than usual in any one year, too many of them cannot be caught.

Of other game the people in certain fjords can reckon with white whales, cod, sharks and salmon, but complete investigations have not yet been made on the question of the importance of these to the population. There are many rivers frequented by salmon, indeed there are extremely large quantities of them in some; but salmon is not stored away for the winter, for at the time when salmon can be caught there is always open water and good sealing. Seals are therefore given the preference, and salmon are only taken in order to vary the diet somewhat at certain times of the year.

One cannot repeat too often that the people on the East Coast live on seals. Consequently, should there be a summer with few seals, especially of the large species, with the result that sufficient supplies have not been prepared for winter, and when winter comes seals are scarce too, we may be certain that there is distress among the East Greenlanders, a distress sometimes so severe that people die of starvation. In former days especially, when there was no trading station at Angmagssalik and the people had no firearms either, their straits were sometimes very sore indeed. Often it happened under such circumstances that there were seals enough, but that they frequented places where they could not be got at. For example, when the ice became thick and deep snow lay over it, so that the *itsuarmiutit*-method could no longer be employed, the people had to fall back upon their winter stores, for

without guns the hunters could not get seals which appeared in the cracks in the ice. And if the winter stores were small as a result of poor hunting in the previous summer, things were often critical. They used to say that when the ice lies so long that it is only broken up by the current, one may always be sure that there would be poor hunting.

They never starve as long as they have blubber and there is seaweed near the settlement to be gathered and eaten. When the blubber runs out and the lamps can no longer burn in the houses, then comes distress in real earnest. If such periods are long the people lose their strength and some of them die, usually of exposure and hunger.

The Rev. CHR. ROSING states that while he was at Angmagssalik there was most distress among the people living at Inigssalik. Some years back there was a year when the *pitaraq*-wind did not blow once, and as the ice consequently remained where it was, and deep snow fell on it, it was the cause of much misery.

We are told that when the famine was at its worst the people would rake over their old refuse heaps for "blubber-mud" (*pujaq*), and that this was all they had to eat. It was nothing unusual for the people at Inigssalik to be in distress, in fact it happened whenever the winter was an unlucky one, and often many of those living there starved to death; and, as was formerly the custom, the survivors then ate the bodies of their fellow villagers to avoid suffering the same fate. Without doubt there are people still living today who have had to resort to cannibalism.

A short time after Commander HOLM wintered there, many people died of starvation in the neighbourhood of Angmagssalik Fjord. It is even said that the entire population of several settlements died off in one year when the distress was very severe.

The years 1906 and 1907 too were very bad years at Cape Dan and at the head of Angmagssalik Fjord. The field ice remained all through the summer, so that the seals were unable to get up the fjords. If then the men had not had firearms and had not had a shop to go to, there is no doubt whatever that large numbers would have died of hunger. And those who went up to the head of the Angmagssalik Fjord that year to try their luck at sealing would certainly have perished if they had not been able to catch sharks.

The following account of a famine was narrated by one who as a child was in the house where the drama took place.

One spring six umiaks set out for Kialineq to spend the winter there. They did not arrive at their destination till after the cold had set in and the ground had begun to freeze hard. Thin ice was already covering the sea almost everywhere.

They at once built themselves a winter house as well as they could under the circumstances. Severe cold set in and new ice formed all over the sea, not a single crack being observable anywhere. They were therefore all very anxious about the winter, indeed they were afraid, and one evening a great shaman gave a performance on that account. He summoned his helping spirits and consulted with them as to what the people ought to do under these dismal circumstances; when the seance was over he said to the people of the settlement:

"The spirits tell me that we cannot winter here, for if we do so we shall starve to death."

The very next morning they all made ready to travel and flee from this sinister place. They started out, one of the umiaks going on ahead and arduously breaking a way through the ice for the others. A man had always to stand in the bows of this boat to break the ice, and as soon as he tired and could do no more, his place was taken by another.

After having got through, but with enormous exertion, where the ice was thinnest and easiest to break, they went out to sea, and when they were a good way out, away from the shore, they came to an enormous floe of firm ice. On this they landed and pitched a tent. But then the wind began to blow strongly from the southwest, and next morning when they emerged from their tent they found that they were entirely surrounded by sea and that large quantities of snow had fallen.

When the weather cleared they saw that they had drifted a very long way from land, which now could be seen merely as a narrow blue stripe on the western horizon. Again they slept on the ice floe, but during the night there was a great commotion among them, for they found that the floe had divided into two. In fact one of the tents had been torn in two pieces by the division of the ice.

They were obliged to remain long on the floe, to the constant accompaniment of magic words and spells.

One day one of the shamans in the party, a childless man, announced that he intended to hold a seance: he would try to arrange for open water back to land, for, he said, he pitied all the children who otherwise would be bound to freeze to death out on the ice-floe on the wild ocean.

For the greater part of the night the shaman invoked his helping spirits, and next morning when they awoke they got ready to sail as soon as it became light, though there was not so much as a drop of water to be seen. A little later, however, they discovered a little water on that part of the floe that was nearest land. The shaman's umiak was immediately launched into it and made ready. And when the water then seemed to grow and became a little wider, they put another umiak out. Thus it went on, and at last all the umiaks had set out. The shaman then turned the bow of his boat towards the shore, when all at once

an opening formed in the ice, an opening just wide enough for the oars to move, and it extended more and more towards the shore. Along this opening they all rowed as through a channel, and they really succeeded in reaching the coast without having met obstacles of any kind.

When at last they reached a place that seemed fairly suitable they built a house; but as the ground was frozen hard they were compelled to use their tent-poles as posts and make a roof of the skins from inside the umiaks.

While there one of the hunters—the father of the woman to whom this narrative is due—succeeded in killing a narwhal, and this was fated to be all they had to live on all that winter.

The story goes that in the time “when the sun constantly descended towards the horizon” matters were not so bad. They had the narwhal for food, and as it was a large one, by dint of economy it was made to last a long time.

But when “the sun again began to go upwards in the sky” their situation really began to be grave. Many lay on the platform with no strength even to get up. At last they began to die of hunger, and those who died were merely laid on the ground outside near the house.

The man who killed the narwhal had kept a little blubber till the last, because he had several children. He would go out at night and come back with a small piece each time. It was so small that it was less than a hand. He did this secretly, so that his companions in the house should not discover it.

There was never any warmth in the house, and therefore the inside was all covered with rime which fell on the people like snow. The man who had killed the narwhal used to give his children a mouthful of blubber, to which they “washed down” by eating the rime. The rest of the blubber he shared with his wife; he did the same again when morning came.

Of their companions there were three brothers who lived along by one of the walls. They were never silent, talking all the time among themselves. Spring came, and still they went on. Then the father forbade his children to go outside the house, because he had noticed that the three brothers were always talking about “a human”, by which he understood that they only wished they could get a human being to eat.

One day these brothers arranged something secretly outside and a little later their mother got her cooking-pot ready. The brothers took it and a little later came in with it, filled with meat. It looked inviting. It was human flesh. They boiled it and ate it, and this they continued to do for a time, until at last they ceased entirely. This proved to be after they had eaten all the corpses lying outside.

One of the people in the house was a large, powerful woman who did not seem ever to be thinner. As spring went on the three brothers

were seized with a desire to eat her. They began trying to persuade her to go outside, and one day she did go. The people waited long for her to return, but she did not do so. Later the brothers went out and were apparently engaged on something or other out there, and they were heard to say: "It is our own fault. We waited too long before harpooning her; now she has disappeared."

They searched and searched, and in the end found her, whereafter they ate her dead body. For it turned out that the girl had been afraid of being killed and eaten, for she had observed that she was the subject of their conversation. She had therefore chosen to put an end to it all by throwing herself into the water at high tide, which now had become broader as spring was so far advanced.

Among the people in the house there were also two small orphan children, a boy and a girl. The girl, however, was almost of marriageable age. It was not long before the three brothers also began to tempt this girl to go for a walk outside. She refused for a long time, then at length agreed and went out. The brothers followed immediately, and at once she was heard to scream: au, au! That was when they stabbed her with their knives. She screamed long before she became silent. These cannibals ate her too.

At last, however, spring had gone and summer was coming. Then, shortly after the last-mentioned girl had been eaten, the owner of the house moved to another settlement, for he dared not have his children living at this cannibal village.

People who have accustomed themselves to eat human flesh turn to like it. It is said, for instance, that a man once came home with a seal. While his wife was busy flensing it, and she was not looking, he put their little boy, who was fat and in good condition, into the cooking pot. His wife boiled it without discovering what had happened while her back was turned, and her husband ate the child with great relish, in that way appeasing his longing for human flesh. For once during a famine he had tasted it and in the end he liked it so much that he could not resist the craving for it again. So he had turned upon his own offspring.

V. EAST GREENLAND PHILOSOPHY

Nature has written the laws contained in Eskimo religion, where all views on life are based more upon precept and taboo than upon faith and worship.

All the forces of nature have spoken to man and made him small, small in relation to the tremendous voice of the elements, groping in relation to the mysteriousness of darkness, and wondering in relation to all that which is incomprehensible.

"I know nothing; but life is continually bringing me face to face with forces that are stronger than I am. The experience of generations says that life is hard to live, and that the burden which men and women must always bear is an inexorable one.

"For that reason we believe in Evil. No one need take regard to Good, for it is good in itself and needs no worship. But Evil, which sometimes rolls towards us in the ferocity of the storm, sometimes whispers treacherously around us in clammy fog, must be kept at a distance from the paths we tread."

Put into the white man's language these are the words uttered to me by a wise old man of East Greenland, now long dead, his bitter but sage, his stern but beautifully expressed philosophy.

I cannot resist the temptation to compare them with the views of a Polar Eskimo shaman, in the same manner spoken in terms that come natural to a primitive man when speaking of holy things:

"We do not believe in any God as the white man does. We dare not speak with the assurance of the white man of things that are hidden to us. We believe in our shamans, because we wish to live long. We believe for the sake of our lives and for the sake of our food; and we believe in what the shamans say, for we cannot conceive wickedness so great that down through all the generations from the time of our earliest forefathers the shamans have been frauds and deceivers.

"We observe our laws in order to keep the world up, in order to keep the earth in balance. For the powers which we do not know must not be offended. We observe our laws in order to hold one another up. We are afraid of the Great Evil. Man is so frail against sickness.

"Here the people do penance, because the Dead are powerful in their humours. If we did not do so, we believe that great masses of snow would slip and bury us, that snowstorms would destroy us, that the ocean would rise in its might and cast us to the bottom when we are out in our kayaks, or that floods would come and cover the land and wash all our houses into the sea.

"But, you white men who know so much and come to us with a new doctrine; tell us what is right and convince us that it is better than the traditions of our forefathers! Then we shall believe in you and in your God instead of in our shamans and their words."

In comparing the words of this clear-thinking East Greenlander and Polar Eskimo my purpose is merely to show the beauty and serenity that surrounds their groping in the obscurity of the problems of life and their deep respect for that which no man can understand.

To return to what must be regarded as the foundation of the ancient religion of these East Greenlanders.

The worst evil of all was what man himself created. Worst of all were the enemies born of hatred or of slander, intolerance or envy. For this reason vital elements in the Eskimo religion were applied to man himself.

An evil man was the worst enemy of man and of life. But nature, too, was full of horror and dangerous problems. There were mountain spirits, sea spirits, underground spirits, giants and goblins, who were only too willing to come and help when evil called and gave them a chance.

All these spirits were stronger and mightier than man himself and he would perish inevitably if his forefathers had not arranged life so well by means of amulets and magic words, and if certain people had not been given the power to rule the hopelessness of darkness.

These people were shamans, and they were regarded almost as deities in frail human shape. The shamans, who in their daily existence shared conditions and fate with their fellow-men, sometimes skilful at hunting, sometimes only moderately so, exposed like the others to life's great and trifling troubles, and who never surrounded themselves in any cloak of cult until some event forced sorcery upon them and elevated them from the ground into the skies where no other mortal could follow them. Then they laboured to stop evil on its way towards mankind, thus in the eyes of their fellow-Eskimos practising the highest form of goodness.

As a general rule the immediate impression made upon us by the Eskimos is that they live a life of idyll and childishness, a state no longer known to civilized peoples but which fascinates many who are civilized

and who often wish themselves back to "primitive life". The Eskimos' good humour, evenly balanced mind and freedom from care, one of the outcomes of which is that they literally "let tomorrow take care of itself", may overwhelm the civilized person so much that he loses sight of the great element of risk in living a life of this sort.

But notwithstanding this easiness of mind, this daily carelessness and the apparently gay existence, the Eskimos like all primitive peoples were always on their guard and suspicious of one another—as indeed appears from what is recorded elsewhere. The fact is that behind all this charming congeniality there was a lack of naturalness and freedom and a feeling of dependence, not merely on nature and its forces, but also on the people with whom they spent their lives, and this influenced their religious views very greatly.

As already stated, it was the arctic, the depressing power of the dark period, the gloom and cruelty of the gale and storm in the infinite spaces, which formed the background of the old Eskimo religion—a religion in which all views of life were tied by categoric and stern rules and prohibitions, and knew nothing of the mildness, indulgence and devotion which form part of worship.

All the wild and harsh forces of nature spoke to mankind and made it small and fearful at bottom. This was the reason why they sought protection and aid in their religion, which in turn was shaped accordingly.

The rules and taboos which surrounded the Eskimos in their religious life were so manifold and complicated that to the outsider the immediate impression was one of complete chaos, fostered by diseased brains. But on delving deeper into them one catches sight at length of the red thread which runs through the seeming confusion, and the first impression gives way to astonishment at the ingenious manner in which these people endeavoured to grapple with the problems and dangers of life. Actually it is surprising that a primitive people, apparently so material of disposition, has been able to stage and in fact organize such a system of invocation. The fertility of mind with which they sought to meet the inconsistencies of fate, and the fantasy with which they included mystery in the means prescribed for waging their fight for life, can only be characterized as amazing.

The fundamental feature of the ancient Eskimo religious system was that they depended entirely on the infallibility of their ancestors and built up their beliefs on the myths and legends, which were considered to be true and which in their minds had populated all nature with powerful and strange beings.

This brings us to the central point in the old Eskimo religious belief, which in the foregoing is expressed in the statement that one need pay attention only to evil. The idea consequently is that mankind

would have perished if its forefathers had not shown how to some extent it was possible to keep the evil powers and forces of nature at arm's length.

This was accomplished in the following ways:

1) Amulets, *árnússat* (plur. of *árnuaq*), for averting disaster and bringing luck.

2) Magic words and spells, *serratit* (plur. of *serrat*), which were regarded as addressed to or as invoking the dead, who then gave their help.

3) Penance, *agdlerneq*, done when owing to certain circumstances, for example contact with dead bodies, one was regarded by the community as unclean.

These are the three main points in the system, but for the sake of completeness I should mention a form of offering, one that was the same in all Eskimo tribes, though in daily life it played no great role. It was called

4) *mingulerterineq* or *tunigdlaineq*, and was an offering or votive service: meat could be given to the dead by placing it in their graves. It need only be very small portions, as the dead were considered able to make them as large as they required.

Offerings would also be made to certain places, mountains, rocks or caves, etc., in order to ensure good weather for a journey, luck when hunting, and so on¹).

Offerings to the dead were meant for the soul or for that vitality which had outlived the body.

Notwithstanding all this, however, the people would not have been able to hold their own in the struggle for existence if they had not had intermediaries between them and the supernatural. These intermediaries were the shamans, *angákut*.

¹) Only a generation ago on the west coast, for instance in Disko Bay, there were several places of this description, past which one could not travel without something being "offered up", perhaps even a "chew" of tobacco. If one enquired what this was, or what was its purpose, the Eskimos would usually pass it off as a joke. H. O.

VI. EAST GREENLAND CONCEPTION OF A DEITY

There seems to have been a very ancient tradition—though in idea it was extremely vague—of a supreme being, indeed almost an all-governing deity, which was called *pínga*, “the one up there”, sometimes *pivssuma*¹⁾). To most, however, what was meant by this was very unclear, and it was often said that it was a myth from remote times and was no longer understood by anyone. Yet they knew that it was supposed to be a spirit, “the one up there”; but where? There was no particular delight in being up in the sky, so perhaps it was not much higher than ordinary mortals; but where? No one could now say with certainty.

On the creation of the world they said frankly that they knew nothing; it was much too far back in time for any human being to understand it. Yet, there was one old individual who remembered an ancient legend concerning the beginning of man. There were many gaps in it, and usually it was told as follows:

The old people say that man and woman fell down from the sky, and afterwards they bred children; this is how the people of the earth came, and in time they became many.

A variant of this tale was:

It is said that mankind came to the earth from the sky. The first man fell down from the sky. Later on he bred a daughter with the earth, and she became his wife. They had children with each other and became many. From them came the people of the earth²⁾).

There were also those who told that the first human being on earth was a man; he felt lonely and made a woman out of his thumb.

All the old folks said that while people still were young on the earth they became wicked and murdered one another; they killed fellow-beings who had done no harm. Then suddenly the sea began to rise; it was a flood, a high tide, which grew and grew and at last washed

¹⁾ This idea was recorded already by the EGEDES. H. O.

²⁾ The latter variant is already given by PAUL EGEDE, cf. for example Efterretninger fra Grønland, p. 81. H. O.

over the whole earth¹⁾. The people fled up the highest hills, but the earth cracked and many fell into these fissures. They it was who later were called *ingnerssuit*.

In the lap of the earth there lived goblins, many kinds of spirits; one of the most powerful was called *tórnrssuk*. The following story is told of it:

Once upon a time there was a shaman who had a helping spirit—an *aorrussaq*, an *autaussánguaq*—a little animal that lives in the sea. It was a shaman's *tórnrssuk*, and it became a mighty spirit. It was always spoken of with great awe; it seems to have been regarded as more powerful than all other forces on earth. Not even the Mother of the Sea Beasts—*savssuma arnarssua*—could match herself against it.

The various religious figures were closely associated with amulets, magic words and *akilersuissarneq*, i. e. actually, to be in the habit of paying something to somebody. As a rule they had no clear idea of to whom they addressed themselves; generally it was to the spirits of the earth, the air or the sea. And if one enquired, the usual reply was:

We know no more than that we do so because our forefathers used to do it.

Sun and moon originally were brother, *aningat* (or *aningâq*), and sister, *malina*, who had had intercourse together during a "lights out" game and therefore went up to the sky for shame²⁾. The sun is not worshipped, whereas the moon is a mighty spirit who sees to it that people observe their taboos—if not, it takes the animals away from them.

Note. (Information from the Rev. ROSING)³⁾:

The qualities which Christians place highest, that which we call loving: *asavâ*, simply means: has taken care of. They were never jealous after a "lights out" game; it was as if this custom was a manner in which they expressed their feelings for woman in general, the female body.

What they understood by being merciful or displaying pity: *nâ-kingnigtulineq*, is so far removed from what Christians understand by these terms that it is difficult to believe they are the same human feelings that lie behind the deeds of mercy of these heathens.

¹⁾ The deluge legend is also to be found in POUL EGEDE, for example l. c., p. 69. H. O.

²⁾ This legend too is in the EGEDES, cf. for example *Efterretninger om Grønland*, p. 54. H. O.

³⁾ In the book "*Tunuamiut*" (the East-Greenlanders).

Some examples:

If a woman lost her husband, or was merely put away by him, her children (sometimes we are told it was as many as three small infants) were all thrown into the sea. The argumentation was that they no longer had anyone to provide for them. This was called an act of mercy.

If a mother died leaving a young child, even if there was nothing wrong with it at all, it had to be buried with the mother¹). If the mother's body was thrown into the sea, the child was thrown in too. This was also called an act of mercy.

They feared the spirits and by means of gifts and magic prayers tried to persuade them to be good to people. They sought their help in all kinds of danger, but still they were not looked upon as deities whom one need thank afterwards.

They thought that man had an immortal soul—as stated elsewhere (Chapter V).

All those who did not die by accident but of natural causes were looked upon as having been killed by wicked fellow-beings.

They believed—as likewise stated elsewhere (Chapter V)—in a life after death. When sick people considered that their illness was lasting too long, and had abandoned all hope of ever getting better, they would sometimes, while still in possession of the necessary strength, go to a place from which they could throw themselves into the sea. If they had not the strength to do it, and wished to die, it was the duty of their nearest relations to take them to such a place.

The explanation was the belief that those who died in the sea went to a place where they would be best off, i. e. in the underworld, which was full of game animals.

This was also the reason for throwing into the sea those children who lost their parents.

When it happened that the dead had to be buried on land, it was done without much ceremony. The body was simply laid somewhere near the houses, where wild animals would quickly eat it.

Present-day East Greenlanders have no traditions about burials. All the graves to be found on this coast are said to date from ancestors, the old customs of which now they know nothing about.

Whereas the Land of the Dead in the underworld was happy and a desirable place to go to, it was not good to be up in the sky, where those people went who for some cause or other did not parish in the sea, or could not be said to have perished in the sea as it were by throwing

¹) In EGEDE SAABYE'S "Brudstykker af en Dagbog, holden i Gronland i Aarene 1770 til 1778" such cases are mentioned. H. O.

themselves into it. In the sky, some thought, everything ran round and made people dizzy. There were no other game animals up there than ravens, and nothing eatable on the ground other than crowberry, and the water was so half-warm that it would not quench thirst.

And yet, it is said, there were some old men and women who had been so happy here on earth that they had no wish to leave it after death and preferred to be buried at the place they thought was so beautiful.

Note. ROSING says of this:

This custom makes me think that it is not all who believe in a life after death. This perhaps may be the reason why they were so reluctant to die and wanted to get the utmost out of life here on earth. There was nothing they feared so much as that their life should end, and they lived in a constant state of suspicion that some one would murder them. They feared death in many ways, e. g. that it should come to them through *nungutsiartortut*, those who shall come to wipe out every living thing. This extermination, they believe, will come from the white people, whom they fear, because they have heard that they often exterminate one another in wars.

A person who had lost his life on the sea would never, they believed, be happy in the Land of the Dead if those that were left mourned his death too strenuously. He would feel uncomfortable down there and at last become ill. For the tears would drip down on him, and if the weeping lasted too long the dead man would in the end drown in tears, which destroyed the soul.

This was the reason that the dead were mourned only a short time, in any case never for more than a year from the day of the death.

VII. THOUGHTS ON THE SOUL

According to the general Eskimo conception, which is shared by the East Greenlanders, man consists of a name, a body and a soul.

As regards the name, it is regarded as a deceased person's name-soul which remains on earth and takes up its residence in another body, which is then equipped with the qualities and powers associated with this name. It was therefore a matter for very careful consideration what name a new-born child should have; it was taken for granted that some particular soul would wish to enter into the little new being. Therefore it was often left to the old members of the family or of the settlement, who were supposed to be possessed of special knowledge and wisdom in this domain too, or to the shamans, to decide what name the child should bear.

In other words, the name was considered to have both vitality and the ability to keep on renewing itself as long as there were any people at all.

The body, on the other hand, was regarded merely as the wrapping or the temporary residence of the name-soul and the real soul.

An East Greenlander explained this to me in the following manner:

"A body cannot always exist; it is perishable and shares the same fate as all other flesh that perishes. For this reason the soul is associated with the body only quite temporarily. A human being has many souls, however, distributed over his whole body. Every limb and joint has its soul, and these souls are in the form of a man, a tiny man, the size of a thumb. In these souls is concentrated all man's vitality, and it radiates through the the mouth. That is why man ceases to breathe when he dies.

"These souls are all created in the image of small men because every single part of the body to which they attend is like an independent being."

For this reason, a man who would do harm to another would always first try to steal one of his souls, for then that part of the body that was deprived of its soul would become sick. It was therefore looked upon as one of the most important tasks of a shaman to recover souls which had been stolen from their rightful owner.

Not all souls were considered to be of equal size. In particular there were three large ones, of which one was thought to be in the throat and the other two in the groin. These souls were almost as large as young sparrows.

"This", said my informant, "is what our forefathers have told us about the entity and significance of the soul. We who live now do not understand the things which were clear to the ancient ones."

It was also stated that the dead, *qardlimaitsut*, could return to the grave and the body long after death to live there in summer, in the time when the earth is warm and green. Whether they meant that it was the soul which returned for a time cannot be said now; to "the ancients" too that was vague and mysterious.

In this connection mention may be made of two other transitional forms of life after death which like the above are often referred to in the legends. One is *arnagtoq*, the other *angerdlartugssiaq*.

Literally, *arnagtoq* means: one who goes into his mother again. This is spoken of in a legend on *Navagiaq*, whose soul was reborn in all animals, until at last it ended in a human being. Thus they imagined a form of existence in which the soul, instead of proceeding at once to the Land of the Dead, first sojourned for some time on earth¹⁾ in other shapes than that of humans.

By *angerdlartugssiaq*, on the other hand, was understood a human being over which such spells had been cast when it was born that it was able to live several times, for the soul, after undertaking an adventurous voyage round the world through the sea, could return to its settlement in human form.

Another form of existence is described in the legend about *Alorútaq* and *Tagta*, from which it appears that only people who had perished in the sea and whose bodies had not been buried could rise again in this manner.

Otherwise, as was shown above, the soul was pieced out into small parts, one for each limb and joint; in general this is to be understood as meaning that all these small souls became united into one chief soul on the death of the being. The chief soul alone then travelled to the eternal hunting grounds, where it materialised again in a kind of body in appearance similar to its former earthly shell. It was said that this was so in order that the dead might know one another again.

By means of penance as described elsewhere, the survivors to try

¹⁾ "The soul sojourns for some time on earth", possibly it was in reminiscence of this that a woman, whose husband had died, came and asked me if he could not be buried as quickly as possible, as just before he died he had expressed the wish that "his soul might go to its place soon"; this could not happen, apparently, till the body was buried. H. O.

to facilitate the journey for those who departed this life. If this penance were not done, there was a risk that the soul would become homeless, when it would appear as a ghost that frightened to death everything on its way.

As the dead were thought to take a whole year to work themselves from death to the new life, for it was necessary first to get rid of all the juices that belong to the earth, the period of mourning and the penance of the survivors had to be of the same length.

There are various explanations of how one went about getting rid of the earthly juices.

According to some accounts, for a whole year one had to work from one side of an outstretched tent-skin to the other. As soon as this transitional existence was safely over, the whole body had become a kind of spirit body. In appearance it seemed to be like that of a real human being, but if one tried to grip it one could get no hold, for it was without substance or matter.

According to other accounts, however, the transitional period was spent on an enormous "world slope" somewhere out in space, where the body constantly bled by sliding down over the stony ground. In this way the earthly shell of such a man was worn out or used up, whereby in the course of a year it had become an airy being without flesh and bones, whereas the appearance prior to death was retained.—

The East Greenlanders have no fear of death. In pagan times if suffering from protracted illness they would often take their own life. At their own wish the family or others would throw them into the sea from a cliff or slope, sewn up on a burial skin. Or, if the terrain was unsuitable for this, they would lie on the beach so that the flood tide might wash them out to sea.

Those who perished in the sea were thought to go down to The Land of the Dead, which lay below the sea. For the East Greenlanders love the sea and look upon it as the "mother" who gives them food and clothing and all the exciting experiences of life. Accordingly, they preferred to imagine life continued in the underworld of the sea, where, so the shamans said, there was hunting under much more favourable conditions than in life on earth.

But those people who died "on a bed of sickness", or on land at all, and were buried under a heap of stones as was the custom, were thought to "go to the skies". That place, however, was not nearly so attractive to them as the underworld, for there were neither seals nor any other sea beasts, which meant that there was no blubber either, so that one had to get food mainly in the form of berries and ravens.

As far as possible one always tried to follow one's family, after death too. If husband, brother or forefathers were thought to have gone to the underworld, then they took steps to go there after death too. Those whose relatives were buried on land had themselves buried there too, so that they might meet the departed "in the skies".

It happened, however, that there was a way of getting to both places. If the dead were wrapped in a burial skin and laid a little way above the high-water mark for three days, and then thrown into the sea, the dead would be able to go both to the skies and to the underworld of the sea.

But if a man were drowned at sea, it was considered impossible for him to go anywhere else than to the underworld, even if his body were found and taken ashore.

VIII. MYSTERIOUS BEINGS AND ESKIMO MENTALITY

It was the belief of the East Greenlanders that they themselves were not the only inhabitants of their land. In fact they believed themselves to be surrounded by a host of mysterious beings, which often could be sensed but seldom appeared to ordinary people; the shamans, however, were usually able to see them.

There were the *Ingnerssuit*, the beach spirits, which were just like ordinary people except that they had no nose. Suddenly, and without warning, they might grow out of a beach or jump out from a cliff-side facing the sea. When high-water washed over an old ice-margin which the summer had not had warmth enough to melt, with a sound like a whimper or a human sigh, it was the *Ingnerssuit* crying. Normally these beings were not dangerous; indeed, they were kind to human beings and were often employed by the shamans as helping spirits.

An old woman, who must now have been dead a long time, told of encounters she had once had with these beings. They were always trying to bewitch her to make her stay with them, but she got the better of them because she was the stronger. And after she was baptized they never again crossed her path; they had turned afraid of her.

Much worse than these beach spirits, or underworld spirits as they were sometimes supposed to be, were giants who could suddenly grow as it were out of abysses right down into the sea. They appeared unannounced, laughing and mocking, from the great silence, often as an entire umiaq crew, but all male figures, ready to throw themselves upon solitary travellers.

Or sometimes they would appear in a half kayak, when they killed all whom they met. Such giants in half kayaks were called *Sargiserasait*. Their women were even more dangerous than they themselves; they lodged up among the wild and solitary mountains and had long nails or claws on both hands and feet, sharp as knives, and so hard that they could easily dig holes in the very granite.

Then there were the so-called *Timersit*, enormous giants, who frequented the inland ice—perhaps a dim memory of Canada's inland Eskimos.

When a hunter had harpooned his seal he would sometimes be attacked and plundered by *Makakâjuut*, small naked beings who from the mountain tops could keep a watch on the kayak-men and steal their game when the opportunity occurred.

There were also *Ingnerajuaitsiat*, the mountain dwarves, who in themselves were quite tiny, but when necessary could assume any size they required according to circumstances; and when they were in a hurry, they could fold the earth up under them and stride over immense distances.

There were *Isserqat*, who lived in the ground. They winked sideways with their eyes and delighted in tickling people to death as a pastime.

And there were *Tarrajârsuit*, the shadow-people, whose bodies were invisible but had shadows which were deadly if they fell upon a human being.

Again, there was *Aqajarorsiorpua*, the living stone in giant form, which scared whole settlements to death merely by showing itself.

And finally, there were *Erqigdlit*, the most dangerous of all the mystic beings that populated the earth where people lived. Their bodies were like those of humans, but they had dog heads. They, too, lived on the inland ice and were so bloodthirsty that not one ever escaped when they attacked a settlement.

The most fearful of all, however, was the moon. If anyone refused to bow to the wisdom and customs of his forefathers, it came down to earth to punish his disobedience, and if there were no shaman furnished with many powerful helping spirits, the man was as good as dead.

The moon commanded the ebb and flow. If there was no ebb to uncover the shore so that the seaweed could be seen, the people had nothing to live on in times of famine. The moon was also thought to have power over the animals of the sea and the land, for the moon saw to it that the animals multiplied and became many, so that mankind should not go short of food.

Then there was *Ímap ukûa*, the Mother of the Sea, who was thought to live on the bed of the sea. The sins of mankind collected as dirt and refuse in her hair and on her bed, and being angry at this she would keep the animals back.

These beings were not very willing to do much good for people of their own free will; they had almost to be forced to do it. The Mother of the Sea, or "Mother of the Sea Beasts" as she was also called, greedily guarded the seals, and the moon spirit was easily offended even at the

slightest breach of a taboo. In such cases the shamans had to employ all their arts in order to conciliate them. If a shaman after superhuman effort made his way down to the bottom of the sea and cleansed the



Fig. 11. An erqilik. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN. From KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Myther og Sagn fra Grønland I.*

hair and bed of the Mother of the Sea Beasts, she would in gratitude allow the animals to return to the people.

Similarly, *Asiaq*, the woman who reigned over weather and precipitation, was appeased by the shamans when the ice would not break up in spring, so that she allowed the rain to stream down over the earth and the Föhn wind to blow the ice out to sea.

All these beings are described in legends, of which I was fortunate enough to collect many; for the rest, however, they are not peculiar

to East Greenland; it is merely that they seem to have been of greater significance in the East Greenland settlements than among other Eskimo tribes; indeed, on the whole the East Greenland legends are born of a stronger and so to say more curious fantasy than is generally the case, except perhaps in Alaska.

On hearing of all this sinister world and all the mysterious forces which ancient Eskimo imagination has created, one might be apt to think that the East Greenlanders in pagan times were pessimists and alarmists who went about looking miserable.

That would be a great mistake. On the contrary, they were bursting with optimism and high spirits. The dangerous powers left no permanent impression on the Eskimo mind. With adversity they were as most people are when sickness comes; as soon as one is well, one soon forgets one has ever been ill. On the whole one best remembers the bright sides of life. So it was with the East Greenlanders too.

When CHRISTIAN POULSEN spoke of his childhood, his youth and manhood in these apparently inhospitable regions he could quite forget himself in the description of all the joys of life there.

In one passage of his account Commander HOLM says that life on the East Coast undoubtedly is the hardest struggle for existence that has ever fell to the lot of man. That is true, measured according to European standards.

But to the frugal and hardy people who lived there it was an Eldorado. All Greenlanders who like CHRISTIAN POULSEN once lived on the east coast, long to get back to the glaciers in the great fjords, where the seals used to breed, and to the field ice which on fine summer days glittered before their dwellings and provided them with the daily meat. For they have a faculty for forgetting autumn, when the swell moves like a maelström along the coasts and throws huge icebergs up on land, and for forgetting winter's dark period when the northeasters sweep and roar across the hills.

In one outburst they are able to give vent to all their love for this land in a song which is so characteristic of their mentality and their remarkable faculty for description:

I came down
Where the ocean lay open before the shore,
And looked out over
The small lands in the north
Lying blue under the clear sky,
And I thought:
One day, when I grow tired

And lay me to rest;
One day, when I die,
All this I see
Will be the same to others
And the air will arch itself blue
And quiver in the heat
In just the same way
To those who live when I am gone.
But I turn faint
At all this beauty!

IX. ON HOMICIDE AND ITS CAUSES

Homicide was not uncommon among the East Greenlanders. And it was nearly always men who were killed and who did the killing.

Before the time of firearms homicide was committed with the aid of the harpoon, the lance or the bird-dart. These weapons were used in particular if the deed was to be committed on the sea. On land the weapon was usually the knife.

