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## **The Acculturative Role of Sea Woman**

**Early contact relations between Inuit and Whites  
as revealed in the Origin Myth of Sea Woman**

*Birgitte Sonne*



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# The Acculturative Role of Sea Woman

## Early contact relations between Inuit and Whites as revealed in the Origin Myth of Sea Woman

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Influence of the Whites through trade relations and collaboration with the Eastern Canadian Inuit made the latter alter their origin myth about Sea Woman. The Whites became incorporated into that myth together with elements of Christianity, and Sea Woman gained in religious significance. This happened prior to the establishment of Christian missions and was furthered by Sea Woman's traditional role in myth as a mediator of the relationship of exchange between the Inuit and the sea mammals, and also between Inuit of various locales. The method used for substantiation combines structural analysis with ethnohistorical enquiry, and implications of this combination are discussed.

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## Introduction

Most experts on "traditional" Inuit religion treat the myths that were collected prior to the actual establishment of missions in the various localities, as if these myths were fossilized survivals of a pre-contact past.

In my view, earlier diffusion of Christian ideas and longstanding trade with Whites have left a conspicuous stamp on several myths. Among these are numerous variants of "Dog Husband" (about a human girl who married a dog and thus became the ancestress of various races) and some variants of the origin myth of Sea Woman.

I intend to treat the evidence of impact on these stories in an ethnohistorical frame of reference and by means of a method that combines relational models of structuralism with both comparative cultural-historical analysis and reflections on changes prior to and during the early periods of contact. In the concluding section I shall discuss some theoretical implications of combining this structural method with historical enquiry.

## Preliminaries of enquiry

### Methodological pedigree

Only four of the numerous analyses made of the stories in question deal with historical issues. The first was that

done by Boas & Rink (1889), next that by Holtved (1966/67), a third by Savard (1970), and a fourth by Oosten (1976).

*Boas & Rink.* Their study, which consists of a short discussion of the variants collected by Boas at Cumberland Sound (S.E. Baffin Island) compared to other variants extant at that date, raised one important question: How and why did the Whites become connected with the origin of the sea mammals? Most frequently this is done by inserting "Dog Husband" motifs into the Sea Woman Origin myth or vice versa. Boas and Rink left their question unanswered, and it lost its appeal for later research.

*Holtved.* The purpose of his analysis was to explain differences between the variants of the Sea Woman Origin myth by population movements in prehistory. For an explanatory model he used the revised theory of Birket-Smith (1961: 203–236) of an Eschato Eskimo expansion from the Canadian Arctic Interior to the coastal area of the declining Thule culture. And since this theory has later been thoroughly rejected (Burch 1978; Clark 1976), the consequences for Holtved's analysis can be relegated to the History of Research, which is not the object of the present study.

What remains useful for our purpose is Holtved's fine sorting out of motifs and his narratological approach. He points to alterations in various sequences of events, which show the insertion of certain motifs to be due to a more recent development.

*Savard.* His hypothesis runs like this: The predomi-

nance of Sea Woman among most Canadian Inuit was due to a fairly recent development. It was based on some "new cult" which reached its most sophisticated mythic expression among the *Iglulingmiut*<sup>1</sup> at Fox Basin. Up to that date Moon was the predominant deity and so he remained with most other Inuit (and the Yup'it). The Ungava Bay Inuit and the Western Greenlanders were prevented from integrating the new Sea Woman cult into their own traditional religions by the often brutal control of the Christian missionaries. The Caribou Inuit, however, seem to have been prevented by the resistant antiquity of their inland religion of *Pinnga*. (Savard is not too explicit on this point, but he quotes Rasmussen's conviction that *Pinnga* (alias *Sila*) should be considered the most ancient deity within the pantheon of the Inuit.)<sup>2</sup>

Apart from some fine interpretations of mythic details Savard's analysis is of little use for our enquiry. The historical method employed leaves much to be desired, hampered as it is by the absence of, first, comprehensive source criticism, second, several important variants and third, an explicit ethnohistorical frame of reference. The historical period implied runs from about 1750 to c. 1885, but Savard's evaluation of intertribal contacts and non-contacts demonstrates his ignorance of the real situation in that period. Furthermore, although Savard uses the ritual-myth theory as his decisive historical criterion, no analysis is made of ritual. His arguments rest exclusively with some analyses of myths, to which he adds a very French conception of intellectual development.

The structural analyses concern two compound variants, one of "Moon and Sun" combined with "Blind Boy", the other being "Sea Woman's Origin" including "Dog Husband", as told at Iglulik in 1923 to Knud Rasmussen (1929: 77-81; 63-66). According to Savard the two variants can be shown to embody inverted paradigms of the same structure. But since he employs as his basic explanatory model the rules of restrained exchange as codified by Lévi-Strauss,<sup>3</sup> the reader is left less than convinced about the allegedly identical structures. For the rules of restrained exchange (of women by two lineages symmetrically) did not apply to the *Iglulingmiut* of 1923. Through his conviction that these rules for exchanges are "given us by nature", Savard is led to interpret certain details in closer correspondence to this model than to both the mythic statements and the actual rules then in force among the *Iglulingmiut*. I shall refrain from further comments on the difficulties Savard encounters through his conviction that a cultural set of rules are biological or given by nature.