In most cases the victim was first attacked, and then when he was overpowered by the stronger man or men, he was stabbed to death. A homicide would have helpers in most cases.

After firearms were introduced from the west coast, these too were employed for killing.

The chief motive for these murders were anger and envy, or also retribution, in which case it was regarded as a vendetta. Anger was mainly inflamed by tale-bearing and calumny, and indeed almost just as frequently merely on account of untrue rumours spread from place to place by malicious individuals.

From the same source sprang envy, which on the whole has been very prevalent among Eskimos everywhere—as indeed among all primitive peoples. Envy was often fed by old, spiteful women.

Vendetta meant taking revenge for murder by the nearest relations. One man's murderer had the whole of his victim's family against him, and it was almost a religious duty of theirs not to rest, not to seek peace, till life had paid for life¹).

It was only rarely that homicide was the result of a fight. Equal fights in the open were very uncommon on the whole. It was nearly always assault and murder, and the attackers were always superior in numbers. They simply waited for an opportunity when they could kill

¹) In INGEMANN'S "Kunnuk og Naja, eller Grønlanderbørnene", which is founded on an actual happening in the region round Jakobshavn Isfjord in the 1770's, the conflict in the mind of the chief person during his conversion to Christianity was due the fact that he was burdened with the obligations of a blood-feud for the murder of his father. H. O.

without running any risk themselves. But of course they then had a blood-feud hanging over their heads.

According to reliable accounts as well as legend and tradition, homicide was often in the form of a reprisal; for as soon as a man got to know that he had made an enemy who would kill him when he got the chance, he would try to forestall him by killing him and thus preserve his own life, for a time at any rate.

This motive for murder was often both unreasonable and unjust, for a man might kill another merely on the strength of a rumour or gossip, which as already stated was often simply loose talk or even prevarication. There is an example: When a man had become angry with another and bore a grudge against him, perhaps the result of envy and nothing more, and wanted to have him killed though he himself would not dare to risk his own skin in doing it, he would simply excite a third man against him, a braver and stronger man, by telling him that the other man was after his life, and urging him to forestall him. If the sly ruse worked, and unfortunately it often did, quite an innocent and unsuspecting person would be killed, whereas the instigator of the killing went free.

It is also said of quite a number of separated women who had afterwards married again, that out of spite they persuaded their new husband to kill the first one, accusing him of every possible kind of crime.

Another not uncommon occasion for homicide was when some woman was thought to be a witch¹⁾, or a shaman was supposed to have stolen a soul.

The commonest cause of homicide, however, as stated above was envy and blood-feuds. The East Greenlanders themselves held the belief that once a man had committed murder he "acquired the habit" and could not stop. No doubt the meaning of this was that once a man had killed another, he would in the interests of his own safety take steps to exterminate all those whom he thought would try to take revenge on him.

Two names especially are mentioned whenever there is a talk of people who had "a habit" of killing: *Ilisimarteq* and *Piligkat*. Both must have been killed almost at the same time as the trading and mission station at Angmagssalik was started. Their children are probably alive today; at any rate they were alive a few years ago.

¹⁾ In former times the same thing was very common on the west coast. During SCHWABE's term of office as inspector at Godhavn (1782—86) a deputation of three Greenland men came to his office and on behalf of the population asked permission to execute an old widow, alleging that she was a witch; the inspector had to exert all his diplomatic skill to dissuade them from their purpose; and for safety's sake he sent the widow to another settlement. H. O.

Ilisímarteq was a big and fine-looking man, broad-shouldered and powerful, a splendid sealer and bear-hunter. When in his prime he had killed a man, and it was said of him at that time that he was a man of very difficult temper, that he was almost always angry and that he always tormented his wife. The latter may have been because he wished to command respect, not only of his wife but of others too as a terribly dangerous man. And he was feared by all.

To his first murder *Ilisímarteq* soon afterwards added another, for he killed two brothers, the younger being still a young novice in the art of kayak hunting. It is said that he killed them both at once, the elder brother with his harpoon, the younger with his bird-dart.

There was to be a song-contest at Tasiussârssik and a large number of people had assembled for it. When the contest was almost over, the story goes, *Ilisímarteq* killed one of the contestants with his knife. He had long thought of getting rid of this man and had gone to the song-contest as a looker-on with his knife up the sleeve of his jacket.

These were not the only people that were killed by this awe-inspiring murderer. Others had fallen victims to his thirst for blood, and as a consequence he was hated and feared by all his countrymen. There were many who would have liked to avenge the murders, but none dared do it, for *Ilisímarteq* was prodigiously strong, and if the avenger did not succeed in taking him quite unawares, he would run the risk of losing his own life.

Then came firearms. Some of the East Greenlanders had guns and it was now possible to kill from an ambush. So it was decided to put an end to the man-killer *Ilisímarteq*.

At this time he was living in Sermilik Fjord. It happened that he was to go out in his kayak together with two other men. A short time before a walrus had been killed, and these men had with them a piece of walrus tusk which was to be ground to shape on a smooth rock. First they paddled out to catch seals, but as they did not succeed in that they determined to paddle back to the shore, where they began to grind the tusk in order to fashion it into a harpoon head.

Kúnaq, who related the story, gave the following account of what then happened:

I had a gun at that time, one of those with a large barrel; I had got it as payment for rowing for *Sáikutôq*¹⁾. I was out in my kayak too that day, but when I saw the others on shore I paddled in to them. One of the three men came down to me and said as I got out of my kayak:

“Lend us your gun, for we are going to kill *Ilisímarteq*.”

¹⁾ i. e. the heavily armed one, the soldier; the name under which Commander HOLM was generally known among the East Greenlanders. H. O.

I answered: "No, it is a weapon which I use for procuring food. It shall not be used against a poor man."

Then I carried my kayak ashore and went up to them. There they sat grinding their walrus tusk to and fro against a flat rock. I lay down beside them and watched them at their work. I lay there for some time, when one of the three went down to his kayak; I gave no thought to what he was doing.

A moment later my eyes almost stood out of my head, for, chancing to look aside, I saw that the man had taken my gun and was already standing behind *Ilisimarteq*, aiming at him. He was so close that he almost touched him with the barrel, which he was pointing at the back of his neck. When he fired, *Ilisimarteq* did not even make a sound; all that happened was that his long hair flew forward as he collapsed.

He had such a firm grip of the walrus tusk they were working with that it was almost impossible to force it out of his hands.

Later they cut up the body. How and why this is done is described in another chapter.

Not one person mourned the death of *Ilisimarteq*. Everybody had lived in dread of him, and all the people of the settlement were relieved at the news that he was now dead. In fact, it is said of some people who had a spring camp at Sermilik that they actually burst into song and jubilation when they heard of it, crying to one another: "*Ilisimarteq* is killed! *Ilisimarteq* is dead!";

The news of his death was received in similar fashion at all the settlements. And afterwards, no one avenged him. Nevertheless, it is a question whether he would not have been avenged if the trading and mission station had not been established there. *Ilisimarteq* had an elder sister, the mother of four sons, strong, skilful hunters and excellent kayak men. They might have considered that they were obliged to exact blood-vengeance for their uncle. All these men are now baptized, however, and think no more of vendetta and murder.

The last to be killed was *Piligkat*. He, too, had killed a number of people, and in the end he himself was struck down near Cape Dan, in a spring camp on an island called Agdleroq.

The man who killed him was living a few years ago, and perhaps is alive today; he cannot be particularly old. At one time he was a shaman.

Piligkat at that time had a spring camp at Amitsuarssik, right at the mouth of Angmagssalik Fjord. One day he had gone on a visit to Cape Dan on the other side of the fjord, and there lived the aforesaid man, the one who had been appointed to kill him, *Apikutôq*.

Apikutôq had been told that *Piligkat* intended to kill him, for which reason he was now going to try to get in the first blow.

Piligkat came ashore and went up to a tent in which there were not many people. When *Apikutôq* saw it he followed behind together with his helpers, himself armed with a knife. They seized *Piligkat* as he went into the tent, knocked him off his feet and dragged him away. But when *Apikutôq* attempted to stab him, *Piligkat* seized the blade of the knife with a grip so strong that the avenger was unable to get it from him. So he seized the handle with his teeth and with a quick jerk pulled the knife out of the man's hand, with the result that all the fingers were cut off. Had *Apikutôq* been alone he would certainly have been unable to get the better of his powerful antagonist. As it was, having got the knife free he stabbed him three times in the side a little under the shoulder, so that the blood spurted out. *Piligkat's* strength soon gave out after these blows, and then they shot him to death with a gun. Then they cut the body up as was the custom.

It is said that people who do not wish to kill eat of the dead man's intestines.

These are accounts of the last murders on the East Coast. Among the East Greenlanders there is the belief that killings became more and more frequent because the tribe was only relatively small in numbers and more and more had to be avenged, in fact whole families suffered. In particular, in the years following upon HOLM's winter there, the number of murders was unusually high, and it is generally thought that if the mission had not come, the number of hunters would have been seriously reduced.¹⁾

But it was not everywhere that the people were so blood-thirsty. It is said that round about Igdluarssuit one could go out in a kayak without being afraid of anything. There man did not seek the life of his fellow-men, whereas they were always hearing of killings in the neighbourhood of Angmagssalik, and it is said that in those days no one dared go out in a kayak alone for fear of being attacked.

Now there is peace, and people's minds have calmed down. And it is a blessed feeling, the feeling of security when one is out in a kayak, with no thought—and no need to think—of anything but seals and the other game to be caught.

¹⁾ As to this RÜTTEL, Angmagssalik's first missionary, says: "The general state improved very considerably with the arrival of we Danish people at Angmagssalik. By means of joint action between manager and missionary a stop was put to the wild murdering that had been going on in the land, and gradually a feeling of security set in, engendering a feeling of relief even among the heathens." H. O.

IX A. PROTECTION FROM MURDER

As it would appear from the foregoing that in pagan times the East Greenlanders were rather apt to commit murder or manslaughter, it should be added here that this in itself was not the outcome of particularly bloodthirsty qualities among them; it was due to something which lay deep in their mental processes and their beliefs.

Nor must it be taken as an indication of cowardice that these killings did not take place openly and subsequent to challenge, but where possible from ambush and secretly. In the first place the killer exposed himself and his entire family to the vengeance of the dead person's relatives, and secondly, there was always the risk that the attack would fail and retribution descend upon him at once. And finally, the view was generally held that it was only by assassination that the victim could be prevented from being protected by his helping spirits. When all came to all, it was in fact these spirits that were to be outwitted.

One cause of murder was the superstition that later in life one could "inherit" the seals which the murdered man would have caught, and the ancient legends often narrate how the heroes killed people without bearing any grudge against them at all, simply in order to make sure of their hunting spoils.

Obviously, then, it was nothing uncommon for one hunter to kill another if for a long period he had been unlucky and unable to catch sufficient to feed his family. His view of it was that the supply of game intended for him by fate had been used up, so there was nothing else to do than to secure other supplies by killing a man and taking over the animals he would otherwise have as his share.—

However, murder called for retaliation—a life for a life—and thus arose the moral obligation of the blood-feud. This was no mere personal or general act of revenge, but a religious duty, the principle of which was that it was not only that the survivors upheld the family honour, but that retaliation rehabilitated the dead, honoured his memory and built up peace about his name and the manner in which he had had to end his life.

It was not solely the close relations of the dead that could avenge him; if they omitted to fulfil the obligation, the dead man himself could exact vengeance, in which case its form was much more terrible than if living people had done it.

It was therefore necessary to safeguard oneself in every imaginable way.

Actually, all the rules to be observed, and all the consideration to be paid to the ghost of a dead man, provide the most eloquent evidence of how complicated and intricate a matter it was to commit murder.¹⁾

When a man had planned to kill another, he took the shin bone of a dog's foreleg, to which he fastened a thong, taking great care that the thong had never been used for sealing. This he always carried with him when in his kayak. Having proceeded thus far, he had to keep his intended victim under observation for a long time without his knowing it; the opportunity had to be carefully chosen. Then, when the proper moment arrived, the attack had to be made so suddenly and unexpectedly that the victim should have no chance of resisting.

As soon as the murder was committed—and here it is assumed that it took place out at sea—a hole was cut in the skin of the dead man just above the nose between the eyes. Through this hole the killer drew the thong with its shin-bone toggle, whereafter the corpse was towed ashore. Thereafter the head was to be divided from the body as quickly as possible, and likewise the fourth finger and fourth toe were to be cut from hands and feet. The body could then be cut into small pieces and scattered over as wide an area as possible, or stones were tied to it and the whole sunk in the sea. The stones had to be taken from a grave and be overgrown with lichen and moss.

The eyes were then to be cut out and, together with the head and the fingers and toes, placed into the murdered man's harpoon bladder, which then had to be carried overland towards the inland ice. On encountering a fox-trap of stone, the pointed bait-stone was taken out and on it were transfixed the dead man's eyes, whereafter it was sunk in a mountain lake as far from the shore as possible and so deep that it did not dry up in summer. Finally, the flat stone forming the door of the fox-trap had to be sunk in such a manner that it lay over the eyes. The harpoon bladder with its contents were then to be sunk in another mountain lake or placed in a nunatak on the inland ice, suspended from a stone.

All these precautions were taken in order to make it impossible for the dead man's soul to gather his body together again and revenge

¹⁾ Cf. also *Tunuamiut* (Østgrønlanderne, om hedningernes tro, skikke og livsformer), by the Rev. CHR. ROSING, for many years priest at Angmagssalik (Nūngme—Godthaab—1906). H. O.

himself on his murderer. The fourth fingers and toes were taken separately because they were thought to have special powers, for these it was that the midwife held on to when the child was given its name.

Nevertheless, one could never be sure that the dead man would not walk again and avenge himself, and so one had to seek additional security from amulets and amulet-thongs, the so-called *qigssutit*.

Every East Greenlander had an amulet consisting of a piece of old sooty blubber from a lamp, this being sewn into a small skin bag and worn on the middle of the breast on the amulet-thong. This was for protection against danger in general, lamp-slag being used because, having been hardened in fire, it must possess special powers. One could, however, also use solidified blubber from an old meat-cache; this being impervious to moisture, it was considered to make one immune against evil.

One who had committed murder, however, could no longer be content with the ordinary amulet, and so he would increase its powers by adding to it a piece of twig from a raven's nest, often carved in the form of a small doll, as well as a louse from a shark. In addition, beside the ordinary amulet bag he placed a very small one in which were preserved the nails from the dead man's severed fingers and toes.

The raven is a very cunning and wise bird, which builds its nest in such a position that it is both difficult to see and hard to get at. Twigs from a raven's nest have the property of being able to mislead shamans seeking to revenge the dead. Thus if a shaman related to the dead man endeavoured to find out who had killed him, the little piece of dwarf-willow twig from the raven's nest made the dead man's soul confused instead of helping it.

For all eventualities' sake, however, the murderer had to be prepared that the twigs might be unable to mislead sufficiently. If the avenger got on the right track he would discover the louse from the shark; this revealed itself in the form of a frightful monster eating away at the murderer, and this scared the avenger way.

Should the shark-louse too prove insufficiently effective and succumb to the spells of the shaman, the murderer placed his faith in the fingers and toes of the dead man. The idea here was that when the soul got to the murderer and on him found the nails of his own "name fingers", it would think it had come to its own name, i. e. the person who had been called after the dead man and who therefore would be sacred to it. Then the soul forgot all thoughts of revenge and dwelt in its murderer's body in its capacity of name-soul.

If this precaution also failed, there was still one more safeguard, a thimble-holder of bone laid in a piece of water-tight skin and sown into the top of the gut-skin curtain that covers the entrance to the

tent. This thimble-holder was made of narwhal or walrus ivory and usually had three arms in which the thimbles were placed. The object of this precaution was that when the soul of the dead came and would enter the tent, there was such a spell over the thimble-holder that it immediately grew and became as a large grating and barred the tent opening, through which the soul was unable to pass.

The very best protection a murderer could have from retaliation by either shamans or the dead man's soul was obtained, however, if a son were born to him after the murder. Such a son was called *igdlersigssá*, i. e. "his protector from revenge". In such cases the son, in addition to the usual amulets, had always to carry a knife with a shining copper blade. This was thought to be capable of scaring the soul even at long distances. Furthermore, his chief amulets were to be two upper-arm bands of skin, the left one with the hair on, whereas the right one had to be dehaired but set with beads. The left band was to be made from the upper part of the skin of the left fore flipper of a seal. On the left foot the son was always to wear a kamik which, in contrast to the one on the right foot, was to have the hair on. The hairs were considered to be capable of making the son a stronger man than his father. The idea of the upper-arm band having to be of fore flipper was that it scared the soul away by means of the claws of the flipper. These claws were not placed on the amulet, but such magic had been made over it that they were always visible to the soul when it came to seek revenge.

The right upper-arm band with the beads was though to have the effect on the son that all the ailments he might contract in his right arm—the harpoon arm—would quickly go out through the holes in the beads, and the right kamik, which had to be dehaired as distinct from the left one, was expected to make him quicker and more dexterous than his father.

Finally, a murderer's *igdlersigssá* always had to have his hair cropped short on the right side of his head, and grow long and unkempt on the left side. This would not only scare the pursuing soul far away but make him immune to the diseases which might otherwise have been visited upon him.

X. SHAMANS

The shamans, *angákut* (pl. of *angákoq*) usually enjoyed the respect of their countrymen, were almost always obeyed by everybody, and were feared by many.

Originally the principal function of a shaman was to try by means of religious and diatetic prescriptions to uphold and enforce the ancient customs and laws that had been handed down from their ancestors.

In a way they were priests, brooders over hidden things, and healers of the sick and the sad; they were also intermediaries between man and the good and evil spirits of nature. By means of a sacred art, which they acquired during a long and laborious period as disciples, sometimes extending over as many as ten years, their eyes were opened to all that which ordinary people cannot see.

They were able to work in order to prevent evil from reaching the people, by which means they earned their gratitude. But of course they could also become the minions of darkness in the service of an evil cause and do harm to their fellow men.

The shamans were thought to have charge of the sea animals and to make spirit journeys in times of bad hunting down to the Mother of the Sea, who dwelt on the bottom of the sea. They also journeyed to the chastising Moon Man when he kept man's rightful game animals away in punishment for the infringements of unclean and sorrowing men or women. They visited the "Land of the Dead" in the sky and under the sea in order to procure knowledge of what awaits man after life on earth; and finally, they acted as weather prophets and weather lords; for if for a long time there had been bad weather, preventing people from getting out to hunt, the shamans were thought to be capable of going up to Asiaq, the Mistress of the Weather and the Winds, who could cause rain and snow to cease falling and make the storm-tossed waves of the ocean to calm down.

At a settlement, when anything happened which made it desirable that the shaman should convoke his helping spirits (*tórninialerángat*), an invocation seance was arranged. There was a good deal of previous

preparation to attend to. A skin was stretched inside the house over the small hole through which one enters from the passage-way. The windows were darkened with skins, and finally, a skin which, like all the others used during a seance, had to be a new and unused water-tight skin, was laid on the floor in front of the entrance hole.

On this latter skin the shaman was placed, naked except for his very narrow loin-cloth or belt. On seating himself on the skin, his hands were tied behind him with a strong thong, his head was bent forward and lashed firmly to his legs in such a fashion that he was quite incapable of any movement, and his arms were pinioned behind as in a vice. The magic drum and stick were then placed beside him, and all lamps were extinguished. The seance then began.¹⁾

The magic drum consisted of a round ring of wood over which was stretched the skin of a bear's bladder or the gut of a bladdernose sewn together. Before use the drum skin was moistened and gave out a booming note when the wood ring was struck with the stick, which as a rule was of wood. When the interior of the house had become quite dark, the shaman performing the invocation would often be seized with an inexplicable feeling of fear, and some have told that they trembled so violently at something unpleasant and unknown that they had a feeling of being about to die.

It was thought that the drum in the hand of a shaman possessed mystic and supernatural power which helped to summon the spirits. It would become as if alive in the course of a seance, and floated freely about the house without being touched by the shaman's hand.

If the man holding the seance was a great shaman, his magic drum would usually begin to sound immediately after the extinguishing of the lamps, and it would float over the heads of the people, far in over the platform, sometimes right up under the roof beam, at other times along the floor. Considering the fact that the shaman was firmly tied up and at any rate would require some time to release his bonds, if he could do so at all, even the disbelievers, perhaps to this day, took it as evidence that in the drum itself there must be powers working, or that the spirits made it sound.

¹⁾ The diary of M. N. MYHLENPHORT (1759—1821), one-time inspector of South Greenland, contains the following description of a seance held at "Godhavns Anlæg" in March 1787: "We then stepped (or rather crawled) into the house, which was practically crammed with people. All the women sat on the platform and the men on the benches round about. On the floor sat His Excellency Mr. ANGEKUT with tied hands and a drum by his side. Two lamps, one in each corner, burned with a very faint gleam. When we had seated ourselves both lamps were extinguished, and we heard a voice from the floor as if it came from a person who was in danger. Then the sound began to grow much louder and the drum to beat, with much more hocus-pocus." H. O.

There were also certain positions which the shaman had to adopt at particular moments. If the shaman was to journey through the air, the handle of the drum had to rest against his big toe at the moment he was to rush out of the house. The drum and stick remained behind,



Fig. 12. Male drum-dancer. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

however, and the stick accompanied the drum and beat it just as if an invisible hand were responsible for its movement as well as that of the drum.

Another example is told of the magic power of the drum: on the evening when a shaman was to reveal his art to his fellow beings for the first time, the drum was to float over to his heel and remain there. The effect of this was that a veil, as it were, was drawn from the shaman's eyes, whereby he was able to see what others could not. Gradually as

the shaman improved in his art the drum worked itself slowly up his body at the seances, and it is said that on the evening when it reached the height of his shoulder all distance became as nothing to him and he saw all countries gathered before him in a circle, as it were, so that he was able to see everything that was going on in the world.



Fig. 13. Female drum-dancer. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

When a shaman seance was held the house was always crowded, and it may safely be said that it contained at any rate about fifty people; the presence of visitors of course made the number still greater. The shaman sat in one place the while, and the audience would start to sing mystic songs in order to assist him to summon the spirits; this they continued to do all the time they waited. In the midst of it all the shaman groaned and wailed as if he were succumbing to tremendous forces, until at length one could hear the first helping spirits hastening to the house and coming through the passage with a great noise; then the singing was to cease.

Helping spirits would come alone or, more usually, several at a time. They were heard shouting and screaming, now far away, now closer, then just near the house, and at last they came bounding through the passage; then one could hear them moving about inside the house itself; some floated about noiselessly, so that one could just feel or sense their presence, almost like a breath of air; others stamped about the floor with heavy steps as of enormous feet; some talking like women in shrill voices, others booming in a deep bass like the sombre voices of men. But whatever the pitch of their voices, they all spoke in a strange spirit language that could be understood only by the initiated and had to be interpreted for ordinary people.¹⁾

This kind of spirit invocation among the East Greenlanders nowadays is nothing but a memory of times that are gone. In the course of time all attempts at keeping in contact with nature or its riddles were forbidden or they forbade themselves with the introduction of Christianity. Accordingly, the records I have been able to collect in Angmagssalik and its environs are merely traditions of what used to be. The magic drum will never again beat in time to the sombre songs that were muttered when the fearsome procession of spirits was approaching.

For this reason it is of great human and scientific importance that the East Greenland tribe more than fifty years ago was visited by a man who had both the flair and the ability for making studies while the tribe was still in its purely primitive state; we now have an authoritative account of customs and habits as they were practised and held in honour in their primitive originality. This man was the first to describe Angmagssalik, Commander GUSTAV HOLM, ph. D., the leader of the famous umiak expedition to the East Coast in the years 1883—85. In recalling the name of the leader by whose name the expedition is known, we should not forget his interpreter, the former colony manager JOHAN PETERSEN, who with his intelligence and understanding was an excellent helper in the great ethnographic and folkloristic work that was done while the expedition was on the east coast.²⁾

¹⁾ In his book "Efterretninger om Grønland, uddraget af en Journal holdt fra 1721 til 1788", PAUL EGEDE recorded quite a small glossary of what he called "Shamans Kirendum". H. O.

²⁾ JOHAN PETERSEN's uncle, the curate *Hansêraq* (JOHANNES HANSEN), who was with the expedition and became the first to preach the Gospel to the heathens on the East Coast in 1884—85, helped the leader with much useful information on the life, beliefs, customs and habits of the natives. This information is very fully recorded in *Hansêraq's* Greenland diary of the journey, of which extracts were published in Greenland (in the periodical "*Atuagagdliutit*" for 1891—92) and in Denmark (by SIGNE RINK 1900). A complete translation of the diary, made immediately after the expedition returned to the West Coast by the Rev. O. H. SKAARUP at Julianehaab, was published by W. THALBITZER as Vol. VIII of "*Det Grønlandske Selskabs Skrifter*" (Kbh. 1933). In addition, *Hansêraq* himself published descriptions of drum and song contests in "*Atuagagdliutit*" for 1892. H. O.

In the present work we must otherwise confine ourselves to descriptions and records from Greenlanders and East Greenlanders. It will therefore not be out of place here, while dealing with a shaman seance, to reproduce a passage from Commander HOLM's book in order to see how the art was understood by a white man who was able to see and judge it with his clear brain. It is a first-hand impression of the apparatus which a shaman utilizes when endeavouring to make contact with the supernatural, and it is a description without parallel in Eskimo literature, just because it is so sober and objective.

The passage is taken from the very beginning of a shaman seance, from "Etnologisk Skizze af Angmagssalikerne", pp. 124—26:

"After an hour's waiting, during which the angakok lay quite still in darkness behind the platform, everything was made ready. New, bone-dry water-tight skin was hung at the house doorway, other skins over the window above the door, whereas the other windows were not covered, at any rate not the one opposite which we sat. After the floor round about the passage had been carefully swept and rubbed, and all dirt removed from between the floor stones, a skin with the hair on, folded double, was carefully arranged before the door-curtain. A large flat stone was laid to the right of the door to cover hollows in the floor-stones. After the drum had been wetted it was laid with the drum-stick on the flat stone. A long seal-thong with the hair on was then softened very scientifically by means of rubbing, stretching and so on.

"Finally, *Sanimuinaq* came forward. He walked as in a dream, almost martyr-like, looking neither to right nor left, and sat on the skin on the floor. The flat stone and the drum he placed very meticulously. His hair was bound up behind and a thong was pressed down over his brow. The man who had prepared the thong now pinioned the angakok with it from hands up to elbows and pulled it so tight that his hands became quite blue. During this process the shaman groaned and puffed as if he were wrestling with some great power. When he saw that I was carefully watching the lashing of his arms, he said to me in a pitiful voice that I could see for myself that it would be impossible for him to loosen them. I was given a seat on a skin on the floor, where it was coolest to sit, whereas all the others in time crawled up on the platform. The lamps were then put out, first the one most to the left of the shaman, then the next, so that the one most to the right was extinguished last.

"At once the spirits were invoked with the cries of "*Goi, goi, goi, goi!*", sometimes by one voice, sometimes by several, now from one side of the house, now from the other. All the while the shaman grunted and sighed aloud. Suddenly, the skin at the doorway began to rustle

as if moved by a strong wind. The drum began to beat, at first slowly, then more quickly. Then followed noises of all kinds: rattling, swishing, clattering sounds, sometimes like the noise of an engineering workshop, at others like locomotives, and again as of large flying beings. Sometimes platform and window-sill shook with the most frightful noises. One moment one heard the shaman groaning, wailing, screaming, whining, whispering; or one heard spirits, some of which had coarse, others baby-like, others lisping or whistling voices. Often I heard a demoniacal, mocking, screeching laughter. The voices were above, or below the earth, at one side of the house or the other, sometimes outside, or in the passage. Cries of "*Hoi, hoi, hoi, hoi!*" faded away as into the remotest abyss. With marvellous dexterity the drum was beaten, often passing round inside the house and hovering particularly above my head. The drum often accompanied singing, which at times was subdued as if coming from the underworld. Fine singing by women sometimes came from the background. After a deafening, clattering, rattling and swishing noise everything suddenly became quiet, and then in came the fearsome monster *Amórtortoq*. It has, as mentioned, black arms, and whoever it touches becomes black and must die. It went with heavy steps about the house and on the platform and roared "*A-mó! A-mó!*". All fled to the farthest corner of the platform for fear that the monster should touch one of them. It was particularly attentive to me, bawled in my ears and tried to pull away the skin on which I was sitting, in order to force me up in a corner with the others, but it succeeded only in tearing the skin. After this spirit came another which screamed like a fox. One of the Târtok's¹⁾ said there was a smell as if there were Kavdlunâk's²⁾ present and made very careful inquiries about us. For the rest, nothing was understood of the spirit language.

"The owner of the house, *Kutuluk*, then asked me, no doubt prompted by the Târtok's, if I was not tired of the performance for that evening, as in that case they could wait for the remainder till another evening. As it had lasted about an hour, and the house was stifling with heat, I could not but admit it, and the Târtok was so informed. It could not tear itself away so quickly, however; its retreat was slow and not nearly so noisy as its entry. After a long time someone asked if the lamps should be lighted, whereupon *Sanimuinaq* in his own natural voice answered that his Târtok was still present. The inquirer had assumed "that it had gone, for the drum sounded no more." To this *Sanimuinaq* replied that "someone must have touched the drum since the Târtok would not beat it." But soon afterwards

¹⁾ târtok: helping spirit. H. O.

²⁾ qavdlunâq: European, white man. H. O.

the drum started again, and the retirement proceeded to the rattling of skins and the dying away of the singing. The lamps were lit in the opposite order to that in which they had been extinguished, and everybody sat as before the performance. The angakok sat bathed in perspiration in the same place as at the beginning. His hands were still bound behind him in the same fashion as before, but not nearly so well."

In this seance the shaman seems to have remained inside the house throughout. But if he was to make a spirit flight far away, a helping spirit remained in his place and did not leave the house until the spirit flight was ended. Sometimes a journey of this kind would last the whole night; no one might lie down, but all had to remain quiet till everything was over. When the shaman returned he called for the lamps to be lit, and he was then seen to be sitting in the same place, bound and pinioned as when the last lamps were put out. Only when his bonds were loosened—and as a rule they were properly tied, sometimes so well that they could be loosened only by the one who had tied them—he would tell of his spirit flight and the result of his investigations.

Sometimes the shaman was tied up so effectively that it was a matter of great difficulty to release him again.

In the course of a spirit flight the shaman travelled far through the skies. There are those who believe it was his soul, which released itself from the body, whereas others think his body must have taken these long flights too. But in that case he must have tied the wings of a guillemot to his shoulder-blades.

It was particularly in cases of sickness and soul-stealing that these spirit flights were undertaken.

People became ill when one of the souls in him was stolen by the magic of a shaman or by an evil person. So the shaman consulted on the matter had to find out where the stolen soul had lived in the person's body and where it had been taken. He could find this out from his helping spirits. In most cases it was to far-off places, often a great distance over the inland ice, that the stolen soul had been taken, and so in the course of the night the shaman had to make a spirit-flight there and bring the spirit back again, all of which had to be done before dawn.

There was another, more simple method of summoning helping spirits than that described above, a method usually adopted by the less prominent shamans. On the other hand there are records of shamans who had such great power over the spirits that it was unnecessary for them to employ other methods than this simple one, which was called *kilungmórssorneq*.

When a person fell ill, the shaman could seek advice about it by creeping up on the platform and placing himself with his back to the room, covered with skins and with skins under him. There he sat silent and pondering, with no drum, sunk in deep thought, as if transported to the spirit world. In this state, or during this silent invocation of the spirits it was revealed to him that the sick person's soul had been stolen, where it was, and who had stolen it. In most cases it was an *ilisitsoq*, a troll-woman, who had done it. At the request of the family the shaman would then promise to get the soul back again, but it could only be done if the family observed certain restrictions and held a diet. This diet might vary in the most curious way. For example, one was not to eat *tajarneq*, the forearm of seals, another the *kujak*, the loin, a third the *kiasik*, the shoulder, and so on.

If a sick person whom the shaman had promised to cure did not get better, it was not the shaman's fault; the family was to blame, for he would insist that they had not observed the conditions.

In such circumstances, where a shaman freely and without control had the power to charge any and everybody with soul-stealing, he had every opportunity, if dishonest, of making charges against those whom he wished to harm, and then animosity, enmity or personal vengeance might easily play a part. For if the sick person died, the family would wish to be revenged for the murder; indeed, with some semblance of justice they would feel urged to exact vengeance.

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It is very difficult to make a just appraisal of a shaman's attitude towards the truth, for, being only human, many of them might very well have been deliberate frauds—which is no rare human weakness. Nevertheless, it is my firm conviction that most of them were honest people, who sincerely held on to their seances in the belief that it was for the benefit of their fellow-beings. I believe a shaman's relation to the supernatural was aptly described by the aforesaid remark of a former *angákoq*, that just prior to the seance they were so moved by their call that they felt near to death.

Of course it is obvious that they were unable to travel either to the skies or to the bottom of the sea, up to the moon or to any other of the wonderful places they depicted, and that they cannot have encountered all the various helping spirits whom they claimed they went to visit in the mountains and whom they described so minutely. And at the seances in the houses, no one believed that it was any but the shaman himself who produced the noise of the spirits, the many mysterious choruses and voices from the underworld and everything else that seemed to take place.

But it would be doing them great injustice to call it a low trick to play on good friends and fellow-settlers who for some reason or other were in great need and distress.

First and foremost we must take into consideration the state of ecstasy and excitement, fear and terror, of a young man who would be a shaman disciple and had to seek solitude up in the mountains. It is beyond question that in doing so he must have followed and developed an inclination for or talent for hallucination, which he did not regard—and could not regard—as a nervous affection, but as a holy gift from the spirits. He knew that he would see certain things, but as a rule he did not see them in the first instance. Only when he had got himself into a state of high tension through starvation and solitude, fear and trembling, would the visions come to him.

Again, all the revelations at the seances, the result of conjuring and ventriloquism, cannot have been enacted for fraudulent purposes or even for the purpose of deceiving, for this, too, was a holy art to the shaman himself. All too many who have wished to describe the shamans in their relation to the truth have simply reduced them to buffoons and tricksters.

As regards ventriloquism, the shamans themselves must have thought that the spirits really spoke through them. And if they deliberately resorted to a trick now and then, they must have been satisfied that they were obliged to do so, but only because they were so inexpert in their art that they had not so much influence with the spirits as other great shamans.

At any rate, the accounts which I have received from old shamans who have tried to tell me about their apprenticeship and their communion with the spirits (of which more later), made the definite impression on me that they themselves believed in it; and even shamans who have been baptized and have had explained to them by their priest and teachers that their ancient arts were nothing but lies and self-deceit, to me have explained the whole question by saying that the supernatural world in which they had formerly lived had not ceased to exist, but that they themselves through their Christian faith had turned their backs on it and given up intercourse with it.

In this connection I may quote what a former East Greenland shaman told me several years after he had been baptized:

“I had many helping spirits who often were very useful to me, especially when I was exposed to gales or storms; and not many dangers could threaten me, because I felt safe. When later on I made up my mind to be baptized, they revealed themselves to me and advised me not to; however, I did what I had decided to do. Now I have been a baptized man for several years, and my old helping spirits

have never visited me since, because I betrayed them by being baptized."

It would have been easier for that man to explain his former shaman seances as lies and deceit; but even long after his baptism we see that he thought that all he once had believed in still existed.

After his description of the shaman seance quoted above, Commander HOLM makes the following observation which again is of interest in this connection:

"Several of the men and half-grown boys were able to do shaman tricks, namely, produce the various noises, drum-dances, voices from the underworld; but while doing so they said it was only a game they played to pass the time away¹), in which everything proceeds naturally, whereas the spirits did it all for the angákoks."

This shows better than many words that the East Greenlanders were quite capable of estimating trickery and ventriloquism at their true value. The whole thing stood or fell with the holy inspiration, and both shamans and laymen believed in that.

The following will show how the shamans themselves regarded their apprenticeship and all that they learned and experienced in the course of it.

All who wished to become shamans had first to become disciples. Most began even as children, and in almost all cases they began by seeing a ghost or something supernatural; for if one did not begin in that manner, one could never become a shaman. Their qualifications varied; some acquired the knowledge easily, others had great difficulty. Some had to give it up entirely if they quite lacked the ability to see anything supernatural.

Most shaman apprentices were orphan children who went about feeling the loss of their mother. They never began of their own volition; some old shaman would notice such a boy and take pity on him, and say:

"You miss your mother; if you want to see her, look for her".

A boy who heard this then knew that he would have to go away from other people and try to see something supernatural, far away from human beings. If the people of the settlement noticed that the boy went out alone, they were never anxious about him, even if he remained away long. He might stay away two or three days; they knew he had become a shaman disciple, and he was never asked about anything when he returned.

A boy who had been invited to look for a ghost would walk inland one early morning; he would go so far inland that he could no longer see the ocean, and at last reach a place so far inland that no one else

¹) Characteristically enough, several shamans, even the "great" shamans, said the same thing to both HANS and PAUL EGEDE. H. O.

ever came there. There, among high mountains where there was a loud echo, he would cry out as loudly as he could. All day he would cry, but heard only his own voice. Evening came and he would return home without experiencing anything. Thus many days would go, still without hearing or seeing anything. Then at last came the day when he began to hear something that came after the echo of his own voice. Immediately he would shout in that direction with the full strength of his lungs, and then he would hear another voice, coming nearer and nearer. At last there came a human being, man or woman, with whom he would speak. If the stranger were a shaman he would allow the boy to touch him; then they parted. The following day he would go there again and summon him in the same manner. Three days on end he would do this, and then that person was his helping spirit.

The first spirit to meet him in this way was to be told that he was a shaman disciple. If the spirit was a shaman himself, he would invite him home to his house. There the boy would be his guest and the others in the house would try to give him food, but the spirit he had met would say: "He has not come here to stay with us, he must have nothing to eat." If he ate of the food of the spirits, he would not be able to get home again.

But he had to go on seeking in the same manner. The period of apprenticeship was sometimes as much as eight to nine years. One day, coming to a mountain cliff, he would begin to call up it, so that the echo answered. Suddenly the echo was silent, and a voice would be heard crying like an infant child; when the disciple heard it, he was to turn his back to the cliff and run away with all his might. He was not to look round, even if he heard footsteps behind him and a voice crying:

"*Uh—hu, uh—hu*, look at me!"

If he turned round he would see the child that was the voice of the cliff wall and he would not get it as a helping spirit. But if he did not turn round he would hear the spirit coming nearer and nearer and at last it would touch him. At once he would lose consciousness and fall down. He would come to himself again on hearing a voice crying: "*Kia-ka-ka, kia-ka-ka*". On opening his eyes he would see that it was his first helping spirit that had brought him to life again, running round and round him. Three times he was to go to the mountain wall and do exactly the same thing, and the infant then became his helping spirit.

Afterwards he would go to other places and seek for other helping spirits, and, if anything came to him, he had always to experience it three times. Inland giants and dwarfs and *Ingnerssuit* were often helping spirits.

The spirits accompanied him wherever he went and often led him through the air to distant places. A young man told me the following experience of his:

Once his helping spirits had come to him and suggested that they should take him out up to the north through the air. The spirits placed him in their midst, and all he felt was a faint wind sweeping over him. All day long they rushed through the air at great speed. Then they came in sight of land, a beautiful land, over which they flew. Many were the people they flew over, dead people. Afterwards they sat on the top of a smooth mountain; it looked as if it were of transparent calf-ice, and he laid his hands on it, but they did not become wet, and he tried to scratch it with his nails, but it left no marks. After a brief stay the helping spirits flew back with him.

The first time strange things happen to the disciple he is seized with fear. He soon becomes accustomed to it, however. The beings he met, the spirits with whom he often spoke and whose houses he often visited, could suddenly change themselves and turn into animals, ravens, sparrows, foxes and such like. They were animals in human shape.

When a shaman had reached that stage he would often go away from the settlement to some place where there was a lake, or the dried bed of a lake; the place had to be where the rays of the sun never reached. There he would lie on his back and rub a stone round and round (if a man, a black stone, whereas if the shaman was a woman it was a white one), and on the place where he rubbed the stone on the rock he had to place some small animal from the lake or from the ground; this he had to rub till it had quite disappeared. The shaman stone had to be held in the left hand. Many had to do this for days on end without seeing anything. It was usual to go to a place where shamans had done the same for generations.

One day such a man would hear a sound like that of a buzzing fly; the sound grew louder and louder and came nearer and nearer. Waves rose out in the lake; the water rose and fell along the banks, but out in the middle it rushed hither and thither, just as when a gust of wind suddenly blows over still water. A whirlpool rose out in the middle — just like the “navel of the lake”. When that happened one might expect to see something. The place where one sat began to rock and seemed to dip more and more towards the lake. The water out in the middle throw up great domes, as if the lake were ready to burst, and just when it calmed down for a moment, out came a large bear or a large dog from the depths. From left to right contrary to the path of the sun it turned slowly towards the disciple, who became so terrorstricken that he would try to flee, but found he was unable to move from the spot. He became powerless with terror at the sight of the huge animal turning slowly out in the lake and more and more towards him, while at the same time the ground dipped more and more in towards the bear. Then

all at once it threw itself into the lake in towards the shore and came out of the water; a lean monster, dog or bear, with short legs and a tremendous head, much too large for its body, with a long snout. Then it came ashore at the very spot where the disciple had first stopped and, following his tracks, went towards him, leaving deep footprints behind it, whether it trod on soft turf or on hard rock; a little way up on land it turned straight towards the disciple, approached him and came right up to him until at length it opened its jaws over his body; it seized him in its teeth and threw him up into the air, and when he came down again it leaped at him, caught him in its jaws and threw him into the air again; it did this three times. When for the fourth time it took him in its jaws he thought he was to be thrown up again, but it did not; instead, it began to eat him, and thereafter he lost consciousness. He never knew how long he had been in that state, and when at last he came to himself, he heard a voice repeating one word again and again: *kikiákiágagá—kikiákiágagá*; it was his helping spirits trying to bring him back to life again. When he had returned to his senses he felt cold, which was not strange, for there he lay on the ground stark naked, and the spirit beast he had met was gone. Shivering with cold he got up and began to run homewards, but sore in every limb, and tired. His strength slowly returned, and while running he thought: If I go home stark naked, what shall I say? People will find out what I am doing. But as he ran he was seized with a terrible fear, for he caught sight of a being, a being which without legs came rushing before him across his path. He tried to flee, but this being with no legs fell right in front of him, and then he discovered it was his own skin coat that had become alive and now collapsed when it reached him. He drew it on and ran homewards, but again he was seized with fear, for across his path he saw a man's legs running towards him without a body; he was about to flee from them when the legs fell down and he discovered they were his own trousers with the kamiks put inside the legs; so he calmly drew them on and went home. When he got there he said nothing of what he had gone through, perhaps purposely, or perhaps because he had so to say forgotten what had occurred, for that might happen too. Three times he visited the troll-animal and allowed himself to be eaten, and after that it was his helping spirit.

It is said that one shaman disciple who allowed himself to be eaten died of it, and his helping spirits were unable to call him to life again. There were also those who did not rub a stone against a rock, but were content to throw stones into the lake until the spirit beast appeared and ate them.

When a disciple had been eaten by the spirit bear, the time had arrived for him to appear before his fellow men as a shaman; this,

however, did not take place all at once, for he would practise out among the mountains for a time, where there were no people, the method being as follows: he went up into the country where no people were, and there he began to play; it happened that a disciple who had heard that a dead man could come out of his grave, was seized with a desire to see whether this really was the case. He began to rub a stone round and round, now and then touching the cover stone of the grave; he continued to rub his stone round at such a grave, and then went to another grave, where he was more successful; scarcely had he begun to rub his stone round when he heard a sound coming from far away, a growling sound which seemed to come from the bowels of the earth; then the flat cover stone of the grave began to move until at last it slid to one side, and the dead man came out of his grave with his hood drawn over his head, making a sound like a little child: *ungá—ungá*. At that moment the disciple was as if rooted to the spot and could not move. The dead man rose slowly and got out of the grave. The disciple then felt very faint all over his body, for the dead man clung to his knees, and when it touched his head he lost consciousness, whereafter he came to himself again exactly in the same manner as when he was eaten by the monster.

"I had this power of calling lifeless things to me because as a shaman disciple I had once wished to see a dead relative. For those who have seen the dead rise out of the lake receive the power not only to summon people who are dead but also to get hold of lifeless things which otherwise they would miss."

"But", concluded the man, "I warned my brother against saying anything about it after our return home."

"Another time I was out walking along by the shore. I had then just bought myself a gun. Some distance away from our settlement I caught sight of a female eider-duck swimming near the edge of the water. The wind was blowing off the shore; I crawled close and shot the bird; I hit it and was very pleased, for it was the first thing I had ever hit with a gun; but alas, the wind was blowing hard and blew the bird from the shore, farther and farther away, till at last I lost sight of it altogether. At this I became greatly annoyed; almost in a state of indignation I laid myself on my back, with my head right out to the water's edge, my long hair being right in the water, and I concentrated all my will and all my powers, saying: Come in here, come in here. Some time passed, and suddenly the eider-duck came in sight again; it had laid its head in under one wing, and it now had such a speed, against wind and current, that the water almost spurted about it. It kept up this speed till it came close to the side of my head, and then I seized it."

In every possible way a shaman disciple practised the singing of spirit songs. When singing out on their wanderings away from the houses they often used an ordinary willow twig for a drum and another twig for a stick, and it is said that the spirits came to the help of these disciples and gave the twigs a sound as if it came from a real drum.

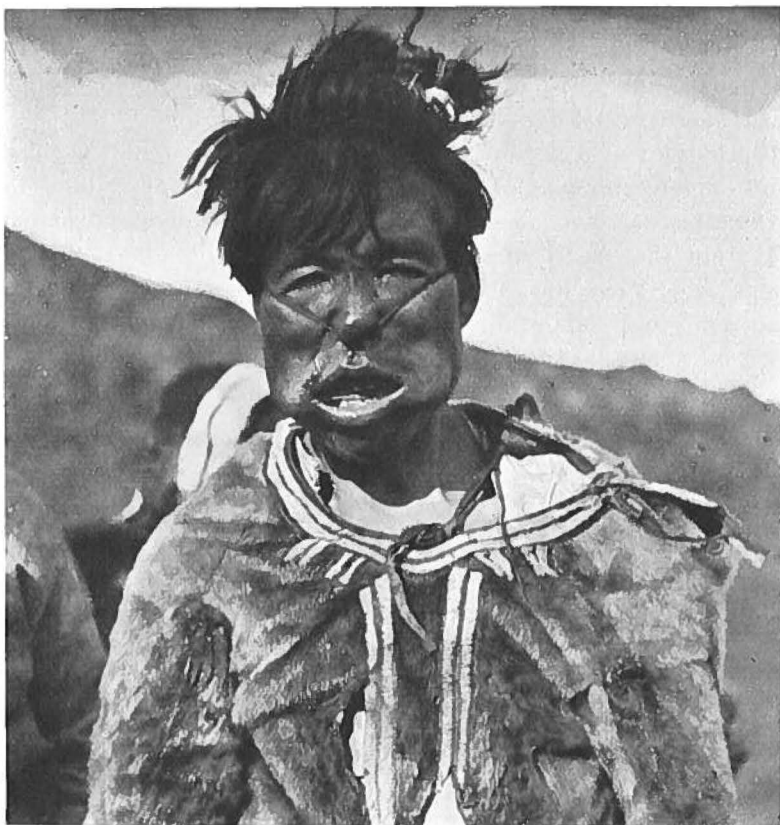


Fig. 14. "Masked" for the drum dance. Photo. 6th-7th Thule Exped.

A shaman who wished to be able to go down into the underworld had to look for a pile of stones running right into the sea, or a high mountain sloping straight into the sea with a large stone at the top. He had to climb up on to this stone, or on a similar stone in a pile of stones, and once there, he had to try to make it move backwards and forwards. It took a long time, for at first it would not move; but then it could be moved, rocked to and fro, more and more, until suddenly it shot downwards with the shaman disciple sitting on top of it; in that manner he rushed out into the sea, and at the moment of touching the water lost consciousness. Afterwards he was awakened in the same

manner as when the spirit bear ate him. He had to do this three times, and then during a seance he was able to travel down to the underworld.

When they had acquired all these powers they learned another great and remarkable art. It was called *silanigtalersarput*, which means working to obtain the great wisdom; this meant that at night, when the lamps in the houses were extinguished, they could see just as well as when all the lamps were burning; and not only could they see their fellow-beings, but they could see quite clearly through clothing and skin and flesh into their very innermost.

It was said of a person who had no special wisdom, i. e. one who did not understand magic and could not see into the hidden things, that his intestines had no horn; but if a person understood magic, the length from the breast up to the throat was quite dark. And so all shamans said: "The life of man is frail; to those who can see it is as if their souls were about to glide from their body all the time. It is no hard matter to do them harm by taking the soul from them. Human life is very very frail. So frail is it that one could deprive a man of his soul just for fun."

It will appear from the foregoing that a man chose to be a shaman for various reasons. Some because they longed for those who were dead, others because they wished to be revenged, others because they were afraid of their fellow-settlers, and others again because they wished to be able to do better in the struggle for food.

In the following is an account of how a man who became a shaman on account of fear of his fellow-settlers passed through his apprenticeship; it is given in his own words:

"I was still a boy when I began to train to be a shaman, the reason being that the people in the settlement often tried to scare me and make me afraid, or shame me and mock me; I wished to cease fearing the things of which I was afraid. My father had died before I had begun to remember; when I was a small boy my mother was one of the two wives of the man *Nórsít* (*qavseraq*: second wife). The man was cruel to my mother, and he tormented and mocked me in every way he could think of. I was most afraid when this man began to stab my mother in the thighs and abdomen with his knife; I thought he was going to kill her, and I, being only a little boy, was afraid he would begin to stab at me with his knife. Later this man drove my mother out of his house, and we went to the people at *Sermilik*.

I was unable to forget all the cruelty we had put up with, and this was the reason why I began to seek. I started out to seek a lake, one where the shore reached right up to the inland ice. I sought and sought,

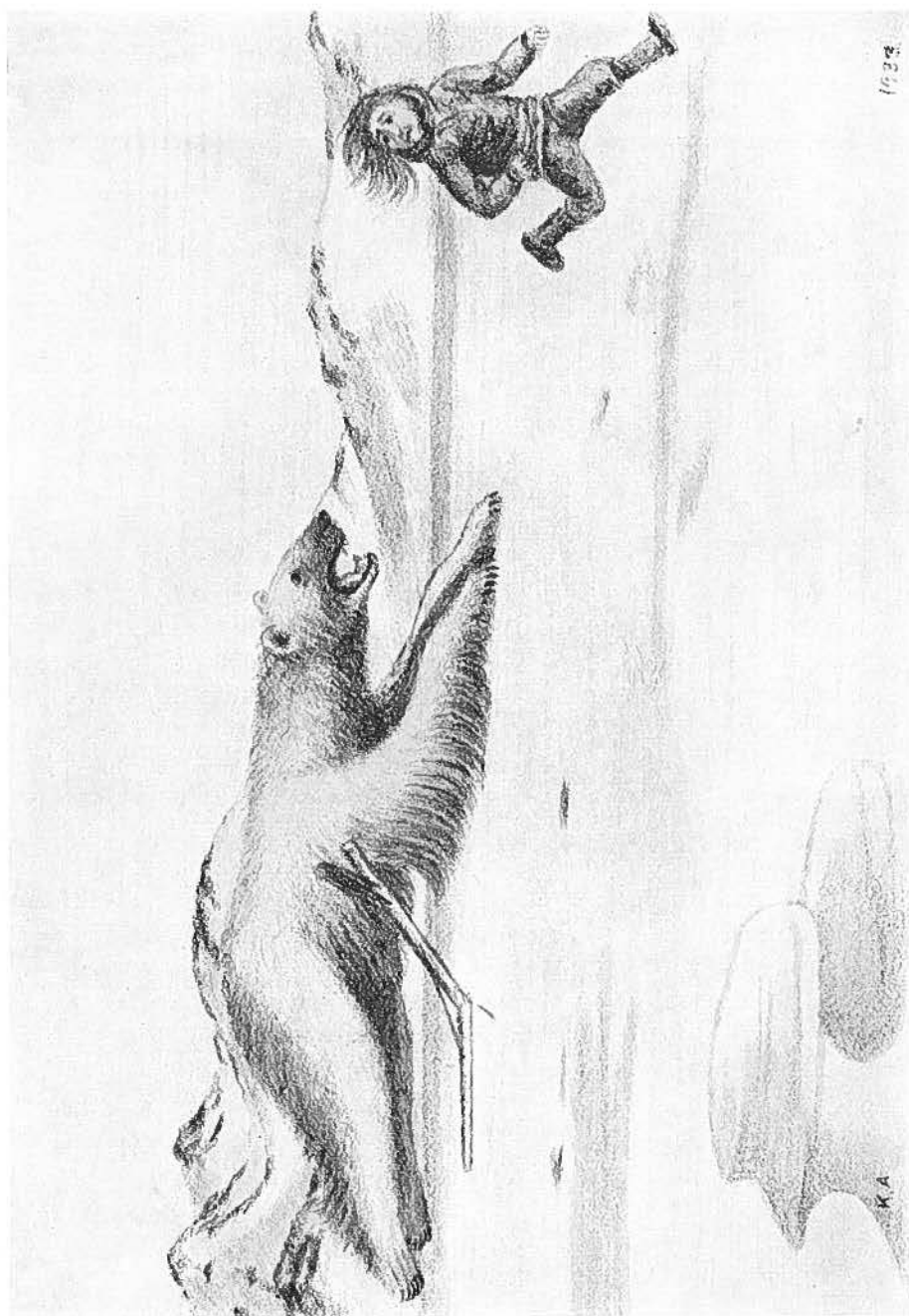


Fig. 15. A wounded troll-bear pursuing a man. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

and at length I found such a lake. I went to it and began to throw stones into it right opposite the glacier, and every time I threw a stone I cried out, and I threw the stones as quickly one after the other as I could, but I observed nothing unusual, and I thought to myself: It is not so strange that nothing happens. At last I became tired and was about to cease, for by then I was throwing stones only at long intervals; but just as I was leaving the place and threw one last stone, I discovered that the movement in the water caused by the stone persisted; at the place where the stone fell the water continued to be turbulent, and it was as if a small wave spread all over the lake and at last reached the shore. When I saw this I again began to throw stones, one large stone quickly after another, and shouting all the while. The eddies caused by the stones became greater and greater; I threw more stones when I began to hear a noise from up on the glacier, and out in the middle of the lake the water began to swirl and break, surf-like waves moved in towards the shore. Then suddenly a bear came up out of the lake; it stood straight up and down with its back to me; it was like a real bear, for it was white, but its legs were short and its snout wide and long. When it appeared I had tried to flee, but then the thought came to me that I had summoned this magic bear deliberately and of my own free will so I remained where I was. The bear turned slowly towards me and walked leisurely up out of the lake; I was in deadly fear and could not help moving very slowly; at last I controlled myself and stood quite still; it reached me with open jaws, but even before it bit me I lost consciousness. I awoke at the sound of a voice beside me saying over and over again: "Wake up, wake up, why don't you wake up!" I looked around and then saw that two little men were walking round about me; so I got up and started out for home. I was stark naked, and could not help thinking that everybody at the settlement would discover what I was doing if I came home in that manner; but I kept on walking, until suddenly I received a great shock; it was my skin coat, which fell at my side. A little later I was scared by something that came rushing after me; it was my trousers, and I pulled them on too, and at last made my way home fully clothed, thinking that when I got there I would have to tell everything I had gone through just the same; but when it came to the point I dared not tell anything, and so I kept the secret to myself.

The next day I again went to the lake, but I had scarcely thrown my first stone and uttered my first cry when the troll-bear appeared. This time I made no attempt at flight, but calmly allowed the bear to attack me. This happened three times.

Having gone through this experience with the troll-bear I began to meet people, strangers, *ingnerssuit*, *timersit*, and they became my

helping spirits. Now it would happen that I was not always alone, for one of my friends also wanted to be a shaman; so we went out together and saw the same things, but the helping spirit was always his who saw it first.

I shall now tell of what advantages I had of the troll-bear that ate me three times.

I had grown so big that I had a kayak; I also had a harpoon bladder, so that I could go real hunting together with the grown-ups. I lived in a tent together with the friend who was a shaman like myself. It happened one morning that we overslept ourselves, and when we awoke, all the men with whom we were to go hunting had gone. It was very fine weather and calm; there was plenty of open water, ice only here and there, the sun was already high in the sky and it was warm; we hurried to get ready, and instead of setting out after the others, straight out to sea, we sailed southwards. A good way from our camp we caught sight of a seal cub, which seemed not to be shy. We reached it and began to pursue it, but neither of us could get a chance of harpooning it, for whenever we as much as lifted the harpoon, it dived. During the pursuit we reached a small island; there it dived down, and though we waited long for it, it did not come up again. We paddled round the island, he one way, I the other, he on the outside, I on the inside. Behind the island there was another, smaller island, and in the channel between was a rock. The tide was going out and the rock had just appeared out of the water. Paddling through the channel I discovered to my surprise a human being sitting on the top of the rock, a live being, but stark naked and its body entirely red up over face and head, and there was no hair on the head at all. Having come up to it from behind there was nothing for me to do than to lift my harpoon for a throw; but scarcely had I done so when it sprang into the water with such violence as to send up spray around it. Just then my companion came from behind the island and we now began to chase it, but we were quite unable to catch up with it; we could see how the surface of the water rippled where it was coming up, but when we lifted our harpoons it was down again before we had time to throw. Then I made a tremendous effort when the water rippled again; I raised my harpoon and at the moment it appeared on the surface I harpooned it and threw out my bladder. At first it swam outwards, not so fast as before, because it had my harpoon bladder to draw; but then suddenly it turned and swam inwards towards a river. It did not come to the surface now, and we paddled with all our might. When we were almost near the shore one of my helping spirits, a fire spirit, joined us. My bladder came to the river and, after having stood still, pressed down under the water, it began to go up the river. We jumped quickly out of our kayaks and started

to run up along the river bank. I had my bailer with me, but my companion and the helping spirit had nothing in their hands; we did everything we could to catch the bladder, trying to draw it to us by means of the bailer, but just as we almost had it, it slipped from us again; at length we were far inland up the river, and it was not far to a lake into which we expected the thing would swim. This was the situation when I began to call on the bear which had eaten me; and it was not long before it appeared out on the lake, and we could see that a tremendous force was pulling at my harpoon bladder; I lunged out with my bailer, and this time it caught the harpoon line so that I could get hold of my bladder; I then began to haul on the line, and thus I drew what I had harpooned on to the bank; it was a human being, and I thrust my bailer in and killed it, whereafter my helping spirit got it. The spirit went over and blew into a cleft in the rock, when it widened out and I could see a camp down there; then he dropped the being we had killed down to them; it was something they liked to eat down there, he said, and that is how I caught a delicate morsel for my helping spirit.

A shaman can quite well move under the ground or through the air. Once when my friend and I were out walking we came to a river running out into the sea; we thought we would like to slide down through the river; we undressed, and my friend was the first to lie out in the river, on his stomach and with his head out towards the sea; scarcely had he done so when the river suddenly grew big and violent, and at great speed my friend glided down and was lost to sight in the sea. As he did not come up again, I did the same as he had done; and no sooner had I laid myself in the little, gently running brook than it became a tremendous cataract and carried me at great speed down to the sea. I rushed through darkness, then there was light again; when it became light I saw my friend standing on the shore waiting for me, and I went to him; there a new surprise awaited us, for it appeared that we were at a place far away from where we had been carried out by the stream."

All shamans had a *tórnárssuk*. A *tórnárssuk* had very long arms, reaching right down to the knees, the body was broad, the legs short. Some shamans asserted that their *tórnárssuk* was like an animal with many legs, a thing that was not like anything else; here is a story as told by a shaman:

"Once I was up in the country climbing a high mountain from which I would have a view over the land; I looked down from a place from which I could not see the beach, and from there I saw a rippling out on the water; I thought no more about it, for I imagined it to be a breaker; a little later when I looked again towards the same place I saw that the movement and the rippling were still there, so I descended to see

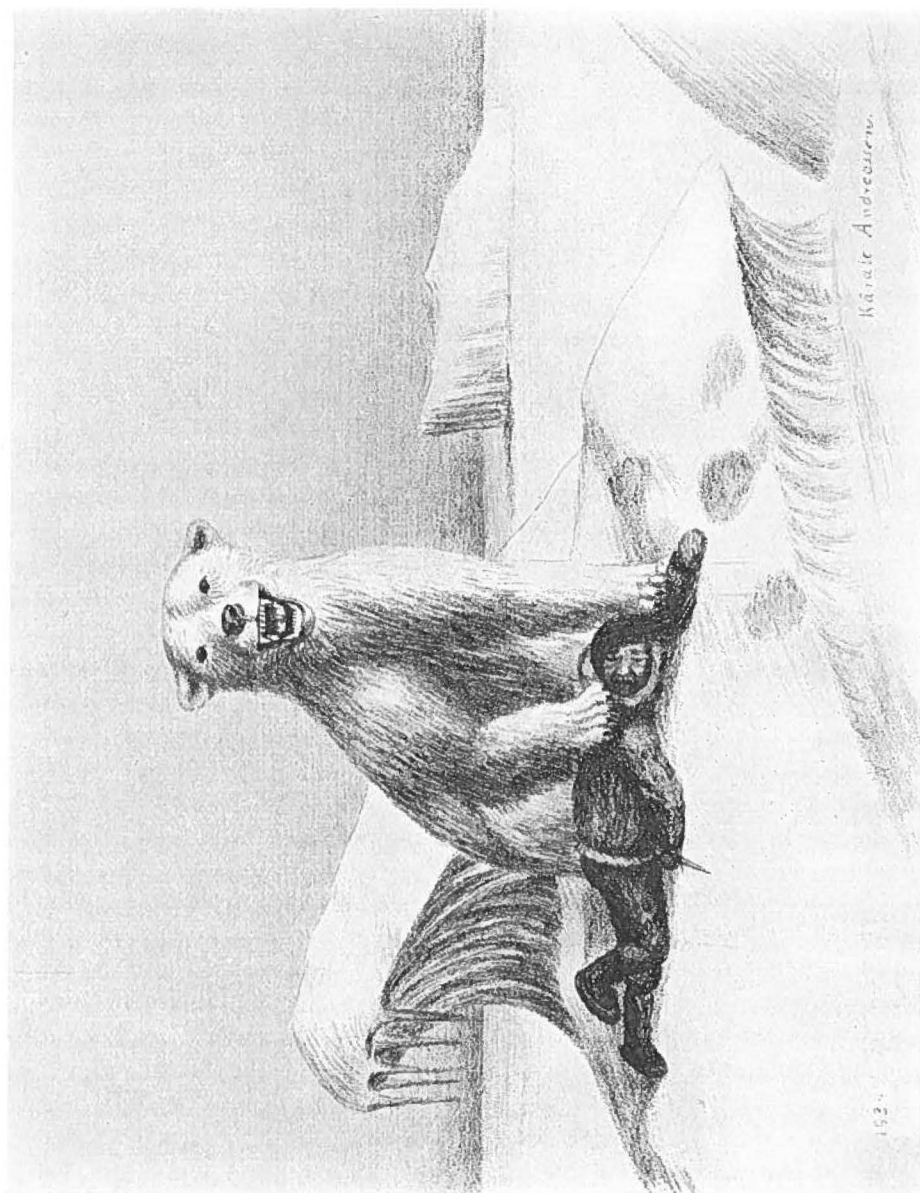


Fig. 16 A troll-bear about to »devour» an angákoq. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

what it could be; on getting down I saw a *tórnárssuk* sitting with its back to the beach; its body and head were all one, and it had something that looked like legs and arms. As I stood there regarding it, it turned its face towards me; after looking at me for a while it seemed to be about to rush away, and then I was almost on the point of leaping towards it without knowing why. At last it rushed southwards and I ran after it with all my might, and it became my helping spirit.



Fig. 17. The helping spirit *Tórnárssuk*. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN. From KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Myther og Sagn i Grønland I* (1921).

On two occasions my *tórnárssuk* has been useful to me. We had land at *Akorningnaq*. One winter there we used to go hunting out from the edge of the ice; my friend and I were hunting there, and we were about to paddle through a crack, but suddenly the ice began to move and the crack closed and smashed my kayak. My friend turned at my cry, and so violent was the collision between the field ice and the winter ice that the winter ice was broken up; but just then I heard *tórnárssuk* coming under the water and under the field ice, so that it stopped the movement of the ice. Now I tried to get out of the kayak, but had great difficulty in doing so, for my heel was caught in the broken kayak ribs. When at last I got loose and came up on the ice I could not walk, but had to crawl in order to get further in on the ice, and there I saw *tórnárssuk* swimming southwards. Scarcely had it gone when the current again set the ice in motion, this time smashing my kayak completely, whereas I was saved, having got out on to the ice.

Another time I was in my kayak and had harpooned a thin-haired esal, which I laid across the back of my kayak; while paddling the paddle suddenly slipped out of my hands and I capsized; then I felt something hard beside me against which I could get a purchase and raise myself up; and as I came up I saw that what had helped me was my *tórnárssuk*, which still lay below me; we looked into each other's eyes, then it swam away."

When a shaman disciple had got so far in his training that he had acquired a *tórnárssuk*, it would not be long before he had enemies who would attack him through a *tupilak*. It was said that it was never difficult to find out who had made the *tupilak*, if only one was shaman enough; for when one saw the *tupilak* one could also distinctly see the man who had made it. *tupilak*'s will be discussed elsewhere (page 159).

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As soon as a shaman disciple considered he was skilful enough, he could begin to make ready to stand before his people as a shaman. There was always a drum in the house. And then one winter evening, when sitting on his platform, he would suddenly fall backwards, making the sounds that usually accompany a seance. The sounds were to be like the trembling voice of a man talking in his sleep during a nightmare; then there would be a commotion among the people, who would cry one against the other: "Look, look, he has turned shaman!" Then people got busy in the house; some cleaned the stone floor, others hung skins before the gut-skin window and a curtain of water-tight skin before the door-way. Drum and drumstick were laid on the floor, the lamps were put out, and the man who was to invoke the spirits took up his position, and, when he had sat down, the last lamp was put out. There was now the stillness of death in the house; all that could be heard was the puffing and sighing of the shaman, who made sounds as if he were blowing through a tube, and a queer sound, as if he were beating his hands or clapping them; up on the platform the women and children remained quiet, only the grown-up men repeated incessantly: *kiá-ká-kô*, *kiá-ká-kô*. The whistling, hissing noises made by the shaman became louder and louder, and in between he shouted: *amô-amô*, or sometimes: *aji-já*, *aji-já*. The water-tight skin hanging in front of the door-way curled up and straightened out again with a dry, rumbling noise; the drum began to move up and down the floor; quicker and quicker was the movement and louder and louder the rumbling; at last it seemed to move with a deafening noise, and it raised itself into the air, moved up and down and round about itself, sometimes right up under the roof, sometimes right down on the floor. Then it returned to the shaman, worked its way up over his back, up on to his head, whirled round there, and then the shaman uttered a cry to show that he was coming

to himself again, that he could now see. He began to point round about him, uttering sounds that seemed to come from one seized with a growing terror. He saw a vision and called upon what he saw, made it come to him: a bear, a seal or perhaps a dead person, a ghost. The audience were pleased if it was a bear or a seal that he could see, or they became anxious and afraid if it were a dead person whom he called to him; the shaman cried: *amó-amó!* and then perhaps made the dead come into the house; one heard the dead move about inside. Then the shaman tried to lower himself, his soul, down into the ground; he uttered a long-drawn: *erk-erk!* with a sound that came from right inside, and, after doing that for some time, it was as if his voice became more and more distant; it seemed to come from far down below, until at last it was gone and no more sound was heard. Then it was the drum alone that sounded, and the skin curtain at the doorway; this went on for some time, until a voice was heard from far below, a voice rising from below towards the earth, uttering the same sound as when it sank: *erk-erk!* At length the voice had come right up, and now his helping spirit entered, stood still a while, and then began to speak while moving about the house. He stayed inside as long as the shaman was on his spirit flight, and left it only when the shaman was returning; he did this in the same manner as when he came, for his voice sank into the ground, sounding fainter and fainter as it went down. Just when the helping spirit reached the bottom under the ground the shaman was heard approaching, his voice could be heard coming near, and at last he was heard to come into the house. At that very moment the movement of the drum and the noise from the skin at the doorway lessened, their noise died away slowly, until the entire house was quiet. The shaman had then got all the information he needed, the lamps could be lighted, and the people were very eager to hear what he had learned, and where he had been.

There is a tale of how a well-known shaman, *Avggo* by name, became a seer; he was alive at the time of HOLM and GARDE's umiak expedition. His name, "he who cuts up" or "he who divides" was given him because he so often had new wives.

The story goes that while *Avggo* was still a little child, his father one day told him that he was to be a shaman, and his grandfather was to teach him. Little *Avggo* got to know this without actually understanding what it meant, and though he had not the slightest idea of what it was, he believed blindly in what his grandfather told him and acted accordingly.

One day he climbed a mountain behind the camp and began to play quite alone; while playing he suddenly heard a violent swish in

the air and, on looking round, received a blow on the shoulder so violent that he got the taste of blood in his mouth; it was a ghost that had hit him; then he fainted. He lay unconscious long, so long that he was quite exhausted when he came to himself again. He felt tired and bruised all over, and picked himself up with great effort; then he began to make his way home, weeping loudly the while. Then he thought to himself: Now if I come home crying like this, everybody will know what is the matter with me. So he ceased crying and got home without anyone noticing anything wrong; but from that day the ghost was his helping spirit.

Another time he was out playing as usual and by this time had of course forgotten he was a shaman disciple. He was playing with kayaks by a small lake, and, looking down into the water he discovered that there was another reflection besides his own; in astonishment he turned and found a playfellow standing by him, a little boy, no taller than himself. But on looking closer he found that the boy had a beard; it was not a boy at all, but a grown man, and that made him greatly afraid and want to run away. It was a mountain dwarf that had come to him; but the dwarf said to him: "Jou need not be afraid of me". And on hearing these words *Avggo* feared him no longer.

"Go with me", said the mountain dwarf, "up on that mountain there". They went up together, to the top of a small hill, and there the dwarf said: "Now you must train yourself to be a shaman, and I will help you; your body is so bright that your helping spirits will come to you of themselves; you must never be afraid of them, for if you fear them, they will fear you; now just you touch me, and the moment you touch me I shall always be your helping spirit." And *Avggo* touched the fell-troll and went home. On his way home he had already forgotten what had happened; for that is just like shamans, they soon forget what they have seen and only remember it when they have use for it; but from that day *Avggo* often met the mountain dwarf when he was out walking.

Having got these two helping spirits, his nose began to bleed one evening; the bleeding would not stop, his nose bled all next day and one more night, and at last day came, and all that day too it bled; in the evening he became unconscious owing to the loss of blood. His parents mourned over his death, and as they thought it a pity that the dead body should remain in the house, they carried him up to an old grave above their house, and there they buried him, building a grave of stones over him. It was early winter then; *Avggo* was quite conscious when they buried him, but he was unable to move a limb or to speak; he could only hear how his parents wept over him. All that night he lay in the old grave; next morning when daylight came he heard his

parents coming; they remained by the grave all day, weeping incessantly with sorrow at his death.

While *Avggo* lay in the grave he suddenly noticed that his anus expanded and became very large, then it became small again, and then large again, but he had no thought for what it might mean; a little later he caught sight of something else that was curious: above him he saw a kind of stairway with three steps, but the steps were so far apart that it was no use his thinking about crawling up them; but he lay all day long looking at these remarkable steps; his weeping parents did not return home till evening came again. All that night *Avggo* lay looking at his anus, and the remarkable steps; then towards morning he suddenly remembered what his father had once told him, and this was that when a human soul left the body, the body should keep an eye on its anus, for if the anus expanded the soul would try to crawl inside again; he had just recalled this when he heard his parents coming weeping to the grave. The day before it had hurt him to hear them weep, but now he no longer thought of it; his thoughts were occupied solely with the question of what he should do to become alive again. Then he also remembered that his father had said that a soul which had left a body could only get into the body again if it crawled up some steps such as those he could see. So he attempted to take the first step, and, in doing so, felt how he began to rise, saying: *hajè-hajè-hajè*. As soon as he had uttered this sound he found it very easy for him to get up the steps; when at the top he seemed to see his body before him, and he jumped straight into it through the anus, and then he shouted as loudly as he could to his parents, who were still standing by the grave, weeping: "Pull the stones off me!"

At first his parents would scarcely believe their own ears, but as the boy continued to call to them, they pulled the stones away, and out sprang *Avggo* from the grave, very much alive. Then they went home together, joyous and happy. But it is said that after *Avggo* had been both dead and buried, he acquired great power of seeing into things that were hidden to others. This experience had made him a great shaman.

Afterwards he often took his kayak out to sea in order to see things happen; he always caught a seal when he was out, and whenever he was alone he had some experience, saw something supernatural, and now he was never afraid of what he saw; and then he went through that which all who would be great shamans must go through; he was eaten three times by the troll-bear. Now he went about merely wishing that he had a fire-spirit.

Once when some people were going northwards by *umiaq* he went with them; there were several together, and when they turned home-

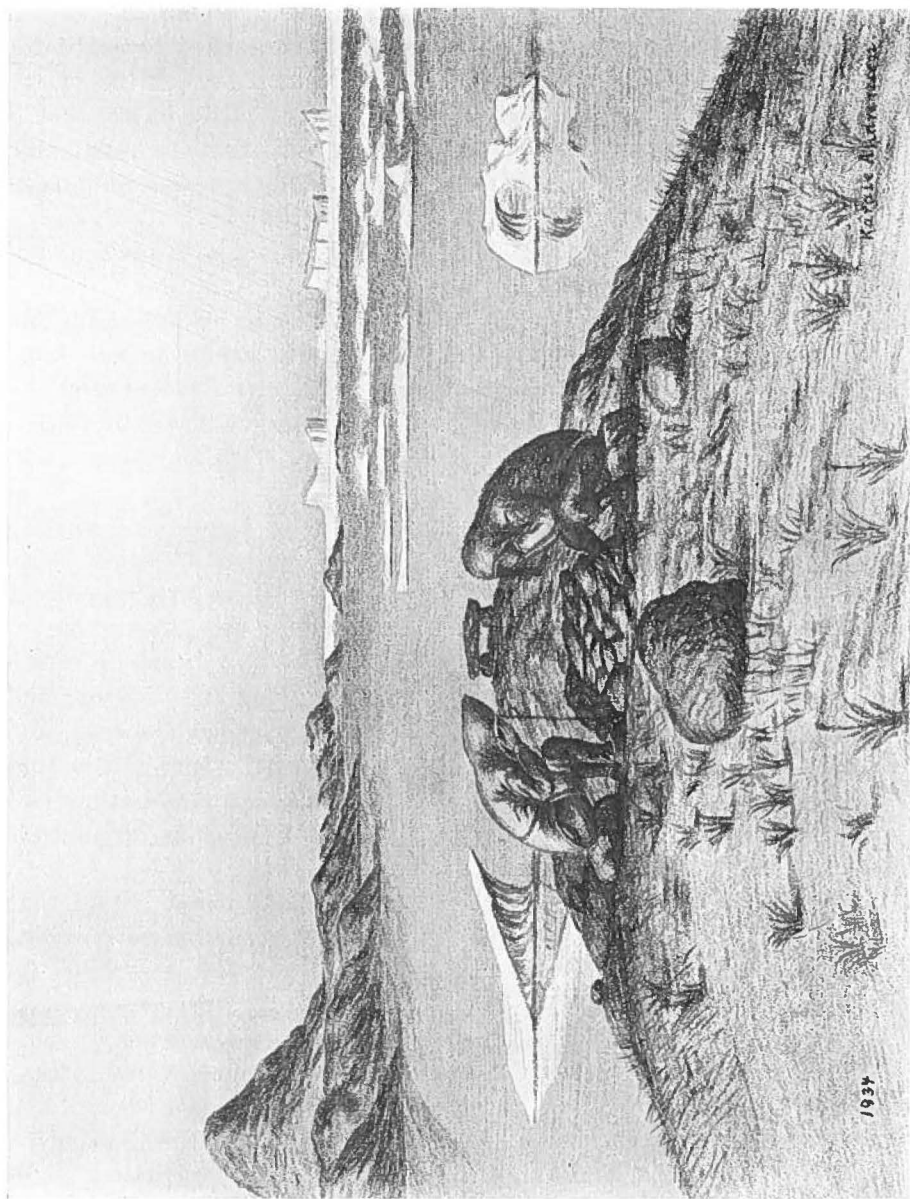


Fig. 18. Weeping at a grave. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

wards he arranged it so that he could be alone; he paddled along by the shore, and presently saw a kayak farther out to sea; he paddled out to it, but suddenly was overcome with fear; he did not recognize the kayaker, and he had never yet met a fire-spirit. He looked to see if the kayak was white, but could not see distinctly as it lay just below the sun; only when he had got alongside the stranger could he see that it really was a fire-spirit, and it backed water in order to lie to beside him. *Avggo* was unable to utter a word, and it was the stranger who spoke first: "I'm coming to you, because you are so bright!"

"What is your name"?, asked *Avggo*. "My name is *Pamialâq*, what is your's?". *Avggo* told him his name.

"Touch me", said *Pamialâq*; then he pointed to his line-stand and said: "You must touch that as well, then it will belong to you too." *Avggo* did so, and he saw that inside the coiled harpoon line was a falcon; it began to scream, suddenly began to grow, and, becoming a giant falcon, spread its wings and flew away. It was the fire-spirit's helping spirit, which had now become *Avggo's* too.

Some time afterwards *Avggo* journeyed in his kayak on a visit to the people at *Sermilik*, for he hoped to meet another fire-spirit there. He paddled through scattered ice and had got as far as *Mângunersiorfik* when he caught sight of two kayaks steering after him; they came up with him and then he discovered that they were two dwarfs from the fire-spirits; one was an old man, the other a young one; *Avggo* asked them their names. The old one answered: "I am called *Unarnaq*, and he there is my nephew and is called *Unarmerajik*"; then *Avggo* told them his name. *Unarnaq* then related a story about a *tupilak* they had caught and asked *Avggo* to touch it; he did so, and they became his helping spirits.

Avggo went through a long period of training, and it is said that he was particularly skilful at imitating the voices of the spirits when he gave seances.

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All shamans had a special drum which they used at seances; some of them even had two; those who had two always made them so that one had a small handle. *Avggo* too had two drums. Once when *Avggo* was to hold a seance they covered the doorway with the usual skin; it was the skin of a young saddleback, which no one but the shaman had to touch; this skin was dehaired. They also gave him the skin of a fjord seal to sit upon; this had the hair on, and it was bent over at the middle so that the flesh side was upwards; presumably thus was in order that it might make more noise when the shaman set it in motion.

Avggo also had a so-called *mavkortaq*, which was made of a piece of kamik-sole skin of such a shape that it would just cover the palm

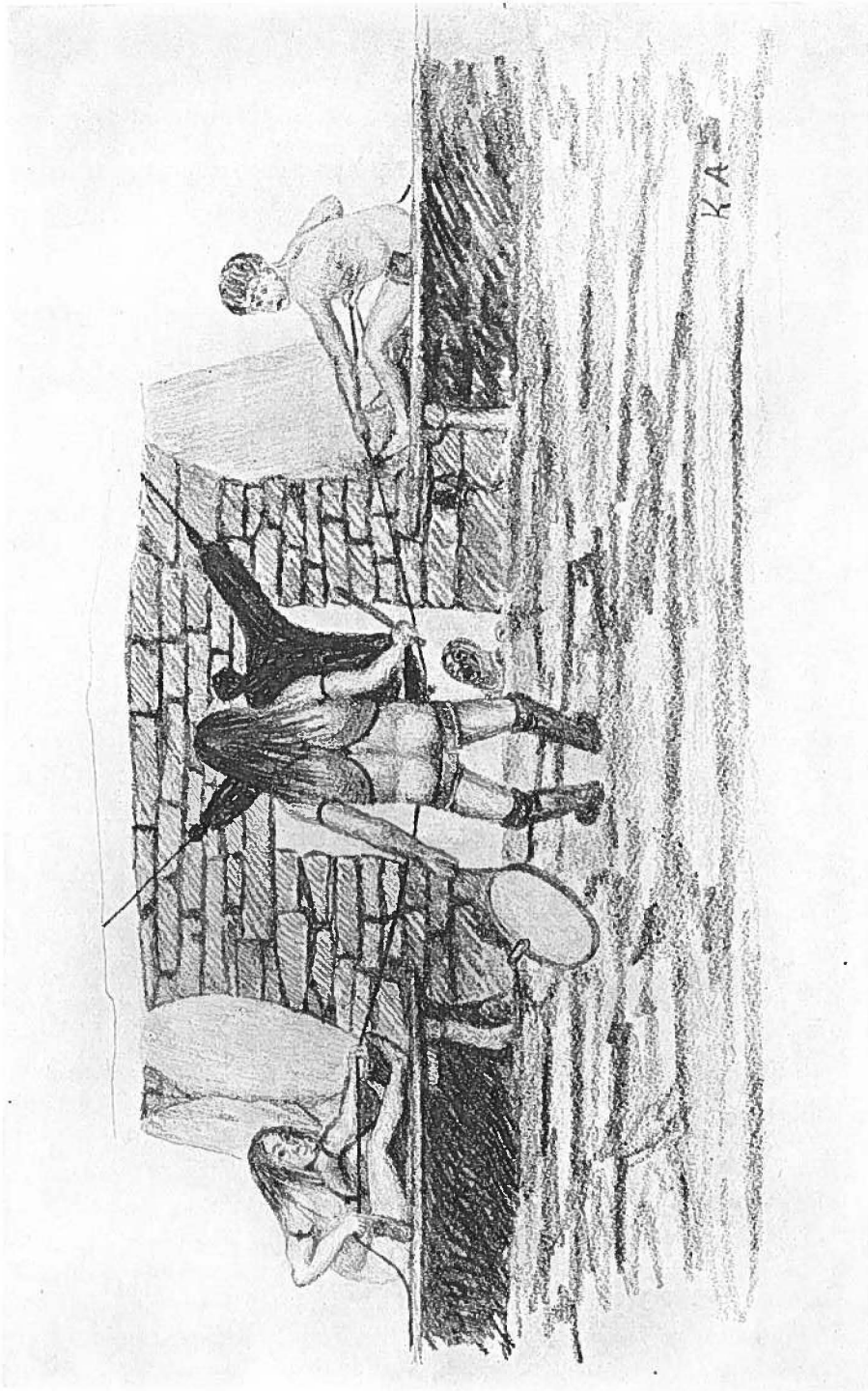


Fig. 19. Ready for a shaman seance in a house. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

of a hand; only great shamans were equipped with one of these; to it belonged a special drumstick of white wood which had not to be used for drum-dances. The belief was that this piece of sole-skin and the special drumstick were bright and inviting to the helping spirits, so that they came willingly when the shaman summoned them.—

Over the opening of the passage hung some small thongs, which were never to be removed from there; they were called *atuliutit*.

Agtâ (*Avssâ*) was to be bound above the doorway in such a manner that the thong was a little way in front of the fore flippers, while the hind flippers were to rest on the floor out towards the passage; the skin was to be so placed that the fleshy side faced the passage; sometimes the hind flippers were cut through. As soon as all the preparations were made, the drum skins were wetted, and then *Avgo* would step forward, carrying his *mavkortaq* and the white drumstick; he was entirely naked, without coat and trousers and kamiks, clad only in his *nâtit* (short under-trousers). He would sit on the floor at the doorway on the seal-skin, which was always to be placed so that the shoulder part of it faced the north; he sat down with bent legs in the same position as the women on the platform; then all the lamps were extinguished and all the men in the house would cry: *kiâ-kâ-kâkâ*; they continued to do so in the expectation that the shaman's seal-skins, that is the one on which he was sitting and the one hanging over the doorway, as well as his drum would begin to move; in a short time the shaman would begin to hiss: *Vê-ssê!*, at the same time striking the soleskin with his hand; all the men should then increase their cries of *kiâ-kâ-kâkâ*, and in between shout *singigparput*: "We are letting him down"; *vê-ssê*, hissed the shaman, and then, when the skin at the entrance began to move, the shaman would begin to shout with all his might: *Ajá-ja, ja-jâ, já-ja-ja*, when all at once the soleskin in his hand would begin making a soft sound, and a little while later the drum—yes, just listen—would begin to move, at first softly and weakly; and just when the drum began to move the shaman would begin to cry at the top of his voice: *Ajá-ja, ja-jâ, já-ja-ja*. He continued to beat the soleskin until the drum was moving vigorously, and then the men also ceased their calls. The shaman alone continued with his *Ajá-ja*, and one could hear the movements of the drum; then could be heard how the drum as if it were alive moved up over the shaman's back, striking him on the back with the handle, and the shaman moaned in pain as if a heavy object weighed on him. Three times one heard how the drum, hitting the shaman on the back with its handle, crept up and down him, and then the shaman would change to a voice which very slowly expressed wonder or pleasure, and then the people knew that he had begun to see visions. Scarcely had he become visionary when he began to point out all those

in the house who had broken taboos, and when he had finished that, he began to lower himself down under the ground, crying: *hâje-hâje-hâje*. One could hear how his voice became more and more distant, and after having gone right away, it began to return, this time crying: *hê-hê*. His sinking into the ground and rising again were repeated three times, and, at the end of the third time, his voice disappeared again, and when it returned this time the skin on which he was sitting began to move across the floor, and the curtain over the doorway was as if stuck fast, and the drum hopped on its handle. It did this in order to empty the shaman's stomach of what he had eaten. Then in came his phantom: *qimarratâ*; it was an *amô* or an *orngavâ* or an *aiimâq*, and these called only to themselves, called only themselves by name: *amô-aoa*. Only when one of these had entered would one of the helping spirits come; they would not come straight in, for they were to come in from below ground, crying: *hâjê-hâjê*; some cried: *hâ-hâ-hô-hû*, others: *hê-hût-hô-hût*; in this manner all his helping spirits came in, one after another. But these helping spirits did not arrive until the shaman was out on a spirit flight; and when he was returning, they slowly sank into the ground again. Then the shaman came back and now had his natural voice and could tell them of what he had seen on his spirit flight. He told of those who had been deprived of their souls and of those who were soul-thieves; or he spoke of a soul which he had returned to its place, or perhaps he would sing the song *unâ-ja*.

While this song was proceeding the drum and the skin curtain calmed down slowly, and then he extinguished the light that was burning inside his body, and which had enabled him to see things, with the words: *hêr-hêr-hêr*, *egeqaik*! These words he repeated three times, and then the lamps could be lighted.

Some held seances without being bound, others were bound; it was the latter who were to make a spirit flight.

Shamans who were called *qimarraterssortugssat* would also be bound as a rule. Though their bonds were tied very thoroughly, they were afterwards able to move about with great force and speed inside the house, beat their hands on the platform and do many other things which would not be thought possible. When the shaman had sunk into the ground the helping spirits came in; they mentioned their names, but spoke in a voice that was not like the voice of the shaman.

One day a shaman had been taken unawares with a kayak-mitten lying by his side, so that he could alter his voice when he was to represent his own helping spirits. But on the whole they were admired for their amazing skill at changing their voices; there were also people who had tried to catch the shaman in deception, by jumping out on

to the floor in order to feel the shaman, to find out if it really were he or one of his helping spirits; but on such an occasion it had been found that it was an entirely different man than the shaman who was on the floor, a bigger man, much broader, particularly once when it was supposed to be a *timerseg*, one of the inland dwellers who live farthest inland and who are considered to be the biggest.

People were also astonished at the ability of the drum to move, for the drum was always placed at a rather long distance from the shaman, and at any rate they could not understand how he could move it at that speed when he himself was pinioned behind. If there happened to be another drum near by, it would always be found broken to pieces and the skin torn. Often attempts had been made to cheat the shaman by laying the wrong drum down for him when it was dark and tying his own drum fast with a thong; but in such cases the first drum would not move, whereas the shaman's own drum became alive and tore at the thong to which it was tied, just like a leashed dog tearing at the thong that holds it.

It sometimes happened, too, that the helping spirit, when the shaman was least expecting it, wounded him in order to test his skill as a shaman. People say that a shaman would be lying unsuspecting, comfortable and happy, on the platform, when to everybody's astonishment he would suddenly jump up with a large wound in his back, abdomen or breast, with the blood pouring out of him; but he would quickly heal the wound on his abdomen by stroking over it with the palm of his hand, whereas if the wound were on his back or shoulder he would rub it against the wall and heal it that way. Then after drying the blood away he would show the wound to the others, and it would be healed so well that there was not so much as a scar left.—

In very ancient times, when there were many great shamans, they had a way of displaying their art; they would stick their lance into the ground with the point upwards, and then fall forward on the sharp lance point so that it pierced their body to such an extent that the point projected from the other side. Then when they withdrew the lance from the wound and merely breathed on it and stroked it with the hand, the wound was healed.

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Shamans who were about to undertake a journey through the air would begin in the same way as at an ordinary seance; but when their drum began to move, they suddenly rose up inside the house and fluttered about to find an outlet that was visible to the shaman. It was usually in one of the corners, or the top of a roof-post, which seemed to open to them so they could slip out into the sky. Then they would make a

flight to places where none of the other people had ever been, far far away; and it must have been far away, for though they went at great speed, they were sometimes away the whole night and did not come back till the day was just about to dawn. Perhaps they had found a soul that had been stolen, or they had gone through remarkable adventures, which they then related to the news-thirsty people. They could tell of strange lands, their people and the animals they hunted.—

If they wished to procure game for a settlement, they used to go and see the Mother of the Sea Beasts. The way to her was difficult and dangerous; it was a journey which only the most highly-trained shaman could undertake. In places the road to her was very narrow with deep precipices on both sides; sometimes they encountered vicious seals or other dangerous animals which chased them incessantly; so dangerous was the road that they always had to have their helping spirits with them. Having survived all these dangers the shaman arrived at the house of the great woman, and there it was that their real difficulties began; the road into the house was as sharp as a knife edge, and on both sides was deep sea with strong currents and heavy swells. The entrance-passage was not always open, but was in constant motion, opening and closing, and when the walls met, the whole house shivered. Inside the house the shaman could hear the furious woman scolding. There he would stand at a loss, not knowing what he should do; even the helping spirits did not know; but after some hesitation he let himself slide inwards just as the passage opened, and he heard the woman cry: "Who dares to come here, where he has no business to be; perhaps he thinks I will allow him to live!"

The shaman now balanced himself along the sharp edge with his helping spirits after him, and, on entering the house, saw the woman on her platform; she was all covered with dirt, and her hair was matted together with filth. The moment he entered she seized him, and they fought; she was very strong, and he would have been unable to manage had his helping spirits not come to his assistance. At length they got the better of her, and started to wash the squirming woman, afterwards combing her hair, which was a difficult task, for the hair was all entangled. Thus they worked with her and tried to soothe her, and they removed the dirt and straightened her hair. When this was done the woman became quite different; now her face was one big smile, and she said: "You are welcome, and with what can I pay you?"

On saying this she moved her lamp, and at once there poured out of it small beings with stiff arms and short hair; over by the doorway they became small birds, and the woman did not stop their flow until the shaman himself thought there were sufficient. Then she moved her lamp to the other side, and this time again a lot of beings flowed out

of it, some large and some small, some with spots, others without spots, and when they reached the doorway they turned into seals. Finally she released large numbers of naked beings, these were narwhals. She let them stream out till the shaman thought there were sufficient.

The shaman then started back home, and the return journey was just as easy as the outward journey had been difficult; all the hindrances he had had to overcome had disappeared at the moment the woman had been appeased.

After his return home the shaman told everything he had seen, but he gave strict instructions to all the hunters that on the first day they were to kill only one animal of each kind.

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Once at *Nórsit* a child was lost, and its parents grieved deeply; so the shaman from *Agdlerormiut* was sent for; he was to have the father's kayak paddle, which was edged with narwhal tusk. That evening the shaman came and held a seance in the usual manner. The very first evening he found out that the child's tracks bore inland. Next day he made a spirit flight with his helping spirits and found that the child had been stolen by an inland-dweller, took it from him and brought it back to its parents.

Once a child fell ill, and as they had a shaman at the settlement, he was asked to hold a seance. He found out that a neighbouring shaman had stolen the child's soul; it was no easy matter to fight against another shaman, but he succeeded, and the next evening, during the seance, they heard how the floor-stones shook; it was the child's soul being brought back.

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Not all sickness was due to soul-stealing; such sicknesses could be cured if only the person persisted with the diet suggested by the shaman.

Some sicknesses were the repercussions of witchcraft. That was the cause usually diagnosed if the sick person was one whom the shaman did not like. The cause of it was that a person had made a demon-animal to bring disaster on another; now, if it happened that the demon-animal was unsuccessful, it would turn against its own maker, who then suffered the death or the sickness intended for the victim. When a shaman had made a diagnosis of this kind, the sick person was never left in peace; all the neighbours kept on asking and asking what sort of magic he or she had practised, until the invalid confessed.

Tupilait were often pursued by means of seances. When a person became uneasy and often suffered from fear, he was said to be pursued by a *tupilak*, and a shaman had then to try and hunt this *tupilak*. He would hold two seances in the usual way, and cry: "There is a bear in sight down there; no, it is a man, no, a seal, no, a dog with a human head,

and it is coming near". The shaman was not afraid and summoned his helping spirits. They chased the *tupilak* as it approached; it was hunted with the shaman's sealing weapons, but the harpoon shattered in the air, though it became whole again merely at the shaman's touch. In vain the *tupilak* was pursued; it came nearer and nearer; now it was quite near, right by the house. If it got in, it would frighten all the inmates to death. The shaman invoked his helping spirits in a very stern voice; now the *tupilak* was just at the house, it was coming in through the passage; the shaman released his helping spirit the giant falcon, and it stopped the *tupilak* in the middle of the passage; one could hear its voice as it began to go out backwards: *éh-éh-éh!* Its voice sounded fainter and fainter as it was followed by the falcon.

Thus were *tupilaks* hunted, and the shaman would display his harpoon head, which would be thick with blubber or feathers from the demon animal.

When much snow was falling, or gales blew constantly, or there was thunder, the shaman was sent for in order to make the weather settle down again. It was thought to be the Moon Spirit that was angry and must be conciliated. The Moon Spirit became angry when people did not observe the taboos; this was one of the shaman's most important functions.

Note: Regarding this chapter, reference may be made to W. THALBITZER: *Eskimoernes kultiske Guddomme* (Kbh. 1926, in German in *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* vol. 26, Berlin 1928), and the same author's article "*Østgrønlands hedenske præster (angákut)*" in *Nord. Tidsskr. (Letterstedtska)* 1910, in English in the report of the 16th Americanist Congress at Vienna 1910. H. O.

XI. FROM CHRISTIAN POULSEN'S LIFE-STORY

In his diaries of the 6th Thule Expedition KNUD RASMUSSEN had made a number of notes of what CHRISTIAN POULSEN told him of his life. Clearly, it was the intention to collect this material into a whole picture of his life, and therefore the following is as much of it as can be reproduced in continuity; it also provides an illustration to what has been written above on shaman disciples.

CHRISTIAN POULSEN'S ordinary heathen name was *Autdárutá* (the *umiaq*), but he had other names as well, viz. *Ānguarârssuk* ("the little sweet one") and *Qitdakajak* ("The Glimmer").

He was born at *Iliarmiut* near *Umĕvik* in spring, "when they had moved out", which means in May. His father's name was *Nángajak*, and his mother's *Perujuatsiaq*; the rest of the family consisted of the brothers *Maegassaq* and *Negigssaróq*, and the sisters *Qagsangneq* and *Misargalak*; CHRISTIAN was the middle one of the flock.

All that he had been told of his birthplace was that there were many large bearded seals there.

His earliest recollection was of *Savssivik*, one of the points projecting into the sea at *Imaersivik*. He was then still in the *amaut* (baby bag), and of that he remembered that he seemed to come to consciousness through his having *pūngartarpoq'*ed—struck his head hard against his mother's back and knocked his teeth together, for his mother was running fast—fleeing from a grave where it had been said there were beads as grave-goods. His mother had found a large bead and was running as hard as she could for fear of the spirit of the grave. Then he knew no more till he came round again long afterwards at *Imaersivik*, where what he remembered was a big savage dog belonging to *Kitormórtoq*; it was so savage that it barked and ran the full length of its leash if a child merely came outside of the door.

After that he recollects nothing till he "came to himself" again at *Tiniteqissáq*. There he remembered an old woman, *Nukartaitsiaq*, because she used to boil "berries" (peas) in her pot, and then share them out among the people in the house: "We never got more than a handful,

and to us it was so nice that we merely licked the syrup and kept the berries, which we ate one by one when we lay down to rest in the evening."

It was at *Orqua* he became so big that he was able to remember everything.

To him this place was a good one to be in, with plenty of food. His father had no gun; he caught everything with his harpoon from the kayak, and the ice-harpoon from the winter ice out at the cracks, but always with good results, and CHRISTIAN also remembered that they always had plenty of *pórutsit*—blubber-bags with crowberries, *tugdlerínat* (rosewort) and angelica, crushed and pickled in the blubber. They also ate *qajulát* with great relish. It was made by boiling seal blood, which became as stiff as porridge, and then it was stirred and thinned with rancid blubber—"lovely!"

There they also ate much splendid rotten meat. There were bearded seals, which were stored away, often in rock clefts with several together, the cleft being entirely blocked up. The whole seals were collected in the late summer season—*panernarungnaertarángat*, i. e. when meat could no longer be dried, but not so late but that the whole seals became a little decomposed. The odorous flesh nearest the blubber was fine; and the blood *pugsutsuinángorpoq'*ed, that is to say it became acid and it was put in a *niutsivik*—a wooden tray. To this raw blood they ate seaweed, the leaves of wrack, *nutsugkat*, as well as another variety, *eqétit*. The latter, however, was not eaten raw, but boiled together with seal meat.

The seaweed was merely washed in fresh water—*nutsugkat tamuákávdlugit*, i. e. the mouth was filled with seaweed leaves and then with the acid, fermented blood, and the two eaten together—umh! umh!

When they had no blood the seaweed could be dipped in boiling seal-meat soup—"scald it in lovely blubber-melting fat soup"—and then eat it alone as it was.

Were mussels also to be had, they were eaten boiled or raw—they were called *úkusiait* at *Angmagssalik*.

naulárnat (or *perqigtat*), a large variety of shrimp, was also eaten boiled or raw—sometimes they scratched the corners of one's mouth.

óqaukat or *siutergut*, a kind of snail in a shell, *auvdínait*, also a kind of snail, smaller than the others but with a hard shell; and *nalukátat*, sea-urchins, not so common as the others, were eaten raw with relish.

Of the fishes they ate there were *najugtút* (i. e. *nagssugtút*, the very horny ones), sea-scorpions, and *upersíjat*, i. e. *úvárgat*, a kind of small tom-cod only two fingers long.

Of fowls there were gulls, especially while they were young; they were caught with a fish-hook. There were eider-ducks—*ugpateqortút*,

i. e. "those with the thick thighs", which were caught with the bird-dart in moulting time when they could not fly; and black guillemots—*qúparmiut*, i. e. "the cleft dwellers"—which were taken on the nest; or fat young ones, taken when they were fledged—"delicious fat morsels". Finally, there were *nuerniagkat*, i. e. those which are caught with the bird-dart (BRÜNNICH's guillemot). These were caught especially in autumn in large numbers; on the first day they were hunted the entire catch had to be put in *iliverquik*, i. e. away in store—*narrutsangniale-qingmatagôq*, i. e. because people said they were often much enraged.

There were eider-duck eggs in enormous numbers, but they were taboo to CHRISTIAN, for an elder brother of his had died when very young, and therefore he was not allowed to eat insides—and eggs were looked upon as insides.

They also killed bears, mostly in winter when the ice had formed. Foxes, blue and white, were caught in stone traps. Men used them for caps, women wore them round their necks when gathering berries in winter—*mamartuliautit*: "tasty food", which were plucked by scraping them loose with the fingers and then gathering them together; when the snow blew away the berries lay exposed and were then easy to pluck or scrape; one could easily fill a man's pair of trousers with them—both legs.—

CHRISTIAN's family remained at *Orqua* winter after winter, spending the summer at *Qeqertarssuaq* not far from *Igdlutuarssuit*.

There they dried the meat of bladdernose, bearded seal and fjord seal, though the meat of the latter could also be dried near to *Orqua*, from seals taken on the ice in spring.

Though they had no firearms they did not go hungry; CHRISTIAN did not remember this happening as long as his father was alive. He died in the second year after CHRISTIAN had got a kayak; he became infected during an epidemic of bad colds, brought there by people coming from a trading journey to the west coast.—

Then CHRISTIAN said:

"One summer we were at our spring hunting near to *Qeqertarssuaq*, and my father's cousin *Ujarnik* came to tell us that white men were coming—they called the leader *sákutôq*. Most of the men were out in their kayaks and those left at home were almost all women and children.

At that time we were afraid of white men, because we were told they were dangerous and fearful, and sometimes fought among themselves and killed one another.

"O, the dangerous ones! the women cried.

"No", said *Ujarnik*, "we have travelled together with them from *Anoritôq* (where they had wintered after a trade-trip), and they are

friendly and good people. There were two umiaqs, and the helmsman on one of them was Hansêraq.

"We were very excited, and at last the umiaqs came, accompanied by *Umêrineq* among others, a famous great hunter and strong man. They came with a red *ergalissoq* (flag); I thought it was very pretty, but the women especially—who are overjoyed at anything red—cried aloud and thought it would be lovely for a *qârut*, i. e. head-cloth.

"The boats did not stay overnight. They moored for a short time only; the white men climbed a mountain in order to look round, and then they sailed away.

"It was beautiful, clear weather and scattered ice, so they hastened on, for they said they wanted to winter higher up.

"It was on that occasion I obtained my first iron knife from *Ujarnik*.

"The following year they came again and remained one day. Now we were quite familiar with them and played round their tent. *Sákutôq* gave nails to all the boys—alas, I have often thought of that, for I was not there, and got nothing. O, how I envied the others their nails, which they made into heads for their toy harpoons.

"I suppose at that time I was of about the age at which boys on the west coast were confirmed. The following year I got my first kayak."—

CHRISTIAN's mother also received a special present from HOLM's oarswomen. She had softened a spotted seal skin for him, and in return was given sewing needles and some sweets. CHRISTIAN received one, but when he had had it in his mouth a while he became nauseated by its sweetness, spat it out into his hand and threw it against a cliff so that it was smashed—without so much as "looking after it", so little did he care for it.

It was fine, having a kayak. It was as if it no longer was fun to play. "I was now to go out and work with the grown-ups, but first I had to practise. Often I had to be content with a small lake, where nothing could happen to me, but I wanted to go out on the sea, and when mother forbade that, I would often weep.

No seals! My first I got the following winter on the ice, a big, smelling male seal—the ice was as flat as a plate, so I could drag it home on my sledge myself.

I had a *tuteriaq*—a skin to stand on—of bear-skin, an ordinary ice-harpoon, and a seal-thong of five fathoms; we used the same kind of ice-hunting implements as the people at *Angmagssalik*.

Two years after I got my kayak my father died.—

Shaman disciple.

After his father's death he was seized with a feeling of great loneliness, saw himself as a poor orphan and altogether felt deserted.

He began to think about all the hidden forces of life—all those which one could use and possess if only he had been a shaman.

He felt he had the gift, for, although he had told nobody, he had already had visions.

The Moon Dog.

His first supernatural experience had been not when he was alone, but when together with the women of the houses. His father and two elder brothers were out on a visit, and he was alone with his mother and the others in the house, when suddenly, from the ground under the house, he heard a tremendous barking of a dog—the Moon Dog—*qíngartog*, i. e. angry and offended at something that was wrong.

The Moon, that stern supervisor of mankind's observance of usage and custom and old time-honoured taboos, used his dogs as messengers when anything was amiss. In this case it was found that his mother's trouser-skins were too old—the souls of seals did not like their skins to be used so long that they became too worn and old; they were to be renewed before they became nasty to look at. And this his mother had forgotten.

All those in the house shook with fear, CHRISTIAN not least. His mother seized her *ulo* and struck out in the air with it, cut through the air, as one did with spirits. But it did no good; for the dog was barking in the depths of the earth, and everybody in the house sweated with fear—until the kayaks came home. Then the barking ceased. His mother covered the old skin with oil from the waste-bowl of the lamp and threw it away.

The Crawling Infant.

While CHRISTIAN was still a boy he once got up early in the morning to go fishing. All the others in the tent were asleep except his father, who was sitting in his "work place" in the tent, just opposite his mother's lamp, working on his harpoon.

When CHRISTIAN got outside the gut-skin curtain of the tent he saw an infant—a wailing infant with long hair—crawling towards him, whimpering, and uncanny to look at. CHRISTIAN shrieked and ran back into the tent, and his father, who ran out, came too late—"the spirit" had already had time to sink into the ground; his father saw nothing.

The Dead from the Grave.

One day at *Orqua* he was up on a mountain which they used as a look-out place, when he saw a man get out of a grave. He gazed at him and then discovered that it was a *tarrájakajik*—a shadow spirit; the

moment it caught sight of him it slipped into the grave again. But CHRISTIAN, who was then a mere boy, ran home terrorstricken.

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These visions made him believe that he could get in touch with the supernatural.

The First Voluntary Encounter with a Spirit.

He now began to take long walks among the mountains. They were living on the island of *Kúk*, not far from *Orqua*, and it was summer. It was an island with tall and wild mountains.

He gathered *tugdlerúnat*—rosewort—as he went, and all the time kept a look out. He *wanted* to see something!

Suddenly he heard singing, distant singing, pleasant to the ear, by two men; he looked carefully, looked for them, but did not see them.

Next day he went out again. This time he saw two men—two spirits, but dressed like ordinary people. They came to him and said: “We would like to help you! We are sorry for you!”

These two became CHRISTIAN’s first helping spirits; they were *ingnerssuit*—inland dwellers.

CHRISTIAN then began in a small way to become a shaman, but said nothing about it to anybody. The following year they moved southwards and settled at a place where there lived an old shaman of high repute. He was stiff with rheumatism and could not carry his own kayak down to the water and up again, so CHRISTIAN helped him with it. At first the shaman’s wife helped, but CHRISTIAN was soon able to carry it alone, “*maqisermivdlugo*”—carrying it on his head.

The shaman was very grateful and one day said: “How shall I show you how glad I am for your help? May I let you *see* something?”

The old man quickly observed that this was just what CHRISTIAN did want, and one day took him into a fjord, where they landed close to a large cave near the inland ice. The old man then said he would make CHRISTIAN a great shaman, and told him to take notice of what was about to happen.

At his orders CHRISTIAN walked aside and concealed himself behind a stone. Soon there came a giant bear with bluish hair—*nápaisilat*, the spirit bear; it came swimming out from the fjord, clambered up on shore and made its way to the old man, whom it attacked and ate. Then it vomited him up again and swam away.

CHRISTIAN was terrified, and became still more so when he came to the cave and saw the old man lying groaning and in a bad way. By and by, however, his strength returned and they sailed home. On the way he confided to CHRISTIAN that he should go through the cure too if he wanted to be a real shaman; for every time he allowed himself to be

eaten alive by the monster, he acquired more power over his helping spirits—the strength of the spirit bear passed into him.

In the end CHRISTIAN had to consent, and some time later they sailed out together again; this time he was eaten by the spirit bear. He was almost mad with fear, but strangely enough it did not hurt until the monster bit his heart, when it certainly did hurt terribly.

But after that time he was visionary.

The first he met of supernatural things was an *ingnerssuaq* in its kayak. This was rather larger than an ordinary kayak, and the figure in it rather larger than a man. It had no nose and turned its head away as if ashamed every time CHRISTIAN looked at it.

At first CHRISTIAN thought of getting away, but took courage and stopped. The other paddled up to him and spoke. This, too, afterwards became his helping spirit.

One day some time later he was out at sea, hunting the seal. He had harpooned a bearded seal. Normally he was never afraid—did not know fear, he said—but on that day he was suddenly filled with fear. Then he saw two kayaks coming from behind *Ivnaq* off *Tâterait*. They came towards him and spoke to him. At the same time he heard talking up on *Ivnaq* (the brink); he gazed at the cliff and then saw the movement of an umiak in the water, then the drip of the water from the oars. Finally he closed his eyes tight—and then saw an umiak full of people rowing towards him with all their might. In the middle of the boat stood an *arnarquagssákajik*—a hag with wrinkled face and with hair so white that it looked like bear hair.

In the middle of the boat there was also a captive, who cried or sang: "You will soon be as I am. Though you would rather go with open eyes, you will soon be unable to move!"

"What's the matter with you?" screamed the hag.

"I am not afraid of you now", sang the other; "now when nothing can happen to me worse than what has happened."

By this time CHRISTIAN had become calmer; he remembered his helping spirits and called them.

They came, but lay dispirited round about the *umiak* and dare not attack.

Then CHRISTIAN invoked the helping spirit *Kisermârssuaq*: "the great lonely one", which lived on the tall island off *Auarqat*.

It came and said: "I will fight any one who attacks!"

The old hag cried furiously: "Look at him. A cry-baby, when he was little. It does seem as if he has grown into something!"

Now there was only one kayak between CHRISTIAN and the *umiak*, to which he had been taken, and the kayakman was a big *ingnerssuaq* who once had tried to steal him. He took the bearded seal which CHRI-

STIAN had caught and handed it with its line to the captive in the boat, who took it and then gave CHRISTIAN his line again with the harpoon head on it.

At this juncture the "great lonely one's" stupendous helping spirit began to gnash his teeth. It lay on the front of his kayak, and every time he lifted it, it opened an enormous mouth that cracked and chewed and crushed everything that came between the jaws.

With this black, shiny animal, which was unnameable, being neither fish nor bird, nothing but a toothed pair of jaws, "the great lonely one" dashed at the big kayakman who wanted to get CHRISTIAN lifted into the *umiag*. The jaws snapped like lightning at one of his arms—the man just escaped having his elbow smashed—and then great confusion arose.

They howled, screamed and fled, the old hag shouted to CHRISTIAN from the middle of the boat: "*qanortoq-orgioriartornerata tungá—maki-taginarnarajungna!*—I hope—whilst it goes with the wind—you may die!"

And then they all disappeared, just as suddenly as they had come, and "the great lonely one" sat in his kayak with the jaws in his hand, and laughed.

That same autumn CHRISTIAN *sargúmerpog*'ed, i. e. he revealed himself as a shaman, one evening when the children had been playing at shamans.

And in the capacity of shaman he acted

- 1) as a physician: if anyone was ill, he would rub a bead over the sick place. He had the bead on a piece of sinew thread and tried to blow the pain out through the hole in the bead. Thereafter it had to hang by its thread somewhere at the foot end of the platform for three days, and the sick person would then be well. But it did not always work!
- 2) as a seal-giver: in that he made his helping spirits the *ingnerssuit* chase the seals in towards the shore.
- 3) as a weather prophet; the helping spirits would arrange the weather as he wished it to be. But—sometimes it went well, sometimes it turned out all wrong!

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One of CHRISTIAN's last helping spirits was *Equngassog*—twist-mouth. His first meeting with him took place at *Iluileq*. There he saw a large kayak, and the person sitting in it was very broad-shouldered and powerful, but his mouth was all twisted. It was the Spirit of the Breakers, who always stayed out at the outermost skerries and called the swell *kanánárneq*: "that which comes from the outside". He cared only for sailing where the swell was as high as icebergs.



Fig. 20. CHRISTIAN POULSEN, the last of the south East Greenlanders, doing a drum dance. From Medd. om Grøn. Vol. 109. Nr. 2.

One day CHRISTIAN met *kitormôrtoq*: "the contrary one". This was an *ingnerssuaq*, who came smiling with a high swell through some large ice-hummocks.

CHRISTIAN became afraid and cried: *qangauna una qungujugkame qungujungnaqá?*—"When did that fellow smile, since he is smilin now?"

At this "the contrary one" became so furious that in one single evil wish he slackened all CHRISTIAN'S arm muscles so that he was unable to row home.

What was he to do? However, at that very moment came *Egunga-ssoq* and *Kisermâq* and helped him. He laid himself a little behind Twist-mouth and caught hold of his kayak-thong, and although Twist-mouth rowed quite ordinarily, they dashed off at a foam-pace so furious-lashing that CHRISTIAN could hardly steer his kayak with his paddle.

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KNUD RASMUSSEN had met CHRISTIAN POULSEN as early as in 1904, after he had moved round to the west coast not long before and had been baptised.

Among KNUD RASMUSSEN's notes from that time there is the following, with the heading:

Christian's Faith.

This "converted" CHRISTIAN is still a full-blooded heathen, that is to say he calls himself a CHRISTIAN because he voluntarily chose Christianity for paganism, because it gave him a greater guarantee. But notwithstanding this he is a heathen, because he still believes in the existence of everything in which he believed as a heathen. He has merely abandoned it, because it is hostile to Christianity. In other-words: he has not yet declared the heathen beliefs to be fraud, but looks upon them merely as something that is now forbidden—out of regard for the new faith. All the heathen mysteries, all the supernatural spirits that were his helpers as a shaman, still exist, but simply dare not, or will not reveal themselves to him because he has betrayed them to the Christians by telling about them—by his conversion.

XII. FROM PAGANISM TO CHRISTIANITY

There can be no doubt that the East Greenlanders who travelled round to the west coast for the purpose of receiving Christian instruction and of being baptized, were quite sincere in accepting the new faith. But KNUD RASMUSSEN, in his notes of his meeting with the baptized East Greenlanders at Cape Farewell in the late summer of 1904, has many examples of how difficult it must have been for them to tear themselves away from the ancient ideas and all their pagan past. Here is one that is very characteristic.

An unmarried woman of about forty years of age, *Nikoline* by name, whose heathen name was *Majivartariaq*, whom he asked to tell of her previous life over there on the east coast, at first was very unwilling to do so; nevertheless her tongue loosened after a while and she told him the narrative recorded below.

"Now I have been baptized, and since I became a Christian I have tried to forget everything that belonged to my heathen life—and now you want me to tell you about those old matters! No, I really have succeeded in forgetting them.

"It will never help me to anything good to talk about all that I have turned my back on. I was very fond of singing drum-songs, and so one day after I had been baptized I yielded to a sudden desire to sing one of the old songs. I did so, and afterwards I was never able to get it out of my head again. Even if my mouth were closed and my voice silent, the melody and the words whirled about in my head and would not leave me.

"Long after I was baptized an umiak came one day from the east coast on a trading journey; it was a shaman and his people. Shortly after their arrival the man began to sing shaman songs, and the women accompanying him joined in. When I heard it I ran away, because I felt how the old familiar melody gripped me—yes, evil has deep roots in one's mind; it takes much fighting to get it out!

"I had run away, as I said, in order not to hear more—for I had long been baptized and now felt how my old kinsmen's customs nevertheless were taking hold of me.

"But then some one came and said that the man was only singing drum songs, and that I surely could bear to listen — and so I let myself be persuaded and went back again. But what was happening? Was I dreaming? I almost thought I was home again—that I was still a heathen and had never been baptized. And that was just because I heard the old familiar songs again. So hard is it to fight evil!"

It was really pathetic to see what power the old life still had over her. Whenever she happened to talk about drum-songs it was a physical effort for her to condemn them as sinful, as something that was no longer proper for her as a Christian.

"Now I have acquired other habits and new thoughts—and that puts greater joy into life that I could expect to have in former times. Now I know, for instance, that I shall see my dead relations again some day, and that thought is so consoling that I prefer to forget all that happened before. Of all the dead I miss my sister most. Now she died a Christian, and sometimes I go to see her grave—and when I do so, I can still feel sobs in my throat.

"And here you come and want me to tell you about things which I have no wish to remember—to talk about such unworthy things.

"At first when I attended for baptismal instruction I was quite unable to understand anything of what they wanted to tell me; I could not even learn the letters.

"Then one day the priest asked me if I had formerly occupied myself with anything sinful; he thought that might be the reason why I could not learn, and he urged me to tell all about it if there was anything of that kind.

"Then first of all I thought of my fondness for drum-songs, *ivngerrutit*—and told him about it. I thought that was the worst I had ever done. But that did not do any good; I became no better at learning. So there must have been something else that was stopping me.

"Then I recalled that an old shaman, *Qánguatse*, had once tried to teach me the magic arts. I had forgotten all about that, as it was so long ago. And of course that was what was wrong with me.

"I told the priest everything. He was pleased that I put all that wickedness away from me—and from that day it was easy for me to understand all that was explained to me and to learn all that I had to learn.

"By the way I shall tell you about *Qánguatse*—it means nothing to me now, so I don't mind telling it.

"It was at *Igdlluarssuit* that *Inîjâ* and I were playing together in a large house which was empty. It was autumn, but the people were still living in tents. Inside the house was dark, and we played *tarrâjaq*—the shadow game.

"*tarrâjauvutit*—you are a shadow! we cried to each other, and then we rushed about in a scared fashion inside the house, skrieking and pushing each other.

"No one took any notice of us, and we were amusing ourselves mightily; we were just half-grown wenches, whom no one missed.

"What are you doing?" a voice asked suddenly in the darkness. We could hear by the voice that it was *Qánguatse*, the shaman.

"We are playing the shadow game', we answered.

"Foolishness!' he said, 'there is nothing really funny about mere games. No, shamanism—there's something in that. That is the only thing that is really funny.'

"I shuddered. 'What is he going to do?', I thought. And I became afraid, for even then in my thoughts I wanted to go to the west coast to the Christians.

"Come', he said, 'I shall teach you something funny'. And he took us into a corner, where it was quite dark.

"There he sat down and began to rub on a stone—to the left, of course, against the direction of the evil.

"At once we heard a curious humming and what seemed to be several voices all speaking together. It was his helping spirits coming to him. There was a buzzing as of bees round about, and we heard down on the floor—from far down under the ground—what sounded like a choir singing shaman songs. It sounded pretty, almost like hymn-singing in the church here.

"I shivered with fear. His helping spirits could be heard buzzing and humming from the roof, from the walls and right down from the floor. It was strange, beyond our understanding.

"Now, here comes *Amârsinijôq*!' he said, and we felt a great commotion in the house. None of us said a word—I was trembling with fear and had a feeling as if my skin was being flayed off me, slowly, from my head downwards.

"Now he is in here' the shaman said. We were unable to utter a word, so frightened were we, nor dared we run away out through that long, dark hose.

Amârsinijôq was a large monster clad in skin of fjord-seals and with an open back, like a hole, and when it saw children walking about alone it stole them and put them into the hole in its back, as in an amaut. We could hear it inside the house, but it was so dark inside that we were unable to see it.

"Then *Qánguatse* ceased rubbing the stone, and the house became silent.

"'You see', he said, 'it is worth while learning tricks like these; it is different to fooling about with games. I was an orphan, just as you are, and have never had any real home among people. No one cared about me, and so I went for long walks alone in order to become a shaman. I can tell you, there are many queer beings living up in the fells and down by the sea below the beach—*timersit* and *ingnerssuit*—and strange monsters, which became my helping spirits.'

"'Come up into the mountains with me, and I shall teach you many things', he said to me.

"'We'll go to a dried-up lake, and when I rub my stone to the left, water will suddenly flow up out of the ground and fill the lake. At first the water will lie still and shiny without moving, and then dark shadows will rush over it and ripple it; then it will rise in high waves, and a monster that looks like a big dog will come up from the middle of the lake; it will begin to roar, attack me and eat me limb by limb. It will do the same with you. But it will gulp us up again just as we were before it ate us. Then we shall have become greater shamans than we were before. That monster has several times eaten me, so that I might become great in my art and power as a shaman.'

"'The monster is horrible to look at, but one has not to be afraid of it.'

"Now I knew that *Qánguatse* wanted me as his assistant and would train me. But I was much afraid of him and ran away and hid myself.

"I never became a shaman, but once I made a little attempt to do the tricks; but I did not succeed.

"Shamans are given presents, I thought to myself; if I went in for the art I would also receive presents—beads, I thought, for I did want some beads! But—I could not.

"Once I was out gathering berries when I heard a loud growl from a stone cairn above me. I stood still and listened—it came again from up there. Then I ran away down to the people and told what I had heard. Many went up to examine the stones, but found nothing.

"Very possibly, I thought, it was a helping spirit who wanted to communicate with me—but I wasted the opportunity again because I was afraid—for it was quite clear it had growled to me.

"But all this is long, long ago. And now that I am baptized my thoughts must not occupy themselves with things of that kind."

XIII. AMULETS

Many precautions were taken among the East Greenlanders with the object of warding off death.

Sickness, and all bodily pains, were thought to come from other people who had brought them on by means of magic and sorcery and the soul-stealing connected with them. All magic was practised in secret, which made the danger greater and aggravated the feeling of insecurity.

This being the case, the object was to seek protection from attacks of that kind, for it was thought that all kinds of evil came directly or indirectly from man himself. For this reason it was necessary to be protected by *árnússat* (sing. *árnuaq*), amulets, as many as possible for preference, as each one had its own significance and purpose.

The objects that were found and on the advice of the old people used as amulets were very carefully kept and preserved, for no one had any doubt that they kept away disease and all kinds of evil; they were convinced that as long as they possessed the particular object they were invulnerable.

It was not only their own lives they protected, but those of their children too, their lives and their fates as hunters and bread-winners, their skill in throwing the harpoon; indeed, there were amulets to protect their dogs, so that they themselves should never be without dogs.

Married women had their amulets, as had widows and women who had been cast aside by their husbands; but their amulets were intended especially for the protection of their children.

If a woman had had a child that had died early, or perhaps a still-born child, there were special amulets for protecting those children which arrived after the dead ones. These amulets were for the purpose of scaring sickness and pain away from the child.

The amulets were of every possible variety: pieces of wood or bone, stones, dirt (*minguk*), *pujaq*, seaweed, twigs from a raven's nest, beads, thimble-holders, the nail of a fourth finger (*mikileraq*, the ring-finger).

Thus to all appearances an amulet was a modest object, in itself nothing, but in which its owner believed and hoped, and which he cherished and concealed; the method of preserving amulets varied; some tied their's to a cord and placed them inside on their body, where they would be kept for life; others were kept in the house, usually in the place reserved for the one owning the amulet; but there were amulets in tents, in clothing, in kayaks, in umiaks, in hunting implements, and so on.

Homicide amulets.

These are the amulets of a man who has killed another.

If one came into the house of an elderly hunter who was at home and in his house-costume, i. e. naked down to the waist, it would be seen that he was wearing a pair of skin braces over his naked body, the so-called *qigssut*; they were of water-tight skin and very narrow; at the front they were joined across the breast, at the back up under the shoulder blades, where there were some pieces of skin, four-sided and stitched double; if these bulged out in the middle, it was almost certain that they contained the nails of a man's fourth fingers.

These nails were cut from the fingers of a man whom the amulet-wearer had killed; they were thought to ward off revenge. There was always a fear of revenge after a killing, that which was feared most being the dead man's soul; for that reason the dead man's body was cut up and scattered about in many different places, as described elsewhere.

Sometimes, however, it was thought sufficient to cut through the joints without dividing the body; it was in such cases that the nails of the fourth fingers were taken and carried as an amulet.

The explanation of this custom was that when a child was born, and it was to be given a name, the name was spoken while holding on to the fourth finger. Now if one took a murdered man's fourth-finger nails, and his soul tried to find the killer, it would be unable to recognize him, for the first thing it saw was its own fourth-finger nails; it would then think that this was a man who had been called after him, so that the soul simply made its dwelling in its own killer without taking revenge. The belief was that a dead man's soul always came to live in the body of the child or the man who had been called after him.

The amulets placed on the skin braces were not all the same; there were many small wooden figures fastened to them, the wood of which they were made being twigs from ravens' nests; the following belief was attached to this:

Raven's Nest Amulets.

It is always difficult to discover a raven's nest, for as a rule it merges with its surroundings. Accordingly, a person wearing an amulet from

such a nest will not be seen or found by any shaman seeking him in order to steal his soul.

Some people had a lump of coagulated blubber in their amulet braces, *pujaq*. Kayaks were tightened with *pujaq*, and therefore it was believed that this amulet as it were laid itself round about its bearer, whereby the evil fate intended for the bearer could not get in to him.

These amulets were worn all through life.

They received them when children; a mother placed them on her child just after its birth, and, as it grew up, the straps were made longer and longer until it ceased growing. It was possible to see old men wearing amulet braces that were from 65 to 70 years old.

The following idea was also associated with twigs from a raven's nest:

If such an amulet were borne by a boy whose elder brother had died because his mother had no milk, though meat and all other kinds of food had been tried, it was his mother who had given him the amulet, for ravens eat all kinds of things without coming to any harm. One who wore such an amulet could accordingly eat anything and digest it.

It is said that a woman at *Sivinganârssungmiut*, who occupied the main platform in the house, gave birth to a boy. The boy was growing fat and big when suddenly the mother fell ill and gave no more milk. As there was no one else in the house nursing infants at the time, there was nothing to do but to give the child meat cut in thin slices; the consequence was that it became ill with diarrhoea, drooped, became thinner and thinner till it died. The parents sorrowed deeply. Later, when the woman was to have another child, the husband did everything to find an amulet; in his kayak he never went out to sea but along by the shore, examining all the cliffs he passed on the way; at last he found a raven's nest and with much difficulty secured some twigs from it. When the child was born these twigs were placed as amulets on the amulet-braces, and the boy had a good digestion all his life.

There was a really fine symbolism behind the following.

If one found a dwarf-willow standing upright, a piece of the stem should be cut off to make a doll, which was to be fastened to a boy's hood. The reason was that a straight willow of this kind had more vitality than one that crept along the ground, and an amulet would not only make the boy grow quickly but also give him a straight back, whereby he could go through life upright and fearless.—

Of children's amulets that were more common mention may be made of a piece of iron tied to the lamp-trimmer. If a child fell ill and its mother beat the air with this, the sickness would leave the child.

Hunting amulets.

Most amulets were for the purpose of making a man a lucky hunter. In the days when they had no guns, but only harpoons, many of the amulets were intended for making a man a good harpoon thrower, one who did not miss his mark.

One hunter gave his son a bracelet on his right wrist, and in the bracelet were some beads; these would not only make him a good harpooner but also one who never had a pain in his arm. Should pain come, it would immediately pass through the holes of the beads.

Another gave his son an amulet of the seaweed that is called *eqûtit*, which was rolled inside the head-skin of a seal. This amulet was called the cleaner of his throwing weapons: *sârqutautâ*, *ingiulîtâ* or *uvfautâ*, and was used in the following manner: If it happened that the one wearing the amulet was unlucky with his harpoon throwing, missed the seals he aimed at, his father should scrape his implements with his knife and then wipe all the bone parts of the harpoon: *igimâ*, *qautâ* and *napassortâ*, with the amulet; the seaweed was not to be taken out of the sealskin—the implements were merely to be stroked over with what projected from it.

When the new moon appeared for the first time, a father whose son had such an amulet was to stroke him with it over all the soft parts of his body; he would then have good hunting all that month.

In the same manner, the boy was to be stroked over the soft parts with the amulet whenever it was heard that people at a neighbouring settlement had caught a narwhal, walrus or bear; the boy would then succeed in catching one of these rare animals.

As an amulet for good aiming one boy had a snipe feather fastened to his harpoon. The idea was that just as a snipe always catches what it snaps at with its long bill, so would the hunter hit everything he aimed at with his harpoon.

The snipe from which this feather was taken, however, had not to be killed with a stone or a bird-dart, only with a seal harpoon.—

Most hunting amulets, however, were placed in the kayak.

One amulet was a piece of seal liver wrapped in the head-skin of a seal; this was placed inside the kayak at the side of the *tunerssua*; it was never to be removed from there, and then the man would be a great hunter.

Tiny fish found in the water, seal fore-flippers, seal tail, or even a fulmar, were used as kayak amulets with the effect that one did not capsize so readily.

A very common kayak amulet was the root of a dandelion, *âssorutit*. This is a very prolific plant, so the man who had such an amulet would catch as many seals as the dandelion has seeds.

The mussel was a good amulet too, its effect being this: Suppose a man was a lucky hunter and made people envious. If one day after coming home with a catch he saw one of the men of the settlement doing something at his kayak, he would at once suspect that the man was casting an evil spell over it. As soon as the man had gone he would go to his kayak, take the mussel amulet from it, go to the other's kayak and there with the mussel scrape off some of the old blubber congealed on the right side of the kayak at the place where the seal tow-line was usually made fast; the blubber scraped off he would take to his own kayak and place it down in the man-hole. By doing this it was thought that he would continue to catch as many seals as before and in addition catch the seals which should have been caught by the man who tried to spoil his hunting.

One special kayak amulet was a bone, slightly curved and with a rounded point; fastened at the middle was a length of plaited sinew-thread. If a young hunter having such an amulet happened to be caught in an off-shore gale while in his kayak and was drifting out to sea, his mother would be able to draw him in to the shore by means of a magic song—figuratively haul him in by means of the seal bone, which gave a good grip and was furnished with good strong plaited sinew-thread.

One special amulet against sickness that might attack children was a wick-trimmer pointed with iron, or an *ulo* (woman's knife) or the like. Nor were these always children's amulets, for they were also used by adults; the explanation was that if the owner of such an amulet fell sick, he or she was to strike the air with it; the sickness or the evil would then become afraid and flee, and the person would become well again.

Haemorrhage Amulets.

A very common amulet was a plug of wood for stopping the harpoon wound in a seal: it stopped blood-spitting. If a person wearing such an amulet began to spit blood, the plug was placed in his mouth and he had to say: "In this way it is made to stop!" After that he would never again spit blood.

Amulets against Sorcery.

Wooden wound-plugs were also employed as amulets against magic and sorcery. When an enemy—or a sorcerer (*ilisitsog*)—attempted to work evil on one who had a wound-plug as an amulet, the plug would fly into the enemy's anus, with the result that he would get diarrhoea, which would last so long that he died of it.

Another amulet to protect life against sorcery was the following:

A splinter from a *kapússiut* (an object pushed in under the kayak-thong whereby the kayak-man could steady himself) which had belonged

to a man's father, and a piece of the hip-socket of a bearded seal, were sewn into a skin and fastened to the amulets worn on the body under the clothing. If pursued by an *ilisitsog*, the effect of the amulet was that the man's life would be hidden in the hollow of the hip-socket, so that he could not be killed.

The splinter of one's father's *kapüssiut* was to be placed under the pillow when one went to sleep, and also under the heads of the seals when they were being flensed. The effect of these measures was that no sorcery could prevent one from catching seals.

Sometimes a small piece of water-tight skin was used as a wrist-band, on which there were various small amulets intended to ensure long and strong life; among such objects were small tubular things found in the lungs of seals, these being first dried. The idea was that just as lungs cannot sink, a man wearing such an amulet would not sink if he fell into the water or capsized in his kayak.

One man who had an amulet of this kind said that it had helped him to such an extent that though he often fell into the water, his head never went under. Once when a boy he was walking with a girl who was older than he, and they both fell through the ice; as the girl was sinking he crawled in under her and in that way held her up till they worked their way to an ice-floe, on to which they clambered.

An amulet often worn in a skin bracelet consisted of bear sinews; a man wearing this would inherit the strength of the bear.

A doll made from the stem of a bush growing straight up and not along the ground would, if used as an amulet, give great growing power and the person would become tall.

Women's Amulets.

Women seldom wore amulets, the reason being that the life of a woman is not so precious as that of a man and therefore not so much in danger from the powers of darkness.

A common amulet used by women was an old piece of wood or bone sewn fast under the platform skin where they slept. The effect was that they had children who were not so easily overcome.

Another woman's amulet consisted of a small bone cut spirally and bent, and with a little handle at one end; that gave the woman the power to give birth to boys only.

If a woman died in childbirth, a child named after her had to have an amulet consisting of a small doll, or a small piece of blubber sewn into water-tight skin and placed on its wrist.

If a girl was named after a woman who had had no children, that is to say had been barren, a small piece of bone was fastened to the thong of her trousers. A woman with such an amulet would get children.

Others amulets.

A man who had killed another who had a shaman among his relatives would have special cause to fear vengeance from the shaman, who by his magic would be able to find out who the killer was. It was not enough for such a man to protect himself with a twig from a raven's nest; he should also have a shark-louse as an amulet. If now the avenger came, and the twig from the raven's nest had been unable to prevent him from finding the man, he would see the shark-louse in some fearful shape eating the man, and this would make him afraid and cause him to run away.

A man who went in fear of vengeance had to have a thimble-holder as his amulet. These thimble-holders consisted of three small pieces of bone bent upwards but gathered together at one end; thimbles of seal-skin were made fast to the three hook-shaped legs, and this amulet was placed in the door-curtain of the tent, inside a piece of water-tight skin. Then, when the avenger—whether it was the dead man's soul or his relative the shaman—tried to get into the tent, he would see nothing but a dense row of sharp hook-shaped, bones which would prevent him from coming in.

Vengeance could be taken in various ways, however. If the dead man's soul could not be revenged on the killer, it was a very common thing for it to exact vengeance on a child born to the killer after the murder. For this reason it was very necessary to do everything to protect the child; it was to have an amulet consisting of iron or a knife, and also a bracelet. The knife amulet should be of something bright, conspicuous. For this they used copper, a piece from a pot or kettle, which they used to get in barter on the west coast. His bracelet was also to be furnished with certain amulets; on the left wrist there would be a bracelet with the hair on, on the right wrist a bracelet of water-tight skin without hair. When the child became older and was able to eat, it had to eat with its amulet knife; the avenging soul would then be afraid of the bright, glittering weapon and would not dare to come near him.

His bracelets were to give him special strength, and he was to wear kamiks with hair on the side on which he had the hairy bracelet, and kamiks without hair on the side where he had the dehaired bracelet. Likewise his hair had to be long on the one side and close-cropped on the other. All this was thought to make him strong and also unrecognizable; and when to these amulets was added a piece of the dead man's fourth-finger nail, the soul would think it recognized itself in the child and would jump into it.

Another form of amulet was the head of a bird or a bird carved in wood.

The story is told of a child that fell sick; a shaman was sent for, and they promised him a pair of very fine paddles belonging to the sick child's father, mounted with narwhal tusk. The shaman held a seance and summoned his helping spirits, but could do nothing; the child's soul had been stolen, and the thief was not to be taken unawares, the child died and the parents wept grievously. Later the wife became pregnant, and when the time came for her to be confined, the husband went about frantically looking for something for an amulet. He went to an old shaman, who said:

"You must try to catch a raven, and, when you have done so, cut off its head and feet, take it home and hide it; you must also make a bird of a piece of very dry wood, and that too you must hide. When the child is born and is to be laid down for the first time, you must lay the amulet by its side; afterwards the raven's head and feet can be put under the platform just below the place where the child is lying, whereas the carved bird must be tied to a cord and suspended above the child. While the child is growing up its place must always be under the bird figure and over the raven. Now if the avenger should come, either the raven figure or the raven will discover him, and they will rush at him and keep him away. If the one does not discover him, the other will. So the child will always be protected. One of them will always peck at the avenger."—

A piece of wood which has belonged to an old man and placed on the kayak deck-thong to preserve the kayak-skin from wear, can be used as an amulet for a boy. Every time the boy came home with a seal he had caught, either his father or his mother was to stroke the seal over the whiskers with this piece of wood, and it was always to have its place under the platform. When the seal was skinned and cut up, its head was always to rest on this piece of wood; it was not to be put back in its place till then.—

Sometimes one could get an amulet when some particular experience was associated with the object. A man had an amulet consisting of a mussel which he had once seen a bearded seal trying to eat, with the result that it had shot up on to a piece of ice, from which he had taken it. This amulet was especially effective in counter-acting the envy which caused another hunter to try to take his game from him. It was very common for such an envious man to weave a spell over the kayak. When therefore the owner saw a man who had no right there doing something with his kayak, and he suspected that the man was trying to conjure his game away from him, he would, when the man had gone, go over and scrape the other's kayak with the mussel, and take the scrapings back to his own kayak.

By that means he not only retained his own game but caught the other man's too.—

Thus amulets could give protection in many ways, indeed they could help a man against all the enemies he would always have if he were a skilful and lucky hunter; it is therefore surprising that they were not more perturbed than was the case when these amulets got lost, or if the dogs chanced to eat them. It was seldom that they were seen to look for something to replace them. If they were asked why they were not distressed at their loss, or why they did not look for others, the answer would usually be: "Yes, why?". In fact, it happened now and then that people did not know why they carried their amulets, because they had forgotten the explanation given by their parents, or perhaps the parents had never told them the purpose of the amulets.

XIV. THE BLACK ARTS

(*ilisineq*).

Ilisitsut, those who practice the black arts, were people who desired to bring misfortune over others by striking them with sickness or making them cripples or by murdering them or by parting friends and making them enemies. They did not act as men with weapons, but concealed their actions and sometimes thought out the most cunning means of carrying out their wicked plans.

The black arts were not exercised through things which one invented, but only through what had been learned of others, who in their turn had inherited the art. The tutors were usually old people who possessed this particular hidden knowledge, mainly shamans, in which case they were considered to be especially dangerous.

It could not be a person related to the one concerned, for it was held that the arts could not be passed on to a member of the family.

When a person wished to learn evil practices of another, if it were a man approaching an old woman he had first to give his body to her, no matter if she were very old and he quite young, or vice versa. If it were a woman approaching a shaman, she had first to give her body to the shaman, before any kind of teaching could begin. It was said that coitus had always to precede a lesson in this mysterious and evil art. Only then could one begin to explain what it was one wanted to obtain or to learn to do against another. It was almost always a case of wanting revenge on account of anger born of envy.

On the west coast *ilisitsut* or *kugssuit* had always been looked upon as practisers of one kind of art, though what was done through *kugssuit* was regarded as a weaker degree of magic. In East Greenland they did not know of *kugssuit*. On the west coast it was only women that occupied themselves with sorcery of all kinds, whereas on the east it was men or women, in addition to which all shamans knew the black arts.

A person about to cast a spell had to be sure in his art, for there was the risk that if it failed, the misfortune intended for the victim would inevitably turn against the sorcerer or sorceress, a reaction which

was looked upon as life's revenge on those who occupied themselves with the machinations of Darkness.

ilisitsut were regarded with great fear, for they were only happy when doing evil deeds; it was thought that all sickness and death came from them, but they were not considered able to steal souls. As *ilisitsut* worked evil on all those whom they envied or with whom they were angry, people tried to ingratiate themselves with those who were suspected of being *ilisitsut*.

If anybody were injured, or became sick or died, *ilisitsut* were always suspected. It began by suspecting somebody of having caused the misfortune through magic, and sometimes the suspicion would become certainty if a shaman said that the person was skilled in magic; in such cases there was never any doubt but that the person indicated had caused it, and those concerned would then seek an opportunity to kill him. Many shamans were killed on the strength of this suspicion or assumption.

If a person had a spite against another and wanted to harm the object of his anger or envy, he (or she) would seek advice on the afore-said conditions of a shaman or an old woman; it was said that the shaman *atarserpá'd*—i. e. taught—the other.

The ways in which *ilisíneq* could be practised were as varied and grotesque as the Eskimo fantasy is luxuriant.

One very common way, however, was that the shaman advised the person consulting him to take a bone from an old grave, saying: "When you get this bone you must try to place it among the clothes of the one you wish to harm, but it must be at a time when he has no clothes on; as soon as you have placed the bone among the clothes, you must think hard of the sickness that you desire shall kill him!"—usually it was stitch, vomiting or diarrhoea—"then you must closely watch for the moment when the person is about to put on his clothes; now should it happen that the bone does not fall on to the platform or the floor, but disappears entirely, and the person notices nothing of anything being done against him, you may be sure that what you wished will be fulfilled; but if the person notices that he has been subjected to an attempt at injury, or sees the dead man's bone and throws it away, saying magic words over it, the sickness you wished to bring over him will turn against you, and if you do not confess your wicked intention to the people you will yourself die!"

Those who wished to work magic often had to pursue their intended victim long; sometimes it was so difficult for them to do it that their efforts stretched over more than a year. It was held that if the object of their hatred moved to another settlement, it would be easier to get at him when he returned to his old settlement.

The story is told that a man at *Íkártormiut* tried to put a spell on one of the men of the house, but failed. Spring came, and then when autumn was approaching the intended victim moved to *Akorningnarmiut*; after wintering there he came back to *Íkártormiut*, his former settlement, and then the other did all he could to harm him. He tried to chase a hen-sparrow with its young into its nest; this was very difficult, but at last he succeeded by chance, getting the entire sparrow family into the nest; then he took the cock and the hen sparrow and one of the young and killed them; this done, he let them stiffen in the position he desired; then he waited only for a day when there was a dead calm. The day came, and that evening, when dark had fallen, he fetched the dead sparrows and placed them ready on top of the passage-way, arranging them in such a manner that they looked as if they were standing on a small hummock on the passage-way, but with their backs to the opening, the cock-sparrow foremost, the young one in the middle, and the hen behind; he fixed them carefully so that they could not fall.

This done, he had to repeat the name of his victim to the sparrow family. Next morning very early he had to go out before anyone else to look at the sparrow family. If the cock-sparrow, which stood foremost, had fallen over, the man he wanted to harm would die sooner or later. But if it had not fallen, his attempt had failed; filled with anger at his failure he had to exert himself still more.

At low tide he had to go down to the beach and seek along the water edge, where he would find an *erqussaq*, a sea urchin, which he was to pick up and hide on his person; continuing his search he would find an *ungersartog* (a small animal like a snail but with no shell on its back; on being touched it shrank together). This he was to take, and both things, the sea urchin and the little *ungersartog*, were to be placed under the victim's platform skin. If they disappeared from there without the victim's noticing anything, that meant that the magic was working; the victim would be tied to his bed, he would fall ill, which meant that the little snail had clung to his body and flung itself round about him so that he could not move on the bed. When this happened, the sea urchin would commence to eat him till he died.

Still more remarkable things—and more difficult things—could be thought out. Most difficult of all was to cause magic to part two friends who were very fond of each other; here is an example:

At the settlement of *Qumarmiut* one of the young hunters thrust from him a young wife to whom he had been married a short time and married a girl from *Nórsût* (*Nórdlît*); the forsaken wife would have liked to keep her husband, who was a very good hunter, and therefore she was very upset at being turned away, and in her anger thought to herself: Does he really think he will keep the one he has

married now? So she began to wonder what to do in order to separate them. She consulted several old people whom she thought could tell her all about what she wanted to know, but none knew. Her anger grew, and at last she would have given anything she possessed to get the instruction she needed.

Once she was visiting the people at *Inorquagssât*; there lived an old woman who had also been separated from her husband and lived on the side platform; on her arrival the rejected wife at once sat down by her side, and while she sat there, the other said: "Tell me, little one, what is it I hear; I have been told that you have come to sell sealskins; I have almost nothing, but I should like to have them."

The other answered: "I should be very thankful if you could."

The old woman answered: "In a little while I shall go outside; follow me, but not so that the others see that you are following; I shall walk a little to the west of the house, and then you come to me."

The other nodded her head, and a little later the old woman put on her kamiks and went outside. When some time had passed the visiting woman went out too and walked in the direction the old woman had given her; there she found her waiting. She sat down, and the other asked:

"Now, what is it you want me to help you with?"

The other then told her of the husband who had cast her off, and that she wanted to sow discord between him and the woman who was now his wife. The old woman thought long, and then said:

"It is no easy matter; yet I know something, of which I shall tell you. You must go inland and look for a fox that has young ones and is sleeping in its den; when you find it, you must steal up and seize it before it awakes; then you must kill it, and cut off its nipples and a small piece of the breast and take them home. Then you must look for a ptarmigan, but this too must be sleeping; try to seize it without waking it, just as you did with the fox; kill it and cut off its stomach and belly and take it to the place where you have hidden the fox's breast. Then you must try to catch your husband and his new wife while they are asleep; but it is not enough that they are asleep, for they must be lying face to face; when you find them like that, go to them and, taking great care not to wake them, lay the fox breast and the ptarmigan belly in under their pillow, then leave them. Afterwards the scent of the fox and the smell of the ptarmigan belly will go into their thoughts in the form of disagreement, and they will part. But it is hard to catch the things I told you of, and a long time may go before you do so; it may happen that they have children while you are still seeking for a sleeping fox and a sleeping ptarmigan. So you must try to catch a live sparrow, and, when you have caught it, you must

not kill it, but say these things to it, all the while thinking very hard of what you say:" May he never have children; carry away the woman's offspring every time one is born, until there are no more." Then you must let the sparrow go; and it will come to pass that the children she bears will die and she will have no children."

The young woman thanked her for this wisdom, for though the things she had to do were very difficult, she now had hope. She paid the old woman with the sealskins, but no one knows whether her magic was successful or not.

Not all magic spells were intended to kill; it was sometimes enough to do harm. This could be done by the following means:

If a hunter was very clever and caught more than the others, one who was envious could steal over to his kayak and put a knot of matted hair into it, or spittle wrapped up in turf. Certain magic spells were thereupon pronounced over it, the intention being to confuse the man's thoughts so that he would be unable to take any decision—or by means of the spittle to make him uninviting to the game.

Then, if the man in question did not wear amulets or did not have any in his kayak to secure him against such spells, he would soon cease to catch seals.

If a man conceived a hatred of another, he could work against him in the following manner: He had to get up very early one morning before sunrise, and without eating or drinking he had to go outside, climb a small hill and there make a doll of turf. If he hated a man, the doll was to represent a man, and if a woman the doll was to represent a woman.

Then the doll had to be set up beside a rocky slope where the wind could blow, the doll being placed with its face towards the rising sun. Then he named the man whom he hated, repeated evil words and wished evil things to befall the man, after which he could go and leave the doll lying.

Next morning he had to go up and look at the doll; if it had fallen over, he could be satisfied, for then his wishes would be fulfilled; but if the doll stood as he had left it, he had failed.

Through the black arts one could also deprive a neighbour of his game; this happened often when a man was dissatisfied with the gifts of meat he received after a catch. It was done after dark, before the hunter had lain down to sleep, by going down to his kayak and putting into it some matted hair or something else, at the same time mumbling incomprehensible words into the kayak. It was also sufficient to take

his implements out of the kayak, abuse them and pronounce evil over them. The result would be that the hunter could not catch seals.

It was also possible to make a man eat evil, by handing him something to eat and at the same time thinking evil thoughts about this present of food; if one were powerful enough, the man who had eaten evil would vomit or swell up inside and become very ill; indeed, there were some who were so powerful in their thoughts and in their words that they could create an effect simply by pointing at the one they wished to harm, or in fact simply by looking at him.

Thus it is no wonder that people were afraid of *ilisîtsut*, and that they felt unsafe, for it was often those who were least suspected who were *ilisîtsut*.

As was said before, it was thought that all evil from which a person or a whole settlement suffered had come from someone practising black magic. When a shaman had found out that a person in the settlement had worked magic over others, the anger of the people would be directed not only at the one who actually had done it but at his entire family; often their anger grew to such an extent that one of the family would be killed. In many cases, however, such a killing would mean the death of a perfectly innocent person, for often a shaman would point out a person whom he himself hated or envied.

XV. EVIL-DOING TROLL ANIMALS

(*tupilait*).

In undertaking to present a reliable picture of what menaced the life of mankind in the conception of the heathen East Greenlanders, it would be wrong to omit a reference to the *tupilait*, the evil-doing animals.

By a *tupilak* was understood a living creature, made by a human being for the purpose of doing harm to or bringing misfortune over another.

A *tupilak* could be made in many ways. For example, one might find the corpse of a little child, which would then be restored to life by magic and made over again and equipped with certain dangerous qualities. But as a rule the *tupilak*'s were made artificially—not real animals, but animal-like shapes.

Such a *tupilak* was not formed of one animal, but of the bones of many different animals. This was clear from the *tupilak*'s body, since one part of it would be like one animal, another like another. It was generally thought that a *tupilak*, in conformity with its many parts, could turn itself into all the animals of which it was made.

It was dangerous on account of the terrible effect it exerted on one who saw it, for its very appearance deprived one of all strength. It could travel along all paths and swim just as well through sea as through earth and rock. If it got inside a house it scared people to death; anything it touched broke into a thousand pieces. If it were harpooned, the harpoon-bladder stuck fast to the kayak, and when the *tupilak* dived down it dragged kayak and man with it; and once it had dived down with its prey, it never came up again.

There were many kinds of *tupilait*; the more common were those that were made of dead or still-born infants, but they could also be made of earth, seals, birds, patching them together out of all kinds of things which once had lived. But the main thing was that such a *tupilak* was built up in evil and with evil words.

tupilait were mostly made by shamans and *ilisitsut* and women who would practise the black arts. A *tupilak* was always sent against the

person who was hated or envied or on whom vengeance was to be inflicted; a *tupilak* could never be killed by an ordinary person, perhaps only by a shaman; but it was rarely done, and even then it was the shaman's helping spirits who killed it. *Tupilait* were said to be very tasty.

The following is the manner of making *tupilait*.

Any place would not do. A cave or a place between two large rocks had to be found, where the sun never shone, or down on the beach, or far inland, by a little stream running into the sea.

In making a *tupilak*, a man would take a seal head, being careful that no one saw him do it; this seal head or skull he took to a place previously chosen for his work. There he laid the head and spread patches of moss over it; then he went home and, without letting anyone know, got together all that he needed for making the *tupilak*: seal and dog bones, pieces of the skin of seals, bears and dogs, and lengths of sinews. All these were taken to the place where he was making the *tupilak*, and finally came the day when he was to start next morning on the work. He did not sleep at all that night from sheer eagerness. Early next morning, before the sun had risen, he started out without breaking his fast and reached the place, where he arranged the things he had collected. Then he took off his anorak and put it on inside out, back to front, and his face covered by the hood; then he sat down by the bones astride the seal head and began to sing a magic song, moving his body to all sides, bending far back, bending far forward, then to the sides so much that he almost fell over.

Having ended the magic song, he pronounced magic words. While he sat there singing, the bones and pieces of moss and skins came closer and closer together, almost as if they had become one body, and with each piece that joined on the *tupilak* became larger and larger. As day advanced the man should leave his work and only return the following day, and so on for several days in succession.

At last the *tupilak* was finished, and all it needed was to be called to life. Again during the night he did not sleep from sheer eagerness; every time he was about to fall asleep fear descended on him and he became wide awake; thus the night passed, and early next morning, without breaking his fast, he went back to his work. There he sat in the same manner astride his *tupilak* and began to sing magic songs.

As he sat there singing a shiver passed through the *tupilak*, and then the man began in real earnest with his singing. A little later it began to breathe, a gasping, groaning respiration; after a while its breathing became natural; at last, when it was quite alive, it was ready to go to the man for whose harm it had been made. Only then did the man put on his anorak in the normal fashion, and he repeated again and again: "It became alive and rushed away!"



Fig. 21. Putting life into a *tupilak* by magic. Drawn by the West Greenlander Gêrtêraq.
From KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Myther og Sagn fra Grønland I.*

The *tupilak* then began to move, first across the ground, until suddenly it disappeared right through a rock. After being gone for a long time it suddenly appeared in the inland lake of a river or in a broad; there it came up in the form of a seal, but when it was about to dive down it had become a dog. Every time it dived down it came up again nearer to the sea; at last it came right out at the mouth of the river and, turning slowly to the man who had created it, cried: "Where is it I must go?" Then for the first time the man told the *tupilak* whom the person was that it should attack, and only then could the *tupilak* disappear out to sea.

The time it took to make a *tupilak* varied. There were those who had to spend many days on it; old, cunning shamans could do it in the course of one tide, so that they were finished before high water came again; but that was because their spirits helped them.

When making a *tupilak* one had to be careful only to use the thumb and little finger. For if one chanced to touch it with any of the other fingers, it would lose its power.

Sometimes those who made a *tupilak* could get the help of children, whom they instructed; here is an account of a shaman disciple:

"A shaman was my near relative; he was fond of me and taught me many different things.

"One day when he was going out in his kayak, he said to me: 'Just follow me, I am going over there', and I followed after him, walking along the beach. When we were far from the settlement he got out of his kayak, carried it on shore, and when he began to arrange it I looked on with wonder. He took out his bailer and put it in again after turning it forwards; his harpoon, too, he pulled out, put on the head and turned it forwards; he did the same with his bird-dart.

"Then we went inland. After walking a long way in we reached a cave, and crept inside. In there we found patches of moss arranged in a heap. He stood astride of it, sat down and began to remove the moss; I became very frightened when he suddenly uncovered an infant; the head was much too large for the body; from the neck and down over the body right to the lower limbs it was wound round with a seal thong, placed close together.

"Suddenly he said: 'Are you not going to help me at all?'.

"I answered: 'Do you require help?'

"He answered, mentioning the name of a hunter not far from *Kulusuk*: 'Get me that man's wound-plug!'

"How shall I get it; it is over on the other side of the fjord, and I have no kayak.'

"He answered: 'Go out of this cave and hop round on your left leg; count the number of times you hop, and when you get to twenty,

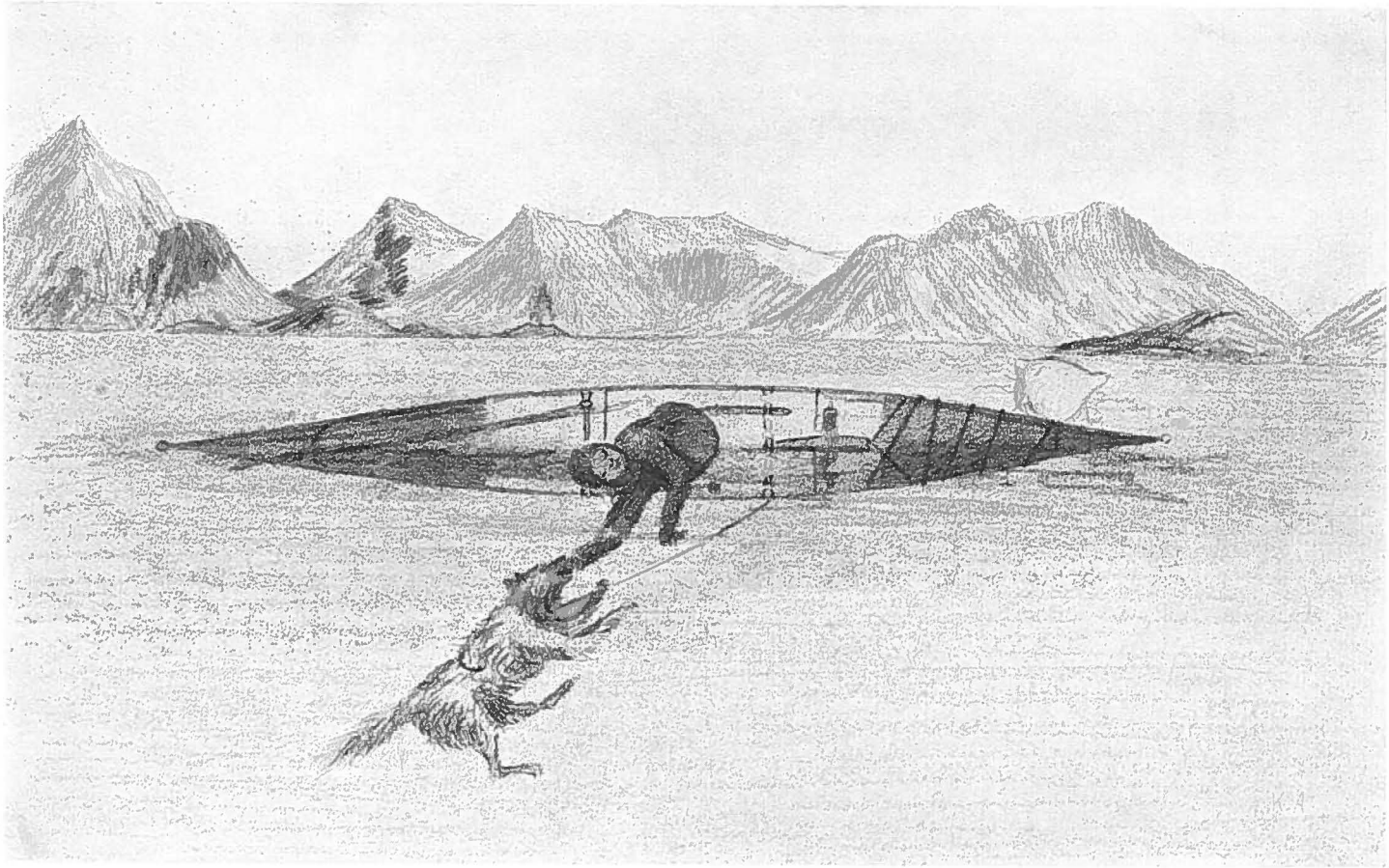


Fig. 22. A *tupilak* in the guise of a dog upsets a kayak-man. Drawn by K. ANDREASSEN.

turn slowly in the direction of the settlement where the wound-plug is, still hopping on one leg. And when you turn your face to the settlement, shout through your hood and out through your sleeve, that you want that wound-plug to come.'

"This I did. When I got outside I drew my arm out of the sleeve, and strange to say the sleeve was just as if it were frozen stiff, and, as I shouted out through the sleeve for the wound-plug to come, I held my hand ready under my anorak; then suddenly I heard a swish near to me and a hard object came into my anorak; I gripped it and felt that it was a wound-plug; then I hopped again on one leg into the cave, and the shaman said to me:

"Let it fall down to me through your sleeve, without your right hand touching it!'

"I let it fall and saw that it really was a fine little wound-plug. He blew on it, and as he did so the plug rushed across the floor and stuck fast to the child's body, and when he blew on it again, it became part of the child's body.

"In the same manner I fetched a seal thong from *Sermilik*; but later, when he was to blow life into his *tupilak*, I came too late; when I went up to the place it had already disappeared."

tupilait were considered to be so dangerous that if they merely appeared to the person they were to harm he would die. In the same manner a *tupilak* could kill everybody in a house.

Their appearance differed, the body that of a seal, the head of a dog, or the body of a dog and the head of a man, a skull—the form might be that of a bear. But a feature common to all these evil-doing animals was that they never had any blubber on them and were very thin.

If a man had to be killed, the animal always appeared in the form of a seal. It allowed itself to be harpooned, but when the harpoon head was in its body it dragged the kayak down under water by the harpoon-line, which was fastened to the kayak by magic, and the man drowned.

A kayakman capsized by a *tupilak* always had blood in the corners of his eyes, for the eyes were distended so wide that they split when the man caught sight of the *tupilak*, which moreover under water always had a terrifying voice.

When a man saw a *tupilak* the land would sometimes become like a storm-beaten sea, or as flat as new ice.

When a sick person became slowly worse it was always thought that he had a *tupilak*; people thought a *tupilak* was after him and remained near him; the only way he could be helped was by a shaman instituting a *tupilak* hunt with his helping spirits. In this manner a shaman could catch a *tupilak* without any of the people of the settlement ever seeing

it, for his helping spirits kept it for themselves. Helping spirits are so fond of its flesh.

If it was thought that a man had been sent to death by a *tupilak*, the windows had to be covered with skins in the evening, and as soon as the lamps were extinguished the shaman would undertake a spirit flight in order to kill the evil-doing animal.

A shaman should lie in wait for a *tupilak* just at the side of the house entrance. Then when the monster breathed through the magic drum the shaman's helping spirits would come in and stab it from above and from below.

When a *tupilak* had been stabbed from above by a helping spirit it had to keep hold of the harpoon line above, and if the monster should rush into the ground, other helping spirits would come along and pursue it and cut it in pieces.

Helping spirits called a *tupilak* a *pequtit*.

When a shaman with the assistance of his helping spirits had caught and killed a *tupilak*, the dead man's wife had to pay him with some of the most beautiful belongings of her late husband.

It sometimes happened that a *tupilak* could not harm the man against whom it had been sent; this was the case if he had amulets so powerful that the *tupilak* was afraid of them, or magic words so effective; then what happened was that the *tupilak* became so hungry through having hunted in vain that it turned on its own maker and killed him instead. If in such cases the *tupilak* did not eat the man who had made it, it could strike him with madness.

A shaman who had caught a *tupilak* was never in doubt as to who had made it, but ordinary people did not see the *tupilak*. The shaman who saw the *tupilak* always saw the man who had made it, bound as it were to the *tupilak* by a line.

At *Sermiligâq* there were two brothers who had land; when spring came the elder brother went in to *Angmagssivik* while the younger brother stayed at the fjord. The elder brother used to dry *angmagssat's* for his brother too, *angmagssat's* for him to eat when he came on a visit, whereas the younger brother kept whole seals to rot for the elder brother to eat when he came visiting; in this manner did they treat each other. One day the elder brother, who was out catching *angmagssat's* received the message: "Your younger brother has been killed by five brothers!" No wonder that the elder brother was sad. He hurried from *Angmagssivik* to his winter settlement, and there he remained without ever being able to forget his younger brother. His enemies lived at another place.

It was winter, and spring came and everybody moved out into tents out at the spring camps; the enemies did the same. When the

enemies had gone to their spring camp, the man whose brother had been killed went to their winter settlement; there he examined the places where they had had caches for whole seals. In one cache he found hair which had fallen from a young bearded seal that had rotted. Then he rowed away to his younger brother's grave, opened it and spoke to him. As soon as he began to speak there was a growling noise in the grave. Having spoken to him, he took the dead man's left kamik; to these things, the patches of hair from the murderers' cache, and the dead man's kamik, he added various things and of them made a *tupilak*. When he had made it he let it swim out through the rocks until it came out at the mouth of a river. There the *tupilak* turned round slowly, following the direction of the sun, and cried: "Where is it I must go?" And the man told it to avenge his younger brother. The evil-doing seal was made in the form of a bearded seal, and as it dived down and showed its hind flippers, they shone white as on a real bearded seal.

At that time the murderers were gathered at *Tiniteqilâq*, and the bearded seal swam out there. There the elder brother also rowed in his kayak and joined his enemies, where many other people lived. The settlement there was so lively that at last he quite forgot that he had made a *tupilak*—an evil-doing seal.

One day when there was a thick fog, the hunters remained at home. During the afternoon, when the fog began to lift, he heard people cry: "See, a young bearded seal is bobbing up just outside. Let us go after it." And just when they almost reached it, it dived down, and when it came up again it was always some distance from them. Once the elder brother had almost thrown his harpoon at it, but as it curved to dive down, he recognized its white hind flippers; it was his own *tupilak*, and he allowed his kayak to glide aside without throwing. A little time passed, and this time it was the eldest of the murderers who was nearest the seal and threw his harpoon; it hit the seal, but when he tried to throw out his harpoon bladder it was stuck fast to his kayak, so that he was dragged down under the water. Thus he perished. Some time afterwards the same thing happened to the next brother, and in turn all the brothers perished, one after the other, and the brother who had made the *tupilak* got his revenge.—

It is also said that one of the hunters at *Kulusuk* suddenly began to feel fear; it was at the time of the year when the light returns and there is no longer the open sea to hunt in, and therefore one tries to catch seals at the blowholes. At last his fear grew so much that he was afraid in the middle of the day and in sunshine.

One day, while standing at a blowhole, this fear came over him in an inexplicable manner, but he attended to his hunting and observed

that a seal was coming towards him; he raised the harpoon and was just about to stab it, when it seemed to him that it breathed very violently for a seal; he bent down over the breathing hole and discovered that what he thought was a seal—well, it was—he saw only a great dog's head, and crying out "Oh-Oh" he ran as fast as he could towards the shore. It was nearer to *Agdlerormiut* than to *Kulusuk*, so he ran there. People standing about outside saw him and said: "Look, how that man is running!"

He reached the shore, and the people standing about wanted to ask him questions, but without answering he rushed into the house without even brushing the snow off, pulled off his kamiks and laid himself right at the back of the platform. Then it was he told about what he had seen. Later, people from the place accompanied him back to his own settlement, and there he stayed and did not go out kayak hunting again. If he had to go outside he was always accompanied by another, and his neighbours missed him greatly, for he was a good hunter.

One day the settlement was visited by a number of people on sledges from the north; they went round the houses and had a merry evening. They were told of the man who did not dare to go out in his kayak any more, and one of the guests on hearing it, said: "I should let him there look into it, he is a great shaman."

All were pleased at hearing this and urged the shaman to make an attempt. The shaman agreed, and asked for a piece of hard wood, which was given him. This wood he whittled until it was very sharp at one end, while at the other end it was given a hollow like a grip for the hands, which was good for holding on to. Then a skin was hung in front of the doorway and he began to invoke the spirits. When he had got so far in his invocations that he became himself and could see, they heard him say:

"Oh, just look, a man is coming in sight down there, Oh no, it is a dog, no, a bear". It became bigger and bigger the nearer it approached.

Then came his helping spirits, and one could hear them out in the passage-way; they began to chase it; but they were unable to overpower it, for it came nearer and nearer. But what was that? That must have been his helping spirit, "Twist-mouth", who came in. One of his helping spirits was missing, and when some time had passed a swishing sound was heard; he could be heard throwing his bird-dart, and when it was thrown and hit the ground, one could feel the force with which it struck, and yet they heard the shaman say:

"Oh, he cannot do it; every time he throws his bird dirt at it, what happens is that just as the dart is about to strike the *tupilak*, it breaks into three pieces and falls to the ground; then Twist-mouth paddles to it, and when he takes hold of it there is no break in it at all."

In the end they could hear the *tupilak* coming up under the house. Oh, if only it does not come inside! Then the shaman called for his falcon spirits, he himself at the same time striking in the direction of the *tupilak* with the hard stick which he had sharpened. Oh, if only it does not get into the passage-way! Then they heard the scream of a falcon outside, then a rushing sound; it was as if the noise were receding; it was bright moonlight outside.

"There, they got it", the shaman was heard to say; "they are taking it down towards *Ingmikôrtoq*, up towards the look-out mountain; I see it so plainly that I believe people who are not shamans should be able to see it here in the moonlight!"

The people in the house were heard to laugh happily in relief when the shaman told them that now they had it up on the look-out mountain and were eating it, hacking away at it; and so large were the falcons that they looked like two bears eating; they ate it all up, and then flapped away northwards. The lamps inside the house were lighted, and all were very astonished to see that the wooden weapon the shaman had had was all bloody.

After that the hunter was never afraid again; the fear had left him, and he did good hunting for his fellow-settlers; and now it appeared that it was one of his own neighbours who had made a *tupilak* against him out of envy.—

Non-shamans can see a *tupilak*, surely, but then they die.

One autumn when the people had moved into the houses at *Îkâtoq*, one of the hunters fell ill; all the while the sun was going down he was ill, and grew so thin that there was scarcely anything left of him but skin and bones. In the end he was so weak he could not move, and his wife had to move him.

When the sun had begun to come up again it happened one evening that a raven suddenly hopped in on to the floor of the house from the passage-way; it hopped about the floor screaming, but no one did it any harm; finally it hopped out again. Amazement and terror seized the people.

A little while afterwards one of the people in the house fetched a whole seal; this they ate, and they were almost finished their meal when the sick man suddenly sat up and said: "There is nothing wrong with me now, there is nothing wrong with me at all." He bent his arm and stretched it again, and kept on doing it, saying "now I am strong again", and his wife in her joy cried: "He has become well", and his neighbours cried "Thanks, Thanks, there is nothing wrong with him any longer."

Then the sick man said to his wife: "Bring me some berries, I wish to eat." His wife fetched berries, pickled berries, opened the skin,

and the man began to eat, his neighbours keeping him company, and for the moment no one thought of the sick man until one cried: "He has gone mad!" And there, he had already begun to crawl in under the platform. The men sprang to him and seized him and with much effort managed to get him dragged back to the platform again.

If a mad man crawled in under the platform from the front and came up from behind, there was no longer any hope, they thought, and no one would be able to overmaster him.

But the madman struggled so with the men holding him that it was all they could do to hold him and bind him with thongs, and they got him lashed firmly to the platform; then they lifted out the two large floor-stones lying just before the door-way and tied them fast to his legs; but when the fits came over him he had such strength that he could raise his legs just the same. All that month the men watched by him without going out to hunt; but when they could neglect their hunting no longer they got a woman to put a piece of a lamp-trimmer in his mouth; this was the poison of the old Eskimos. The sick man crunched the lamp-trimmer with his teeth, swallowed it, and died.

This was an example of how a *tupilak* came back and killed the one who had made it.—

At *Akorningnaq* a hunter owned land; he was a great bear hunter; when he had killed a bear and cut its head off, he would place it on the end of a long pole sticking through its eye-holes.

One winter he had caught so many bears that he filled one whole pole and was half way up another. One morning, when the light had come back, he caught sight of a bear. His neighbours came rushing to him but could not see the bear anywhere. "Where is it?", they asked. "It is out there, off *Orssulugiaq*", he answered; then a long time passed, during which he maintained that it was coming nearer, though nobody could see it. Then at last they saw it, an enormous old he-bear, making straight for the settlement; then it lay down on the ice just outside the ice edge. As soon as it had lain down, one of the hunters sprang up on the ice and ran towards it; but when the bear saw him it rose and came leaping to him. With a tremendous jump the man got up on the ice edge, and all that happened was that the bear almost caught him with its claws; indeed, it brushed the sole of his boot and tore out the whole thread with which the sole was sewn on; this was a sign that it was no ordinary bear.

Then the bear went back and lay down again. The great bear hunter, the man who had seen it first, went out on the ice, but as soon as it saw him the bear sprang after him. The man tried to jump up over the ice-edge, but slipped back again, and then the bear seized him in

the middle of the body with its mouth and carried him away over the ice. Some way out it laid the man down and crouched beside him; there it lay growling, and every time the man moved the bear sprang up and bit a piece out of the fleshy part of his body, and the others heard him cry: "Oh, oh!"

Thus the bear ate the man, mouthful by mouthful, and they heard him screaming all day long, until at last the bear tore out his "tail bone"; it was only then he died. This, too, was a *tupilak* which came back to the man who had made it.—

The general opinion was that a *tupilak* got nothing whatever to eat but the person it was to kill. If it happened that the man or woman whom it was to kill turned out to be stronger in magic than the one who had made it, it would be powerless, unable to do the intended victim any harm. So it would go back to whoever had made it and eat him. On account of this it was always a most risky thing to make a *tupilak*.

As soon as a *tupilak* had accomplished its mission, it ceased to exist.

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Besides the *tupilak*, there was another being that could be fashioned by means of the black arts, namely the co-called *ángiaq*, a terror-spirit invisible to human beings, thought to arise out of a child born in secret¹).

An *ángiaq* or, as it was sometimes called, a *maleruarteq*, pursuer, was not out for human life; its purpose was to scare away the seals from a kayak-man. In most cases it followed behind the kayak and, every time a seal bobbed up, gave a warning whistle, almost like that of a young sparrow. The seal fled as soon as it heard it and the hunter did not even get time to throw his harpoon at it.—

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tupilak and *ángiaq* are often mentioned in the legends, but in daily life in heathen times they were blamed for most of the misfortunes and accidents.

In conclusion, here is a *tupilak* story dating from more recent times:

The well-known shaman *Migssuarnianga*, who died in 1910, had lost a younger brother and accordingly had to do penance in various ways. One day he was visited by an old shaman known by the name of *Uviaq*, "Husband", who asked whether he did not want to be revenged on the one who had caused his brother's death.—

¹) In "Ny Samling af det kgl. Norske Videnskabernes Selskabs Skrifter" Vol. I (Kbh. 1784), GLAHN published a paper: "Efterretninger om det af Grøn-lænderne saakaldte Angiak". Similar records were contained in his now missing diary from Holsteinsborg for the year 1766—67 (see Det Grønlandske Selskabs Skrifter IV, p. 99 f.). H. O.

Migssuarniánga was only too willing, whereupon the old shaman took him out among the mountains until they reached a place where they could work unseen. They found two stones lying almost side by side and forming an angle. A little way from them was a third stone of almost the same size and shape as the others.

The old shaman then wished that these stones should form an enclosure, and immediately two dwarfs appeared; at the same moment it was as if invisible hands lifted the third stone towards the other two until they formed a kind of enclosed space.

The old shaman then exhumed the body of *Migssuarniánga*'s little brother and placed it between the stones, saying:

"We shall make a *tupilak* of him! But first you must get me a dead sparrow that has started to rot, a live snipe, and the sinew of a seal caught by old *Pegigsarpik*, who was to blame for the child's death."

Uviaq then told him how these things were to be procured, and *Migssuarniánga* went to get them. Before long he found a decomposing snow-bunting; it was lying right at his feet. A little way from there a snipe came flying, settled beside him and allowed itself to be caught. Then he stood on land behind his settlement and cried through the left sleeve of his jacket as *Uviaq* had instructed him: "Let a piece of sinew from a seal caught by *Pegigsarpik* come into my hand."

Scarcely had he spoken the words when he heard a rush through the air, and as he put his arm into the sleeve again, he found the seal sinew of which the old man had spoken. Then he went straight back to him.

Uviaq now cut the wings from the bunting and laid them on the shoulders of the child's body. As soon as he had blown on them they became fresh again and grew fast to the body as wings ought to be. Then he cut off the legs of the corpse and placed those of the snipe there instead; these, too, he blew on, and at once they became firmly attached like live legs. Finally, he placed the seal sinew on the back of the corpse between the wings, and when he had blown on this it went into the child's body and became wing tendons.

Now when the child's body had been re-formed in this way, the old shaman bent down over it and uttered certain magic words, until suddenly the body became alive and began to scream like a newly born infant.

Then it rose up on its long snipe legs and began to flap its wings and to run fluttering down towards the beach.

There it suddenly rose on its wings, flew high up from the ground and made off in order to kill the old soul-thief who had caused the death of the child.

XVI. MAGIC FORMULAE

(*serratit*).

By a *serrat* was understood a word or a formula coined in ancient times and handed down from generation to generation. It had power in itself, placed in it by its original creator, but it was to be used only very rarely, and in any case only in direst necessity or when great danger threatened.

It was the old people of the tribe who knew the magic words and formulae and who could pass them on to the people of the next generation, and it was believed that, used in the right way, they would overcome any difficulty, in fact make the impossible possible—*serratit artuga-qángitdlat*, it was said: Magic words can do everything, or, still more literally: magic words have nothing they cannot do.

To repeat a *serrat* was called *artorserdlugo*, and it could be done only early in the morning before sunrise.

Besides having the property that they could be given away as a mark of gratitude or as an aid to a beloved person, a *serrat* could also be bought and sold. In most cases, however, *serratit* were given away as presents.

The following brief record illustrates this:

There was once a young man who used to help an old man by fetching frozen meat for him, and one day, when the old man wished to express his appreciation, he said:

"Tomorrow, before sunrise, you must come with me to the top of a high hill, as there is something up there I want you to hear!"—"tag-pavane tusardlerumáravkit"; that is how he put it, for it must not be said in plain words.

The young man did as the old man had said, and next morning they went together to the top of a hill. When at last they had lost sight of the settlement-land and the sea, the old man began to speak plainly of what he wished to do, for he gave the young man a *serrat*-present—taught him a magic formula which, he said, was pregnant with power and often had helped him under difficult circumstances—and afterwards it often helped the young one, indeed in certain cases saved his life. —

When about to utter a *serrat*, the fourth finger (*mikileraq*) was placed so far into the mouth that one belched, and with it came the magic words. When saying them, one had to be sure that one's fur-cap or anorak hood was pulled over one's head—even when the ceremony proceeded indoors.

When a man had passed a *serrat* on to another it no longer belonged to him, but solely to the one who had received it.

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serratit were employed under the following circumstances:

As a defence against dangers and for obstacles which seemed to be insurmountable.

Against phantoms, ghosts, trolls and supernatural beings in order to keep them away.

For saving hunters when about to perish at sea, and for curing the sick.

To enable one to complete a work in a good and luck-bringing manner.

For harnessing the waves of the ocean and to make storms and gales to cease.

To drive out all noxious animals and render them harmless, and under many other circumstances that are difficult to describe in so many words; they may be summed up as follows: they were used against all that which causes fear and terror, against which man would be powerless but for these *serratit*.

Usually these magic words were spoken in one's natural voice, but very distinctly and often with the repetition of every word twice. There were also *serratit* with a melody, the melody being sung almost as an ordinary drum-song.

At the time when they were in general use *serratit* were not easy to get hold of; for if their owners took them seriously, they were naturally unwilling to pass them on to people who asked merely out of curiosity.

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Some of these *serratit* are recorded below.

If one was pursued by a *tupilak*, it could be chased away by means of this magic song:

ijâ-â, ijâ-â
maligpânga-â, maligpânga-â!
ijâ-â, ijâ-â
qingmerssûp qernerssûp maligpânga-â
qingmerssûp qernerssûp maligpânga-â!
qingmima anuanik anuvdlutit
autdlakasigputit ijâ-â, ijâ-â!
piniartumut piumarputi-it,
piniartumut piumarputi-it ijâ-â, ijâ-â!

which would read almost as follows:

It pursues me, it pursues me!
 A great black dog pursues me,
 A great black dog pursues me!
 Put on one of my dogs' harness
 and get away!
 Go to a hunter,
 Go to a hunter!

Thereupon one had to strike the air with the piece of wood used for the purpose of making boots soft (*kamiut-stick*) and end the song in this manner:

autdlarajigputit, autdlarajigputit,
 tauva autdlarniarajigit,
 tauva autdlarniarajigit!
 uvivitsiartakajivût
 igikartertuinakajivût—ijâ-jâ, ijâ-jâ!

of which the following is an approximate rendering:

You always do go away,
 You always do go away!
 Then go away,
 Then go away!
 We feel confident!
 Things seem to be brightening up for us!

Whereafter the *tupilak* fled, because it could not overpower the intended victim and would now return to the one who made it.

A magic song of this kind was actually called *tupilagsiut*, i. e. a means of chasing evil animals. The magic words themselves do not lend themselves to translation, for—as in all *serratit*—they contain no real meaning. They had their effect and force in the succession of the words and sentences and in the fact that many of the words were ancestral expressions no longer used in the daily conversation but appearing only in these particular combinations.

It was a very intricate matter to make a proper transfer of a *serrat* such as the *tupilagsiut* referred to. First it had to be uttered from the top of the house roof, then at the outside doorway, and finally at the door-way inside the house. While reciting it on the roof one had to walk about sun-wise, and afterwards came the turn of the other places. But when it was all over, and the magic spell had been recited everywhere in the manner described, distinctly and with due repetition of the

various words, the house was generally regarded as properly blessed and inaccessible to evil spirits.—

As said there were many *serratit*, and even shaman disciples had one which they employed when rubbing the two stones together. It was:

ija-ija
 sume qaorortorpua
 sume qaorortorpua ija-ija!
 qâtalîngme qaorortorpunga ija-ija;
 kiap ûma tikîpânga?
 kiap ûma tikîpânga ija-ija!
 îmap tarngnata tikîpânga,
 îmap tarngnata tikîpânga ija-ija!
 sapîgaqarnane
 ajugaqarnane
 ija-ija!

In detail this *serrat* is untranslatable, but it means something like this:

Where am I driving on my sledge?
 I am driving on—?—!
 Who is it that is coming to me?
 The Soul of the Sea is coming to me!
 It knows everything!
 It can do everything!—

These *serrats*, however, naturally were mostly concerned with life in general and the struggle for existence.

A *serrat* to ensure good hunting was as follows:

ija-ijâ
 What is that which goes before me
 across my path?
 ija-ijâ
 A fjord-seal creeps before me
 across my path?
 ija-ijâ
 Be fearless and willing,
 Be fearless and willing!
 ija-ijâ,
 What is that which goes before me
 across my path?
 ija-ijâ,
 A fjord-seal creeps before me
 across my path!
 ija-ijâ!

If this song were recited with the necessary pathos, it would reassure the seal and thus enable the hunter to get close to it.

If a hunter out in his kayak were overtaken by a storm and was in difficulties, he could, if he knew it, say the following *serrat*:

iâ — iâ

What is it that is carrying me towards the shore

What is it that is carrying me towards the shore?

iâ — iâ.

My great grandmother is carrying me towards the shore,

My great grandmother is carrying me towards the shore!

iâ — iâ!

after which the storm would undoubtedly quieten down.—

Fog could be made to lift by the use of the following *serrat*:

ia — ijâ;

It is not steaming for me,

It is not steaming for me!

ia — ijâ;

Let this great fog drift out over the sea

and sink into the horizon,

ia — ijâ!

Let this great fog drift out over the sea

and sink into the horizon!

It is not steaming for me,

It is not steaming for me;

Is is merely one of the people from the river-land that is steaming,

It is merely one of the people from the river-land that is steaming!

ia — ijâ, ia — ijâ! —

The following magic words were for use when a man had capsized in his kayak and was brought ashore for dead, or when a child was still-born; the object was to call the dead to life:

ia — iâ,

What is it I am trying to call to life,

What is it I am trying to call to life?

ia — iâ,

I am trying to call a little eagle to life,

I am trying to call a little eagle to life!

ia — iâ,

What is it I am trying to call to life,

What is it I am trying to call to life?

ia — iâ,

Orúmarajik I am trying to call to life,
 Orúmarajik I am trying to call to life!
 ia — iâ!

If then one blew on the drowned person or the still-born child, it should be possible to get it to revive.—

In winter, when the family moved into houses, one could protect it for the winter against magic, sickness, bad hunting and all kinds of adversity by saying the following *serrat*:

ijâ — ijâ!
 What is it that would pursue me,
 What is it that would pursue me?
 ijâ — ijâ,
 A misfortune would pursue me,
 Misfortune, death and sickness would pursue me!
 ijâ — ijâ.
 Look here, look here, look here!
 I have covered up my face
 And put over it a mask!
 ijâ — ijâ,
 What is it that would pursue me?
 Misfortune, death and sickness would pursue me!
 ijâ — ijâ,
 Look here, look here!
 I have covered up my molars
 And use them as arms!
 Misfortune turns its back on me!
 ijâ — ijâ!

This was recited slowly and with great stress on every single word. It was concluded in the ordinary voice as follows:

You always do go away—then go!

on saying which one had to stand out in the open air with an *amulet*.

This *serrat* was to be pronounced while standing on the roof of the house, whereafter the passage-way was blessed with the following *serrat*:

ijâ — ijâ,
 Just look, a torch!
 ijâ — ijâ,
 A torch up here,
 A torch up here!
 ijâ — ijâ!

and, this having been said with emphasis on every word, one had to repeat in one's ordinary voice:

ukùko — ukùko — ukùko!

Those there — those there — those there!

walking round the house repeating these words all the time.

If it was desired that after a stormy period the weather should quieten down, this could be brought about by the following *serrat*:

ija — ijâ,
 A tremendous storm
 ija — ijâ,
 Goes round about me!
 ija — ijâ,
 Calm and smooth lies the way!
 ija — ijâ,
 What is it that smooths the way for me?
 There is no longer danger,
 ija — ijâ,
 I paddle forward over calm sea,
 ija — ijâ!

It would be an impossible task to collect all the magic words that were used. In the first place, there was scarcely anything at all that was not liable to have these words said over it, and in the second place, many of them have never been revealed and are now forgotten.

But, as already stated, there were *serratit* which suited all the functions of life and all the various phases of existence, not for shamans alone and all the situations they were called upon to handle, but for their helping spirits too; they had their own words, and the shamans were supposed to be able to hear them using them.—

There was never any thought of addressing these words and formulas to anyone or anything in particular. They were simply recited into the air or down into the sea, and in the combinations in which they were employed they were thought to have their own intrinsic power.

The people had no definite idea as to where all these manifold *serratit* originally came from. Some thought that their forefathers had learned them of the animals in the days when animals could speak.

Whatever may be the facts, it is certain that, however great was the danger, these old heathen East Greenlanders felt reassured and encouraged when the magic words of the *serratit* were pronounced, and they did not doubt that the danger had thereby been averted.

This may be the reason why in many cases the formulas really did some good.

XVII. RULES, CUSTOMS, TABOO AND PENANCE

Among unreflecting primitive peoples such as the East Greenlanders once were, with their simple spiritual life, their conceptions of life and death play a very important role.

Nevertheless, there was a striking difference between their ordinary daily existence and their views of life. Whereas they bravely abandoned themselves to the laborious and always dangerous life of a hunter, time after time fearlessly staking their lives in their frail kayaks, and meeting death with a cheerfulness and resignation that cannot but win admiration, their minds became heavy with care and anxiety when they began to reflect on the mystery of death.

This remarkable contrast—or selv-contradiction—between life and opinions made them surround themselves with a crowd of rules, customs and ceremonies which had to be strictly observed if they wished to avert the evil machinations of man or supernatural forces.

The more important of these rules as to taboo and penance are given in the following.

At childbirth.

As a general rule childbirth proceeded in one of the large collective houses, in which several families lived and where all the people, often numbering up to about fifty, remained until just at the moment when birth began and the child appeared.

When labour set in, elderly women were called to assist the midwife. The midwife herself sat on the platform behind the mother and helped from there, especially by pressing and squeezing the woman's waist to assist delivery.

The mother and the assisting women were not to have their hair done up in the usual top-knot, but hanging down loose.

Everything in the house, and especially skins, both new ones and those in use as bedding, had to be taken outside before the child came, no matter what the weather was like. If the birth was a normal one and the child lived, the household things could be brought inside again.

But if the child was stillborn or it died immediately, they had to remain outside for three days, uncovered and exposed to wind and weather.

It was the midwife's mission to entertain the mother with lively and amusing talk in order to help her to forget the birth-throes. If there was a prospect of the labour lasting longer than the usual time, the midwife had to entice and call the child by making rapid whistling noises into the mother's lap. She continued doing this even if it did not seem to be effective.

If delivery was still delayed she had to send for a child, boy or girl, it did not matter, whose birth had been rapid. She then took small pieces of sinew thread, stroked them over the mother's abdomen and gave them to the child, all the while calling and encouraging the coming infant. The child with the sinew threads, however, had to run as hard as he or she could out of the house and place the threads on the wall by the entrance to the passage. After the sinew thread the midwife would take small pieces of meat, then blubber, which were to be rubbed over the mother's abdomen and then taken outside as quickly as possible and placed on the same place as the sinew threads.

All the while the midwife would repeat magic formulas, known only to her in her office of accoucheur, and then it was thought that in some manner beyond the comprehension of ordinary people the sinew thread would help to draw the child out of its mother's womb, whereas the pieces of meat and blubber were to entice it. This process had to be repeated at brief intervals if delivery continued to be slow, and in such cases it was not uncommon to see all the hollows and chinks outside the passage filled with these pieces of "bait".

If these remedies did not do any good, the midwife had to summon the woman's husband. Then as long as the labour continued he had to run in and out of the house continuously in order to try to persuade his coming child to run after him. And while the father was running in and out as hard as he could the midwife continued her whistling, also calling into the mother's lap:

"Come! Hurry up and run after your father! Don't let your mother suffer too long while everybody in the house is wrought up with waiting!"

All the while the midwife would assist her magic and her formulas by holding the mother tightly round the waist, pressing and squeezing, and also inserting her hand to the child. If only she continued doing so the child would at last be delivered, dead or alive.

As soon as labour began in earnest everybody in the house had to make ready to leave it, and when the head was presented the midwife had to announce the fact at once by crying:

"It's coming! It's coming! It's coming!"

They were then to leave the house quickly. In fact, there was sometimes such a panic that people got stuck in the passage, so that it was impossible to get out or in.

This headlong flight had a reason: the child might be stillborn. In that case everybody would otherwise have been in the same room as a corpse, which had to be avoided at any cost by all who were not near relatives of the dead.

If the birth was normal and the child lived, the people living in the house were free to go in again, and most did so. But if it were still-born, no one could go in until the corpse had been taken out.

For three days after childbirth the mother was not to eat from the same dish or vessel as the others in the house. She had to have her own utensils, and these were not used by anyone else.

Nor was she to take water from the water-jar in the house, but get others to do it for her. Again, others had to place the drinking-bowl to her lips, as she herself had not to touch it.

The child was to be named immediately after birth. If it had a grandmother—paternal or maternal—she had to name it. Otherwise this was the duty of the midwife.

The woman—grandmother or midwife—first cleansed the nail of her fourth finger and put a drop of water under it. This drop was then to be allowed to fall into the child's mouth, at the same time holding the child's right fourth finger with her own left hand and solemnly pronouncing the name which the child was to bear.

If the child was to be called *Aningâq*, for example, this had to be announced in the following manner:

“*qaut—qaut—qaut—qaut!*
Aningârtâqaut!”

“They have—they have—they have—they have
They have received a new *Aningâq!*”

The rule was that the name of the nearest member of the family who was dead was to be used first and foremost, but no distinction was made between male and female names, which were used indiscriminately.

A woman expecting a child had not to make clothing for it beforehand, for it might be stillborn, and no woman if she could possibly avoid it was allowed to make clothing for a corpse.

As a consequence, she had to wait till it was seen whether or not the child was alive. Then sealskin clothing was made for it. While in

the making, and until it was ready, the clothing had to be kept covered with whole skins.

If the newly-arrived child was a boy, who as a future family provider had to be made immune against dangers and toil and the evils of life, the father or grandfather had to sing magic songs over it immediately.

When a man child was born to people who understood magic they could give it an *ukutsuk*, a seal snout, which was sewn at the top of the child's hood. Thus from birth the child was given the ability to overcome *tupilait*, evil animals. But the condition that this ability should unfold and act was that during his youth the boy in return had to be temperate and observe quite a number of dietary rules which often would give him a good deal of trouble.—

For a boy who at birth had been provided with an *ukutsuk* amulet there would also be a kind of birth-feast, and during the years as he grew up there would be feasting for him on all special occasions.

As soon as the birth and naming ceremonies were over and the boy had received his *ukutsuk*, his father would have a whole seal brought up from his winter store. This seal would be flensed by the midwife, and was then called "the boy's first catch". When being flensed it had to be done in the particular manner which would always be observed later when the boy's own seals were flensed.

Thus the seal was looked upon as the child's own catch, and it was the father's desire that the guests actually should regard it as such.

The abdominal blubber on this seal was to be cut up into small strips with the skin on. Then the strips were cut into small cubes, of which everybody in the house, both adults and children, were to have one. These *tamoragssat*, chewing pieces, were to be distributed by the boy's father himself, who accompanied the gift with the following words to each one:

"This is my son's first catch! This is really my son's first seal".

As related elsewhere, East Greenlanders eat many kinds of plants pickled in blubber. Regarding the blubber of a new-born boy's so-called "first catch" the rule was that it was not to be eaten with the plants and berries of the ground until three days after the seal had been flensed. Later this had to be observed with all seals which a boy provided with an *ukutsuk*-amulet later on caught when a man.

When all the blubber cubes had been distributed, the father would say:

"Now you must eat the seal! Eat it all up! But you must not gnaw or chew any bone into pieces!"

The reason why no bone had to be injured was that this seal was to be caught by the boy throughout his whole life. The fact was that the animals were regarded as immortal like human beings, and it was thought that the first seal a man killed as his first would keep to him always in after life and allow itself to be taken by him again and again. But if any of the bones were disrespectfully gnawed through, the risk was that its soul would revenge itself by letting the boy be eaten by some monster.—

This ceremony of the “first seal” of a boy provided with an *ukutsuk*-amulet was to be repeated every time the boy was to have new clothes, until he grew so big that he could go out with the hunters. Thereafter there was to be a feast every time the young hunter really made his first kill of the various animals or birds: a gull, an eider duck, a fjord seal, a bladder-nose, a narwhal, a bear, and so on.

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Children whose coming was not very welcome did not get many amulets or mascots, some of them none at all, no doubt. Thus in a way they were much less restricted and were able to live a freer life than children whose parents had especially desired to protect them. When parents had previously lost children they tried to make the later ones less exposed to sickness, danger, magic and death by making them *piárgusiat* (as to which see chapter XVIII: “Rules of Life”).

At Death.

If a person was about to die, all goods and chattels had to be got out of the house before death came.

Immediately the person died the body was corded in a skin, whereafter it was placed on the skin on which the person had lain during his sickness and dragged out of the house, either to the place where it was to be thrown into the sea or to the heap of stones under which it was to be buried.

When a man died, his body was clothed in his hunting dress, the coat of which was corded tight round the neck and wrists. If a woman died, her hood was lashed round her neck with a rope or thong. This was done on account of the *amaut*, the pouch in which children are carried, which leaves the neck very much open. The clothing was also to be corded tight round the waist and wrists, so that “she should not be cold”.

The dead man took all his hunting implements and his kayak with him into the sea or the grave. If the body was to be thrown into the sea, the kayak was first broken up before being thrown in. But if it was to be buried it was not smashed; the skin was removed and laid over the body, whereafter stones were piled on it. If the man had been a great hunter and there were sufficient skins available, more skins had

to be laid over the body, and the kayak-skin would be rolled up and placed by the side of the grave.

In the same manner a dead woman took all her sewing implements, meat-dish and beads with her, the latter, however, only if she had been very fond of them. On the other hand she could not take her lamp, because there was oil on it and this would delay her and give her trouble on the journey to the Land of the Dead.

One had to exercise the utmost care not to touch a corpse. None but the nearest relations were allowed, or dared, to be present at the funeral and the ceremonies connected with it.

After a death the house had to be cleaned out very thoroughly and everybody in the house had to wash over the whole body. Those who had touched the dead had to throw away all their clothing and put on new.

Belongings of the Dead.

Men and women in good health could while alive give any of their property to children or grandchildren, but it was to be stated expressly that these gifts were to be regarded as amulets when the givers themselves were dead. In that case they could be retained after their death, and were thought to acquire gradually such power that they could be employed as weapons against the Moon in its capacity of the Watcher over the observance of penances and taboos by unclean people. And the older these amulet-heirlooms became, the stronger was their power supposed to be.

Things received from a person without first being given as amulets and afterwards regarding them as such were considered to have the opposite effect after the giver's death. They offended the Moon Man more and more the older they became, and if one kept them and used them, one ran the risk that in the end the Moon Man would come down to the settlement where such things were taking place and kill the population.—

A widow was not to inherit anything after her husband, even though she had sons who could use his kayak, umiak and hunting gear. One exception to this rule, however, was iron: knives, harpoon heads, side prongs on bird-darts, and similar things.

If a widow broke any of these rules there was the risk that either the Moon Man or the Thunder Man would come over where she lived and scare the people to death.

The following legend gives an account of this:

Some young people were one day sitting in a house playing the game in which the players sit round a skin and each then tries to pull it to him. The one who ends by getting the skin receives a reward from all the others.

A widow gave them a piece of kayak skin which had been used as the underlayer on her late husband's kayak.

Just when the game had come to an end there was a thunderstorm so violent that a fire was lit in the sky—even the mountain tops were burning with flame.

All the people in the settlement would have perished if there had not been an old shaman present, who pronounced such powerful magic words and formulas that at last the Thunder Man had to abandon his efforts to punish these people.

Men's Penances and Taboos.

If a man had had to do with a corpse, he was to remain at the back of the platform for three days, his face to the wall and his back to the interior of the house. During that time he was not to go out on to the floor at all. His physical needs he had to relieve inside the house in vessels provided for the purpose. He was not to speak to anybody, and the food necessary to him was handed to him by others.

In that state a man was called *alitsissoq*, i. e. one who is waiting to get it at a distance. All who had been in contact with a corpse were considered unclean and dangerous.

During these three days the man every morning and evening had to wail and mourn the deceased aloud. Both men and women during these days kept all their clothing on inside the house, even having the hood pulled over their head as a sign of sorrow. As it was usually very warm in the old houses, which had many lamps, one can understand what torture it must have been to have to move about clad in furs in an atmosphere where all others lived almost naked. But it was all considered necessary, in order that the unclean mourners should not infect the other inhabitants of the house.

After the three days were over the man could again go hunting as usual. Before doing so, however, he had to perform certain ceremonies, during which he was called *tigussissoq*, i. e. one who takes (his habits again).

When he went out for the first time after the three days of getting the death and thereby death itself at a distance, he was to be accompanied by an old man or woman who had the use of magic words. This person would take him round behind the house, where a ceremony was performed called *ardlarsaineq* and consisting in their turning their faces toward each other while the old person repeated magic formulas.

If thereafter the man was going out hunting, the two walked together down to the beach, where more magic formulas were to be said. But in this case the unclean, who was to be cleansed, turned his back to the other.

Before the first seal was caught the unclean hunter was not to paddle out to sea, but always follow the line of the coast or into the fjords. Nor was he allowed to take the harpoon head out of the animal when caught, but let it remain together with the line. He was not to make the usual holes round the nose of the seal and make the towing line fast in them, but had to bend another line round the seal's neck and tow it in with that. When he reached the shore he had to walk away from his kayak and seal at once and leave both to others to attend to.

When an unclean hunter's first seal after the event was flensed inside the house, great care had to be taken that not a single drop of blood fell on the floor. The meat of the animal did not belong to the man himself, but had to be shared out among all the people in the house while it was still raw and freshly flensed. But when this meat was to be cooked it was not to be mixed with other food.

During the period until the unclean hunter caught his first seal after the event, his kayak when on land had to lie bottom upwards, and, when about to be used, had to be carried down to the water and up again after use by others. The man's hunting gear, too, had to be arranged on the kayak deck by others; he had to crawl into the kayak while it was still on land, whereafter it had to be pushed into the water.

As soon as these rules and ceremonies with regard to the first seal had been observed the man could resume his usual habits. But for a whole year he was not to appear merry or happy, nor take part in any song-feast, that is if the deceased had been one of whom he was fond. His pain and sorrow at the death was not to cease till a child had been born and named after the deceased. If it was his wife that died, he was not to marry again within the year.

The taboos and penances to which a man had to subject himself after a death were much easier to observe than in the case of a woman. The reason was that for a man it was necessary to get rid of the uncleanness quicker than for a woman, for the man was the family provider. Therefore the magic words and formulas used for the man were much more powerful and of a more purifying effect than those used for a woman.

Women's Penances and Taboos.

When a woman had had to do with a corpse she had to observe the same penances and taboos as a man in the first three days. She had to take care not to reach from the platform out over the floor or to touch any utensil in the house, and her food had to be handed to her. And like the man, she had to relieve nature indoors.

When the three days were over, she could begin to go out, but the period of mourning with its strict taboos lasted a whole year for

her. During that time she was completely fenced in with rules and prohibitions and was looked upon as an unclean person who could do great harm if she infringed a single one of the prescribed rules of conduct.

Whenever she went out into the open air she was to walk like one in deep sorrow, head and eyes down, and she was not to look out over the sea or up to the sky. She was not to look at the sun or the moon or the stars, nor should she delight her eyes by looking for home-coming kayakmen or sledges arriving or driving away.

It was strictly forbidden for her to mention the name of any game animal. If she saw one, a seal or a bear, she had to say to those who were with her: "Look around you, look around you!" And if no hunter were out, she was allowed to go into the house and by signs try to make the people understand that there was something to do for a hunter.

If she had been outside, on entering the house again she had to sit with her back to the others, and every morning when she awoke, and every night when she lay down, she had to weep and wail loudly in order to show her sorrow.

She was forbidden to smile and to speak aloud to others. If a question were put to her, she had to answer in a low voice, or better in a whisper.

She could take food if there were any in the house, but she must never go herself and fetch food from a cache. For the first month she was not even allowed to ask for something to eat, no matter how hungry she was and no one gave her anything.

She had to have her own water-vessel, and she was allowed to use only her fingers and her teeth to the food she ate; she was strictly forbidden to touch either knife or ulo.

During the year of mourning she could go outside at any time of the day, but she was not to stay out long at a time. If she became thirsty, she was not to use her own boot to drink from, but had to borrow another's for the purpose. If she came to a stream, she was not to walk across it, but jump.

If when travelling with others they came to sea ice, she could not sit down to rest like the others; if she became tired she had to ask one of her companions to squat down, so that she might sit on their knees and rest. She was not allowed to ride on a sledge, but there was nothing to prevent her from joining a party in a umiak. She could also go berry-gathering with others in autumn, but care had to be taken that the berries she plucked were not mixed with others'.

A very strict diet was to be observed by the woman. This was considered to be very important, and if she broke any of these rules or taboos it might be fatal, not to her alone but to everybody in the settlement and also to their catch.

It was very strictly forbidden for her to eat any of the insides of a seal. Nor was she allowed to eat fish, except salmon. Eggs were also taboo, as well as bear meat, *mátak* (narwhal flesh) and walrus meat.

All she was allowed to eat was ordinary seal meat, but not the eyes, tongue or snout. She had to beware of gnawing the bones of the meat she ate.

When the year of mourning was over—reckoned strictly from the day when the person had died—the woman had to put on new clothes, whereafter she was taken down to the shore by an old man or woman familiar with magic words and formulas. Arrived there, such of these words or phrases as were thought to have a cleansing effect were said over her. On going back to the house she had to take with her a seaweed plant. This was a sign that she could no longer infect any of the animals of the sea.

Then the oldest member of the household called the others together and said:

“tassa una arnaq nutångorpog: now this woman has been renewed”.

If anyone wished to marry her, he could now do so.

It was said that for the woman this year of mourning was very hard to get through. In the end it was felt almost like a disease, not being allowed to join merry people for a whole year, not to dare to laugh or be the slightest bit gay, not to dare to mention the names of those delightful game-animals, or to run freely down to the beach and welcome the kayakmen when they came home happy with their catch, not to go near when in winter the sledges came racing home up over the beach.

It was as if nature no longer existed for such poor women. They were only to look at the place where they set their feet. It is said that some pined away and died as a consequence of the taboos and penances they had to observe so strictly, because amid all their happy neighbours they could not bear to be shut out from all that meant life to them.

XVIII. RULES OF LIFE

Pregnancy, Childbirth, etc.

No one must look in through the window of a house in which there are pregnant women. Otherwise it may happen that when the child is to be born it merely peeps out of its mother's lap and then goes back again without being born.—

When a woman who has lost her child gives birth to another, she must take care when going outside for the first time that only the head of the child is visible from the pouch. She must make an amulet of wood, to be worn on the child's body wrapped in water-tight skin. On the outside of her clothing where the amulet rests there must be a small opening in order that it may breathe.—

A woman who has just had a child must never relieve herself inside the house, but must go outside, no matter how cold it may be. This in order not to expose the child to an accident.—

As soon as a woman has given birth to a child, a mussel shell must be fastened to the cord from which the cooking pot is suspended, if meat is to be cooked over the blubber lamp. If this is not done, the great child-robber *Amârsiniôq* will come for the child, which will pine away and die at once.—

When a woman who has lost a child gives birth to another, the new-born child must not eat meat of seal foetus or of a raven, for if it does so, it will also die. Next, the child's coat must be made with the skin inverted, so that the tail, which is usually below, is up at the back of the hood.—

If two step-sisters are both barren, they must eat the tip of a bear's penis raw; they will then both have sons.—

Children.

Infant children must never be allowed to see their reflection in a lake, for, if the reflection smiles, the child will die.—

Children who are called after dead persons must eat certain parts of a seal, all according to the person whose name they have received:

A child named after its father must eat either the shoulder-blade or the upper-arm cut.

One named after its mother must eat the meat of the hip.

One having the name of a hunter's son must eat the forearm.

One called after a hunter's daughter must eat the meat of the caudal vertebra.

This diet keeps the person in constant connection with the forces contained in the name.—

If it is desired that a child shall live long, it must be allowed to sit on the grave of its dead name.—

Children must always undress quickly, otherwise a spirit will call in at the window: "You, in there with all those clothes on, come outside!"—

During the years when children are growing strong, the clothing must be made with gull sinews. The children will then be like the gulls: nothing escapes their attention.—

The first time a boy has his hair cropped, the hair cut off must be thrown into the sea. Afterwards the hairs will be the animals he catches.—

If a child sleeps alone, its face must not turn towards the inner part of the platform, for then it is said that it has turned its back to the door of the skies and may be stolen by spirits.—

A boy ought not to possess a spoon, for then he will be unable to hit his quarry with the bird-dart.—

When the clothes of a new-born boy are to be made there should be no knot at the end of the thread, whereas this may be so if it is a girl.—

The clothing of a new-born child must not be finished until the day after the birth.—

The clothing of a new-born child must not be washed. The inside may merely be rubbed with blubber; afterwards it can be scraped clean with mussel shells. This is done in order that the child may not die.—

Children ought to be allowed quietness in the evening, for it is in the evening when all magic is in the air.—

When a child grows without having had its hair cropped, great care must be taken that it is not cropped later in life, for then the person will die. —

When a child is named after a dead person, those who are pleased at this naming must as often as possible give the child some of the food to eat of which the dead person was fond.—

Piârqusiat, or those who are to be made ridiculous, are children whom one tries to protect from death.

When a woman loses a child and gives birth to another, she must, in order to protect it against death, make it a coat of sealskin on which the hair lies across and not longwise. The trousers are to be so made that the hairs on one leg lie downwards and on the other leg upwards.

Whenever the child goes out it must pull its hood down, and it must not take its coat off to sleep.

Children who are made ridiculous by their clothing can have various things hanging on their breast. Often it is a carved doll wrapped in water-tight skin. And the coat is usually made to open back or front, contrary to all custom. In such cases pieces of skin from the belly of a seal are sewn along the edges and the coat is fastened with them.

There are those who make clothing for these children simply by folding a seal skin and cutting out a hole for the head. Others give them clothes of which coat and trousers are all in one piece; these garments may also be cut up the back or front and fastened with pieces of seal skin. One can also sew dog-skin on the sealskin coats of these boys. Children wearing such a garment will not eat dog's flesh; if they do, the power contained in their being made ridiculous will fade away and they will die.

The following idea lies behind this custom:

"My first children died, though I did everything I could to clothe them as nicely and finely as possible. Perhaps the evil spirits who take their lives will care less about them if instead I make them ridiculous and give them clothing that is the opposite of what is required by custom and fashion."—

Concerning Deaths.

If one would laugh at a deceased person, one must bite one's lip at the same time.—

When a woman has had a death in her family, she must not cut a seal's throat.—

If a woman sews shortly after a death she will drag the dead out of the grave. Her thread will acquire sound and begin to hum when drawn through the skin and one will hear the dead come in through the passage-way, dragging his grave-skin behind him. So a woman who is sewing must, as soon as she feels that the needle resists, put a man's

boot on one foot and a woman's boot on the other, go outside and pour a full urine-pail on to the midden.—

When a dying person is about to expire, everything in the house must be taken outside.—

When the person is dead the corpse must be put into its grave clothes—if it is a woman, only by her husband, and if a man, only by his wife, whereas if the person was unmarried, only by the nearest relatives.

A corpse must never be carried out through the passage, but only through the window, whereafter it must be thrown into the sea in order that the soul may go to the Land of the Dead under the sea.

Anyone related to the deceased must not eat seal-head, seal flippers or insides for a whole year after the death. If they do, they will die.—

A woman who has lost a child must for three days remain on the main platform with her face to the wall and her back to the people. If she has to go out to relieve nature, she must do it early in the morning, before the kayaks set out, and thereafter she must not go out again till all the kayaks have come home. She must observe this carefully, because she is unclean.—

A woman who has lost her child must not eat anything in an *umiak*, but eat her meal only when she has come ashore.—

When a woman who has lost her child goes down to an *umiak*, she must be conducted to it by another and helped into the boat. In particular, care must be taken that she does not touch the beach with her hands.—

A woman who has lost her child must not go down to the beach without first having said a magic formula.—

Of the food that can be gathered at the water edge, a woman who has lost her child may eat only ordinary seaweed. It must be well washed in fresh water.—

A woman who has recently lost her child may not do the following things:

1. She must not do any work outdoors where people can see her. If she is to patch a kayak, for example, it must be taken into the house; if this cannot be done she must do the work behind the house or tent.
2. She must not tread on ice.
3. She must not wade over a stream.
4. After a meal when she throws bone leavings out, she must not throw them on to the midden, but turn the meat-tray away from the house towards land and simply empty the contents there.
5. She must never gnaw bird bones, especially those of guillemots.—

The husband or wife of a recently deceased spouse must not dry any kind of clothing or skins in the open, for then there would be storms, rain and cold, so that people could not get out to hunt.—

Sealing.

When the meat of a seal is “alive” and still quivering while it is being flensed, it means that another seal will soon be caught.

The same is the case when the joints of the animal have not fused together but can easily be cut through, and when the root of the tail is short.—

When a young man comes home with his first seal, its face must be washed in urine. This is done in order that the one who killed the seal may not be susceptible to magic.—

If a hunter has difficulty in catching game, he must bind a thong round the head of his wife or another woman, tighten it and pull at the thong while saying: “Who is pursuing me with magic?”

If the head that is bound with the thong becomes heavy, he must say: “Put it right!”

Then the inquirer must give the one he has questioned two beads on a sinew thread, and when he then binds these around her arm he must say: “He gives you this”!—

If the head of a seal is to be sent to another settlement, one half of the nose must be cut away or one eye taken out. If this is not done the hunter will have difficulty in catching other seals.—

A hunter who catches a gestating seal must, when the it is flensed, give the foetus water to drink, in order that the soul of the seal may conceive a desire to be caught by the hunters in the house where it is given water. For seals suffer from thirst.—

When a man has just lost a child and then catches a bladdernose, he must not cut the portions out himself. Nor may his wife cut out the belly-piece from the skin and blubber which is usually handed round in the form of chewing cubes to the neighbours; if she does so, the bladdernoses will change their course and leave the settlement owing to contact with the unclean.—

Bears.

A person eating bear meat and dropping the piece he is eating on to the floor must not pick straight it up again, but take it from behind the legs in under the bent knees. Otherwise he will himself be eaten by a bear.—

If one breaks wind while eating bear meat, one must say: "That sound seemed to come out from the ice!" This is said because bears come out from the ice, and then the bear's soul will not feel offended.—

When a bear is sighted, a woman must speak out through the place where the side-platform is made fast, saying: "Go out and buy sole-leather, otherwise you won't be able to keep count of the seals you have killed; come here and trade with us!"

When the bear is killed and the head severed from the body, it must be laid below the window with the nose inwards, whereafter someone must say to it: "Let your mother or father come and trade with us!" Then they will soon get another bear. For these sayings lure the bear's soul.—

Having caught a bear, the gall, eye-lids and nose must be thrown into the sea on the fifth day thereafter. This must be done quite early in the morning at dawn, for then another bear will soon come to the hunter.—

When a bear is killed, the hunter allows the dead animal to drink water, after first drinking a little himself. This is done in order that the soul of the bear shall not be thirsty.—

When a hunter thrusts his lance into a bear, he must, on withdrawing it, lick the blood and fat on the lance-point. He does so in order to make sure that he will eat of the bear.—

If a man who has just lost a son finds a bear, he must not wound it himself, but merely be present with the hunters who kill it.

(In East Greenland it is the custom that the one who sees a bear first has a right to the skin and a certain part of the meat, and it is said of him that he caught the bear, no matter whether he wounds it or not.)—

Presents must be laid beside the head of a killed bear—men's property for a he-bear and women's property for a she-bear.—

If a bear runs away so quickly that there is a risk of its escaping, those left in the house must tie a piece of plaited sinew thread to one of the wooden legs carrying the drip-bowl of the lamp. The other end is fastened to the platform just behind the lamp. This will call the bear back again.—

If sinew thread plaited and fastened in this way does not stop the fleeing bear, the mother of the one who is to have the bear, i. e. the one who first saw it, or if he or she has no mother, an elder relation, must let her trousers down and shuffle about quite slowly with her trousers

hanging round her thighs. Then the bear will also feel as if it were losing its trousers and only move slowly.—

— — —

When field ice lies close in to the shore, one throws either stones or pieces of bone from an old grave out on the ice; it will then drift out to sea.

One can also make the ice drift away by taking pieces of it up on to a hill and making dolls of them. The dolls must have eyes, which must look towards the north.—

If it is found that a round piece has been cut out of a garment, it means that someone who would do evil by magic has done it. The owner of the garment must at once cut another round piece out of the same hole and skid the piece out over the sea, turning anti-sunwise. The evil will then turn on the magic-maker himself.—

As soon as guests who are about to leave put aside the dish from which they have eaten, it must be taken away, the host saying: "The channel you have to cross is very wide". If the dish is not removed, it may happen that their fullness remains and they will not have the strength to get over the wide channel.—

If a spider is seen descending from its web, it must be pinched to death with the words: "You can have the fingers I pinch with, then I can have your fingers". This is done in order to become as clever as the spider.—

If one has had an uncanny, supernatural experience, it must be told at once to others, otherwise the supernatural will grow in size and evil.—

If old graves begin to howl at night, oil from a drip-bowl of a lamp must be poured over them.—

During an eclipse of the sun all drinking water must be covered up.—

A hunter who gets a pain in his shoulder must place the waist-band of his mother's trousers over the shoulder, for then the pain will disappear. If his mother is dead, he can instead let the woman who is called after his mother tattoo him.—

Magic and Shamanism.

If a woman who deals in magic has helped a hunter, who otherwise had difficulty in catching anything, to catch a seal, the man will later feel obliged to provide for the woman as long as she lives.—

A woman who occupies herself with magic is called *auningniartog*, one who will get blood for herself.—

A person who wishes to meet or see, or on the whole deals with supernatural beings, must take great care not to touch old urine.—

One who wishes to be a shaman and meets spirits or other supernatural things must not mention it. If he does, he will never again see anything supernatural.—

Only those who are irreproachable in their habits and manners can be *angákut*, shamans.

They begin their apprenticeship by rubbing a stone on the granite surface in a cave. Such a place is called *angákusarfik*. As a rule there are a large flat stone and a smaller round one, and the round one is rubbed against the flat one.

After being rubbed for some time the stone makes a noise almost like the buzzing of a gnat, and, as soon as this is heard, the disciple first tries to flee, but soon returns and continues rubbing. At last an invisible being comes out of the stone, buzzes like a fly and takes up its residence in the person, who at the same time becomes unconscious.

When he comes round again he is quite naked, but feels at once that he can see many more things than before he lost consciousness.

Afterwards his knowledge of the hidden things grows continuously, and he can do many new things, for example make dumb objects speak.—

On going out for the first time after an illness the person must have his hood over his head, if it is a man. If a woman, she must wrap up her topknot wrapped up. If the head is not covered in this manner the person will have a relapse. But on going out the person must say: "I can truly be grateful that you sought so well!"—

Immediately one notices that the Moon Man is approaching, the lamps in the house must be extinguished, and the one who must convoke the spirits must go out on to the floor and summon his helping spirits, who will come at once in order to take from the Moon Man his wooden staff.

The Moon Man, who is afraid of losing this staff, will then flee, but the helping spirits follow him all the way to the moon, and, when they reach his house, they try to conciliate him. They do not leave him till they have succeeded, after which the weather will be fine.—

If a magic umiak, *umiaríssat*, or magic kayak, *qajariaq*, comes in sight, old urine must be quickly poured along the beach down by the settlement where a landing will be attempted, for then the boat will turn and flee.—

— — —

When one eats seaweed no thanks need be said for the meal, for seaweed is eaten only when hunting is bad.—

One seaweed plant, called *uvisak*, must not be eaten, for it has spirits which take vengeance if it is eaten.—

A person gathering tubular seaweed, *suvdluitsoq*, must at once cut off its "flight feathers" (*papia*), which neutralises its avenger-spirit.—

When a guillemot is cooked, its head must not be smashed in order to eat the brains unless blubber has first been spat in through the skull down to the brain. If this is not done, all the guillemots will leave the sea.—

In spring, when the guillemots begin to arrive, care must be taken not to cook sea-birds and land-birds together, for then the guillemots will leave the coast.

The enmity between sea-birds and land-birds started with a fight between a ptarmigan and long-tailed duck.—

After the meat has been eaten, seal bones must not remain in the house overnight; they must not be thrown into the rubbish-bucket nor be gnawed by dogs. This would offend the seal spirits. When all the seal bones are gathered together they must be thrown into the sea.—

A sand-skipper must never be killed, for it would revenge itself.—

When a man has been out on the ice fishing for sharks and is about to enter his house, he must be careful to get all juices and scales removed from his boots before going in. Otherwise the souls of the sharks will come up and revenge themselves. And, it is said, sharks are terrible when they haunt a place for the purpose of seeking revenge.—

If a hunter hooks a shark but the shark gets away, he must tattoo himself at the root of his nose. If he does not, the shark, after having been down to the bottom of the sea, will recognize him when it looks up to the top of the water and take revenge on him. But if he makes even a tiny scratch or line at the root of his nose it will not know him again.—

If a man finds a dead sea-perch at the water edge, he must not take it into the house for three days; otherwise the soul of the perch will be angry and revenge itself.—

— — —
When both man and wife die within a year, the house in which they lived must not be occupied by others.

When later on the house collapses and becomes a ruin, several years must elapse before a new house is built on the site.—

One must not live in very old houses. Even if no deaths occur, people should leave a house when it becomes too old, for there may be much sickness in such a house.—

— — —

If a hunter remains away a long time, his relatives must not mourn over him in their anxiety, for their tears will merely lead him to death.—

If a kayakman remains away so long that anxiety about his fate is felt, those waiting for him should try to warm some of his clothing in on their bodies. If the clothes do not become warm, only damp, it will be proof that the man has been lost.—

— — —

On the day after the shortest day in the year, water must be scooped from the sea into a wooden vessel and as quickly as possible poured over a mountain top.

Then the sun will rise quickly in the sky.—

XIX. ANCIENT SAYINGS AND OMENS

Animal Omens.

When the diver (Great Northern Diver) cries, rain will fall.—

When the ravens scream, they come as heralds for visitors.—

When the ravens scream loudly when flying over a house, it means luck.—

If a raven's nest facing north is destroyed, it means a northerly gale.—

If a raven's nest facing south is destroyed, it means a southerly gale.—

Personal Omens.

If one's eyelid itches or twitches, something is going to happen.—

If one's eye twitches, it means that something surprising will soon happen.—

If there is a ringing in one's ears, it means that one of the family who has long been dead is asking for food. One must then say "Eat your fill and quench your thirst!" One may also carry a small piece of meat to the graves or splash water in that direction.—

When the tongue itches, it means that one will soon quarrel.—

If the corner of the mouth twitches, it means that a seal will soon be caught. The hunter's food must then be covered with something he likes; the omen will then be fulfilled sooner.—

A sore in the corner of the mouth means lies.—

If the soles of the feet itch, it means that a fox is walking in your footprints.—

— — —

If one makes bubbles in the water one is calling for rain.—

If one blows through angelica stalks it will rain.—

If one offers pieces of meat to a stone standing upright like a man, it will return the service. —

If one sees a stone with cracks or fissures in it, one must place a piece of blubber or meat in it. "The stone with the open mouth" will then repay you well.—

If a thing becomes lost, it means that the owner will die a year after it disappeared.

If it is found later, one's life can be saved by cutting a piece from the object and throwing it away. If it is something that cannot be divided, one ties a thong round it and hangs it up, saying: "Now I hang it!"—

When a storm begins with a violent swell, it means that the soul of a shark is taking revenge on mankind.—

— — —

If one is fond of sleep it is a sign that one has a large spleen.—

Those who have much to think of get grey hairs early.—

People with large eyes do not see so well as people with small eyes.—

Those who are lazy at fetching water usually find an empty water-barrel when they are thirsty themselves.—

Those who amuse themselves by breaking wind at others get hanging buttocks after death.—

If one eats of food one has given away one gets long hairs on the buttocks.—

If one takes a gift back again, one gets long hairs on the buttocks.—

Boys who steal from the meat-pot become bad hunters. —

— — —

Pretty women have dimples in the cheeks.—

Women with a short nose are easily angered.—

Women who can bend their thumb right back are good seamstresses.

Women who are married to shamans always sew with a long thread.—

Infant wailing is often heard from women who have tried to give birth in secret.—

If a pregnant woman dreams often of a dead person, it means that the person wishes the child to be named after him.—

— — —

The Sun and the Moon are brother and sister. The Sun is a woman, the Moon is a man.—

The Moon Man punishes people if they do not observe the taboos, for he comes down to earth in human form, big as a giant and in a bear skin.—

To those he will punish the Moon Man comes with a black wooden staff to pull down the house walls.—

All magic disappears after midnight.

XX. EAST GREENLAND WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS

Supplement to HOLM's Collection of Words.

(Communicated by CHRISTIAN POULSEN).

I. Earth; Vegetation; Ice.

aqitseq — soapstone.	nunarasâq — stone.
apusineq, apusinertûkajê — glacier; large glacier.	nutsugkat — seaweed plants (edible).
asjiarpoq — pluck berries.	pisatokajâq — berry-bag.
aukâq — dried blood, eaten with berries.	pissarsimaqaoq — have plucked many berries.
eqitit — seaweed plants (edible).	pissaujat — plucked berries.
iluliaq, iluliartûkajê — iceberg; large iceberg.	pissaula — bag for berries.
iserqalekajeqaoq — an iceberg calving.	pukugkat — crowberry.
mamartit — crowberry.	qeqertarajuk — island.
manigsivijâq, manigsivijârtûkajê — plain.	qîneq — ice-foot; ice-edge.
mângeq — root.	quaitsut — angelica.
mulaussaq — heather plant.	qûlit — sorrels.
nalautâqaoq — there is snow-free new ice, so that one can hear the seals blowing.	sikeq — pieces of ice; soiled sea-ice.
nerissartat — seaweed plants (edible).	sikilinguaqaoq — ice is forming.
nuna — land; stone.	sikuaq — thin ice.
nunarajait — stone heap.	sîvarasâq — clay.
	tungujortut — marsh whortle- berry.
	tûvaligkat — earth-nuts.
	úpilikajeqaoq — calving, falling down (a glacier).
	usúngulat — angelica roots.

II. Space; Air; Light; Sky.

âke — early in the morning.	aningâq — the moon.
alâkalerpoq — (the sun) rises.	asalut — "Charles's Wain".

avángarnisaq — Southwest Greenland.

avangnamukarpoq — going to West Greenland.

âvssit — a constellation (of two stars).

kûkiaujat — the Pleiades.

nalârteq — "Venus".

natarqornaq — hail.

natarqornaqaoq — it is hailing.

norparpoq — (the sun) goes down.

pârnuarpoq — (the snow) is drifting (rare word).

perqigsivoq — the snow is ceasing.

perserpoq — (the snow) is drifting.

pitoralikaseqaoq — it is storming.

qangnileqaoq — it is snowing.

qâtuarpaluleqaoq — the sea is breaking up.

qaumassuatsiaq — star.

qaumassuatsiapagtorajuit — the stellar heavens.

qaumauvaq — the sun.

qaumauvaleqaoq — the sun is shining.

qernerâq — wind; gust of wind (across the sea).

qernâleqaoq — the air is moving; there are gusts of wind over the sea.

siagdleqaoq — it is raining.

sialitâlinguaqaoq — it is raining on the ice.

tagpikângarpoq — it is a north wind.

útalit — the constellation "Orion".

uvatsiaq — during the morning.

III. The Body.

ajitat — spleen.

âmangâq — heart.

ameq — hide, skin.

amuvâjaq — intestine.

anerneq — lung.

avâdeq (avatdleq) — little finger.

avatit — hand.

erqivan — bird's tail.

ikâritân — collar-bone.

iloqut — liver.

ingmariartoq — stomach

ipernijarpâ — gnawing a bone.

isaruaq — wing.

isiâlaq — throat.

isigaq — foot; hind flipper.

isigteq — great toe.

itiavit — buttocks.

kanajautaq — diaphragm.

kaninuk — wrist.

kigdermip (kigdlormiup) tungâ — left hand.

kínauvik — anus.

kûsuk — penis.

mánissaq (mániussaq) — testicle.

mingugtoq — blubber.

mingugtuínarssuakajíngorputit — you are all greasy with blubber

mitsuarpoq — suckles.

mitsuingaq — female breast.

nakasingnâq — calf of leg.

nâleq — little finger.

nápaleq — neck.

napaline tasitipâ — stretching the neck.

neqe — meat.

nerivoq — eats.

nerngisaut — tooth.

nerpik — fish-meat.
 nilarqeq — cartilage; breast.
 nivfik — gut-skin.
 nujat — hair.
 nukeriva — sinew.

oqalugtaut — tongue.
 oqautautâta sinâ — lip.

pamiagdlok — seal tail (rare word).

qalaseq — navel.
 qalequtit — hair.
 qangâtarpoq — swallows.
 qârsûvingne âniauvâ — pain in the head.

qartertaut — throat

qâsak — head.

qatingak — back.

qêt — grey hair.

qilerqivit — spine.

qisêtân — nail.

qordoq (qordloq) — bladder.

sanerngaun — rib.

sarqavun — face.

sarpîssaq — fish-tail.

sauneq — bone; tusk.

singiaussâlaq — rectum.

sivteq (sivdleq) — baleen.

sulugsungutaq — dorsal fin.

tagpikêvait — topknot.

takuarnâpâ — looks at it.

tamuavoq — eats.

tatimâq — thumb.

tingissorâq — anus.

tingivan — liver.

tinupakutsuk — wart.

tordortaut (tordlortaut) — ear.

torduavoq (tordluavoq) — cries.

uisaligaq — eye.

umit — beard.

uniaqat — tail (of land animals
and seals)

IV. Animals.

agtarajik — sea-perch.

aqaluk — salmon.

aqaluviaq — shark.

angmagssak — capelan.

asaleq — merganser.

avataussaq — starfish.

eqisâvaq — gnat larva.

ernijortôq — bluebottle.

erqerniagagssaq — ptarmigan.

igdaoq (igdlâq) — seal foetus.

ivssormiutaq — field-sparrow.

kigssaviarssik — falcon.

kisinertit — gnat.

kûkiâq — dog.

kutsûlaq — little auk.

nagssugtôq — sea-scorpion.

nalingînaq — saddleback seal.

neriniarteq — bladdernose.

nerôkisilik — sea scorpion.

nuerniagarnaq — puffin.

piserajik — snow bunting.

pisigtut — mould.

qajângersaq — swordfish.

gardêrmajortêq — great northern
diver.

qârtuluk — raven; pteropod.

qilalivaq — white whale.

qileritik — maggot.

qitsalivaq — spotted seal.

qorssoq — wheatear.

qumartorssuaq — chaetopod.

qupalorârssuk — snow bunting.

qûparmêq — black guillemot.

saggaq — old fjord seal.

sârigdik } — Brunnich's guillemot.
 sârigoq }

siámarsautit — mussel.
sigssarmijeq — redshank.

tasermijit — loon.
teriangniaq — fox.
tingitangiartarteq — wild duck.
tingmiakajik — raven.
tingmiakajip nanua — owl.
tingmiaq — gull.

tingmiatsiaq — dung-fly.
tordluluatsiaq — fjord seal.
tugtútôrajik — wagtail.

ugpaterqortêq — eider duck.
ukâvkan — snail.
ukssuk — bearded seal.
ûmasit — louse.

V. Man; Relations; Spirit World.

ajak — mother's sister.
ajêra — mother.
ákak — mother's brother.
amarina — grandmother.
angak — father's brother.
ârqigssêpâ — invoke spirits for
 someone.
arnaq — woman.
atsak — father's sister.

ernersiaq — stepson.

igdoq (igdlôq) — nephew (niece).
inertâq — new-born.
ingiaqat — husband.
ining' — native.
îtoq — husband; master of the
 house.
ivna — (exclamation) my husband!
kisimêtuatsiaq — girl.

kôsoqartoq }
kôsulik } — man.

merdertoq (merdlertoq) — child.

nâlungiarssik — infant.

nángivik — father.

nuliákâq — woman.

nuliaq — first wife.

nuliaqángitsiartokajik — boy;
 young man.

qatsoraq — concubine.

qitornánguaq — daughter.

tâq — person whose name after
 death has left him.

timerseq — inland dweller.

tôrniyoq — invoke spirits.

ukûa — mother.

ukûnguaq — stepmother.

VI. Man's Work and Products.

agssaijaq — something that is
 towed.

agssaerqortoqaoq — tows.

akuilisaq — "half-coat".

aligteq — outer clothing (hair
 outside).

aloq — boot-sole.

alugssaq — sole-skin.

amerpâ — covers the umiak.

amêrpâ — takes the skins off the
 umiak.

amigssaq — umiak skin.

angit — steering oar.

aqortorqut — ear-ring.

ârnuaq — amulet.

átat — button.

átataq — knot (in wood).

atdat — amulet thong.

ativaq — inner clothing (hair
 inside).

autdârit — umiak.

erisâq — water-tight skin.

ikiaq — coat of bearded-seal gut.

ikumalaq — lamp wick.

ilipâq — stocking.

imartit — spoon; ladle.

imerfwik — water-vessel.

imiut — drinking cup.

imusiseq — link on a thong.

iput — oar.

itsingnaq — pressed blubber.

kaliva — stick.

kangnúsaq — copper (known from
west-coast travellers).

mátâleq — mitten.

mortût — drill.

nasaq — hood; hat.

nâterqivik — strap.

nerqilôrut — cooking-pot.

nigssat — necklace.

niusivik — wood dish.

noqartaut — whip.

norsaq — throwing-board.

nuánârit — drum.

nuissagssaq — bead.

nukingeq — sinew thread.

nukerutsiaq — sewing thread.

nuviâq — skin border on coat.

pautit — kayak paddle.

peqiserfwik — end platform.

peqitsernaq — wood that can be
bent.

pilautaq — knife.

pôruseq — blubber-bag.

pualeq — mitten (hair outside).

qajarsit — kayak-coat.

qalarqat — detached umiak skin.

qalequtilik — water-tight skin
with hair.

qardêlait — knee-breeches.

qarderpait — women's trousers.

qarmaq — house wall.

qarmaussaqaq — kayak-man's cap.

qârquvaq — ring on the end of a
shaft.

qârssuaqut — hair-band.

qáumarqilivun — window.

qausersêt — kajak-coat.

qáutorut — white kayak anorak.

qissigssiaq — hard wood.

qitsiaq — plaited sinew thread.

qugssalik — wedge.

sákoq — woman's knife.

sârqit — harpoon.

savfalerpoq — cooking something.

sijasâq — putrid blubber-oil.

sijumiaq — bird-dart.

sinâvagssaq — timber (material).

tâtilaq — eye-shade.

tavqarmioq — kayak-knife.

tingisaut — creasing stick.

ûnarqisivik — lamp-stand.

ûnarqit — lamp.

unârsivik — light wood.

usikâtak — harpoon bladder.

ûtilerpoq — cooking something.

VII. Sundries.

akisugpoq — is white.

aliôrtorpoq — have a vision.

âm' — yes!

âmilâ — yes! (Angmagssalik).

angigkartípoq — evacuates in
trousers.

aussugavta (aussigavta) — last
summer

erqijáupâ — flings it away.

ilângauvoq — sleeps.

ilerqoq — custom; usage.

itdâqalerpoq — is pregnant.

kakagpâ — carries it on his back.

kâvigpâ — hovers over it.

kise — how?

nâga — no!

niorruvoq — comes on a visit.

nipe — voice

noqatêrpoq — has cramp.

paqânarpoq — is sad.

pínâvâ — likes; thinks well of him.

pisiniarpoq — bargains.

pissúnguvoq — lie with a woman.

pujorpoq — is sad (rare word).

qanganisaq — old.

qardimáipoq (qardlimáipoq) —
dies.

qorsorpalugpoq — is green.

sikarteq — hard.

siluliaq — carcase.

singêjârneq — excrement.

sipulôrpoq — breaks wind.

sorujârpoq — is sick (Angmag-
ssalik).

sukaivoq — lie with a woman.

sulugpoq — has diarrhoea.

târteq — black.

tautuersoq — red.

toqujángilaq — is well.

toqujavoq — is sick.

toquvoq — dies.

tuáterajik — narrow.

tutigpâ — lie with her (one's wife).

ungiartuatsiarpoq — whistles.

upernagavta — in spring (verbally:
when we had spring).

XXI. OLD EAST GREENLAND NAMES

The Months.

According to KNUD RASMUSSEN's notes from the 6th Thule Expedition there seem to have been two sets of names for the months, one simple and one more developed. No doubt the explanation is that the simple names are the primary ones and the earlier, whereas the others have been formed gradually as contact was made with civilization through journeys to the west coast. Both sets meet, however, in that the year is divided into ten parts with a name for each, but in the more developed set the ninth name covers the autumn months of September—November.

I. Originally, the months were counted from the shortest days.

1. atausiaq ("first"), i. e. christmas month.
2. ardlâq ("second").
3. pingajuaq ("third").
4. sisamâq ("fourth").
5. tátimâq ("fifth").
6. arvinâq ("sixth").
7. arvineq-áipâq ("seventh").
8. arvineq-pingajuaq ("eighth").
9. arvineq-sisamâq ("ninth").
10. qulingat ("tenth").

II.

January — atausiâja ("the first"), because one now began to count.
February — ardlâja or artâja ("the second")
March — pingajuâja ("the third").
April — sisamâja ("the fourth").
May — tátimâja ("the fifth").
June — artâja ("the second", i. e. part of the year).
July — mángulerqâq ("The time when it first begins to be milder").
August — mángúneq ("the milder time").

September }
 October } — ukiagssaq (“autumn”, i. e. really “the coming winter”).
 November }
 December — uvdlokíneq (“shortest day”).

Names of the winds.

Danmark Strait is the most stormy part of the North Atlantic, for it is the sphere of several storm centres. Wind conditions in East Greenland are consequently very disturbed.

The most prominent winds are:

nigeq or níneq — north east.

Almost follows the coast—with a slight inward tendency—and brings bad weather and high seas with it; blows the ice into the shore.

The *nigeq* is the prevailing wind after autumn sets in; it increases in violence with winter, especially in the short days, and is nearly always accompanied by driving snow.

kingángartoq or kingángarpasigtoq — northeast to east.

Blows almost into the fjords.

tagpikángaq, sometimes called avangnaq — south-wind.

There is never any swell after this wind, solely after the *nigeq*.

avángarsarneq — southerly wind.

Blows along the shore and is not a dangerous wind, usually coming with good weather—*silá pitsángordlune-qerneraussánguaq*, i. e. with a slight ripple on the water.

piteraq — the west.

Off-shore wind out of the fjords. When the *piteraq* comes the weather becomes clear at once. It brings open water, sometimes indeed so much that one can scarcely see the ice even from the mountains. Sometimes the *piteraq* blows in summer and autumn, but most frequently in winter, when it usually brings cold. Rare in spring. The name *piteraq*, however, is used of the *nigeq* when it comes with such violence that everything flies, especially in winter.

kanangnaq — the east.

Blows straight in from the sea and is not a very strong wind, but usually brings snow.

It is the most frequent wind *seqíneq qúmukalerángat*: when the sun begins to rise—and when there is field ice.

Birds, their Names and Occurrence.

- tingigdlangiartartoq (W. Gr. qêrdlutôq), common Duck. Breeds on the coast.
- nerteq (W. Gr. nerdleq), Barnacle Goose. Does not breed here, but is seen spring and autumn.
- nerternârssuk, small, dark goose. Does not breed here, but is seen on migration.
- agteq (W. Gr. agdleq), Long-tailed Duck. Breeds i. a. at *Tingmiarmiut* and *Anoritôq*.
- ugpaterqortôq (W. Gr. miteq), Common Eider. Breeds generally, especially at *Anoritôq*, *Igdluluarssuit* and *Tingmiarmiut*.
- asalik (W. Gr. pâq), Red-breasted Merganser (Goosander??). Breeds on most of the small islands along the coast.
- tasermioq (W. Gr. qarssâq), Red-throated Diver. Breeds round about on the lakes (especially on the islands at Ilivileq).
- qartêmôrtoq (W. Gr. tûgdlik), Great Northern Diver. Breeds near salmon rivers in the vicinity of *Tiniteqissâq* at *Eqaluarssuit*.
- qaqigtuk (W. Gr. qaqugdruk), Fulmar Petrel. Seen out at sea as soon as there is open water, when it is common, but it is not known to breed on the coast.
- oqaiteq (W. Gr. oqaitsoq), Cormorant. Seen in spring and autumn, but is rare and not known to breed on the coast.
- kigssaviarssuk, Greenland Falcon. The larger of the two falcons known on the East Coast.
- kigssaviarssuit ardât, Peregrine Falcon. Smaller than the foregoing. Both species breed on steep cliffs.
- nertoralik (W. Gr. nagtoralik), Sea Eagle. Breeds on steep cliffs.
- tukuajêq (W. Gr. tujuk), Ringed Plover. Breeds on sand.
- sikûtôq (W. Gr. sârfârssugssuaq), Red-necked Phalarope. Seen spring and summer, but not known to breed on the coast.
- sigssarmioq (W. Gr. sârfârssuk), Snipe. Breeds at lakes.
- tingmiartik (W. Gr. naujardruk), Great Black-backed Gull. Rarely seen, but known to breed at *Akorningnaq* (Skjoldungen) on a large gull-cliff.
- qusêq or qutêq (W. Gr. nauja), Gull. Breeds on many bird-cliffs all along the coast.
- tingmiavârssuk (W. Gr. naujavârssuk), Ivory Gull, a white-winged gull with black feet and black bill. Does not breed on the coast, but seen especially in bad weather in autumn and winter.
- tâterâq, Kittiwake. Breeds in several places, especially at *Kangeq* south of *Igdluluarssuit*.
- imerqutailaq, Tern. Breeds on the coast, especially at *Anoritôq*, *Tingmiarmiut* and *Umîvik*.

- aqajarormiorsinijôq (W. Gr. isúnga), Long-tailed Skua. Is not common and not known to breed on the coast.
- qúparmioq (W. Gr. serfaq), Black Guillemot. Breeds all over the coast, especially at *Kangek*.
- sârugdlik (W. Gr. agpa), Brunnich's Guillemot. Not known to breed on the east coast, but appears in autumn and does not disappear till the ice comes.
- kútûlat (W. Gr. agpaliarssuk), Little Auk. Does not breed on the coast, but comes in autumn and remains till the ice appears.
- agpardlik (W. Gr. agpardluk), Auk. Very little known.
- túkartialik, also called sîkútôq (W. Gr. qilánga), Puffin. Comes when autumn approaches, but does not breed on the coast.
- erqerniangagssaq (W. Gr. aqigsseq), Ptarmigan. Breeds under rocks.
- orpik (W. Gr. ugpiq), Snowy Owl. Not known to breed here, but seen especially in winter when the sea-ice forms along the coast.
- qârtuluk (W. Gr. tulugaq), Raven. Breeds many places and very common everywhere on the coast.
- pisêq (W. Gr. qupalararssuk), Snow Bunting. Breeds and is very common.
- narssarmiutaq, Lapland Bunting. Breeds in many places.
- súsúsôq (W. Gr. orpingmiutaq), Wagtail. Breeds many places.
- qorsoq (W. Gr. kugsaq, kugsagtaq), Turnstone.
- tatiggaq, a bird somewhat larger than the sârfârssuk (snipe), with a fine neck. Not known to breed.

Of the isarukitsoq, Great Auk, the East Greenlanders have heard "from the old people", but here as on the west coast it disappeared several generations ago.

Edible Plants.

The most important of the edible plants growing on the land are as follows:

quaralik (W. Gr. kuáneq), Angelica (*Archangelica officinalis*). Occurs in various localities south of *Igdlluarssuit*, from *Orqua* and all the way south.

nunârssuk (W. Gr. tugdlerúnaq) Rosewort (*sedum rhodiola*).

The *mángut*, i. e. the root of this plant, is considered to be very delicious.

qugtúngaseq, bilberry leaves.

tungujortoq, bilberry.

The *saningit*, i. e. the root from which tungujortoq grows, is eaten with blubber and *kúkarnâq*, dried blood.

mamartoq or pukugaq (Angmagssalik), black crowberry. The flowers—*ásserítit*—are eaten with blubber.

tùaluat or ivssormiutat (Angmagssalik), the root of *mamartoq*, is gathered by the women in spring, before the plants grow. It is very juicy.

Seaweed plants that are edible include:

neqisautat or imertigkat (Angmagssalik), red seaweed.

nutsugkat or misarqat (Angmagssalik), clover seaweed.

suvdluitsit, *Alana pylaii*.

eqêtit or miserarnat (Angmagssalik), bladder-weed.

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Note. The drawings by Kårale Andreassen which are published in this book, most of them completed during the latter years of his life, reveal the development of his skill through the European influence with which he came in contact while at the teachers' college at Godthaab and during visits to Denmark, an influence which made his style more and more European. This is particularly noticeable in figs. 12 and 13.

In his earlier days he was more primitive in his methods. Specimens of his drawings done in that period are to be seen in *Illustreret Tidende* for 24th February 1907 (Copenhagen) page 281, and, more especially, in Thalbitzer's "The Ammasalik Eskimos" (*Meddelelser om Grønland* Vol. XL), of which those on pages 299—311 are typical.

H. O.