The most surprising hypothesis advanced by Savard is, however, his assertion of an intellectual development among the *Iglulik* story-tellers. His basic idea is this: By their combination of various previously independent stories into coherent sequences of events, these story-tellers have eventually made explicit the structures implicitly embodied in the independent stories. I shall

reserve my further comments on this view for the conclusion.

Oosten. His main hypothesis is in direct opposition to that put forward by Savard. Oosten also finds that the structures of the *Iglulik* variants mentioned above are particularly explicit. But in his view the greater explicitness is not due to a process by which rationality was introduced by recent historical changes. Quite on the contrary, the explicit structure is considered to constitute the umbilical cord of ancient Inuit religion, *i.e.* the religion of the early<sup>4</sup> Thule culture.

Oosten assumes other variants showing weaker structures to be fragmentary remnants and the residue of a deteriorating Thule culture.

According to Oosten the main characteristic of Early Thule was its exclusive orientation towards hunting at sea. Its ideological base was a strong antithesis between land and sea. But the more certain groups were forced by climatic changes to adapt to hunting in the hinterland, the more this antithesis between sea and land weakened. The *Netsilik* conception of Sea Woman as the creator of both sea and land animals is one case in point. Another is an assumed amalgamation of Sea Woman with *Sila* into *Pinnga* of the Caribou Inuit. Conversely the exclusively coastal culture of the S.E. Baffin Islanders accounts for their retaining both a strong land versus sea structure and a continuation of collective rites centered on Sea Woman. With the *Iglulik* Inuit, who were in part orientated towards the land, the Sea Woman cult had deteriorated, while the land versus sea antithesis had remained intact and strong.

The confusion of archaeological theories under discussion at the point at which Oosten made his analysis, renders the evaluation of this hypothesis extremely difficult. Although he relies in part on the archaeological overview made by Tylor (1968) Oosten apparently fails to grasp the consequences of its main hypothesis: The strong distinction drawn by earlier scholars between inland and coastal cultures in the Canadian Arctic is poorly supported by archaeology. The Thule culture was not exclusively oriented towards hunting at sea. Several sites of Early Thule even show a predominant reliance on the resources of the land. The technical specialization of the Thule culture thus permitted exploitation of whatever game was available, either from the land or at the sea.

Oosten does mention this flexibility of the Thule culture, some evidence of which he even finds in the annual cycle of the S.E. Baffin Islanders. They did some hunting and fishing on the land as well as at sea. But Oosten nevertheless sticks to his conception of their exclusive coastal orientation as being representative of Early Thule in his concluding discussion of stronger and weaker structures. I shall abstain from further comment along this line of enquiry.

The effects of acculturative changes, discussed at length by Oosten, lie outside our scope because they do not touch upon his reflections on myth.



Oosten's structural method operates on a much too abstract level to be of any serious use for our ethnohistorical enquiry. Interpretations of symbolic values within a differentiated ethno-cultural context are few, and frequently Oosten looks to parts of variants from widely separated Inuit and Indian groups in order to explain details of the variants under scrutiny. Unfortunately Lévi-Strauss has set an example for this, despite his claim that the variants should be interpreted within their own ethno-cultural contexts.

## Presentation of method

My purpose is not to discuss implicit and highly abstracted structures as compared to explicit ones. I shall deal with the variants in terms of the local historical developments occurring at the dates when they were recorded. I consider the sorting out of motifs as done by Holtved valuable for a preliminary enquiry. But in contrast to Holtved, who was content to exhibit the novelty of some variants by their 'ridiculous' inventions of fresh elements as well as by 'distortions' in the course of events, I shall, as in fact Savard did, take these alterations seriously. In my view they reflect contemporary changes in the cultural conditions of the Inuit in question.

All of which does not mean that the structural analyses published by Savard (1970) and Fischer (1975), Oosten (1976; 1983) and Hutchinson (1977), Sabo & Sabo (1985) are removed from my field of investigation. On the contrary I shall draw heavily on quite a number of their interpretations of symbolic values and also, of course, on those made in Sonne 1975; 1986b; Kleivan & Sonne 1985.

In accordance with structural method I, too, shall emphasize relationships of exchange. But, unlike the above mentioned authors, my main purpose is to reveal the dynamics of the integration of the Whites into the Inuit mythic ideas about relationships of exchange with the beings of nature.

## Concrete auxiliary means for the comparative analysis

Due to limits of space my more comprehensive analyses are restricted to the variants taken down at Cumberland Sound. They cover a historical continuum of half a century, for which a fairly detailed ethnohistorical frame of reference can be made.

In order to distinguish earlier traditions from more recent ones comparisons are also made with variants told by other Inuit groups. In this respect the extraordinarily well preserved and richly represented mythology

of the East Greenlanders<sup>3</sup> constitutes a valuable means of control. Equally valuable are the conclusions reached by archaeologists and linguists on immigrations from the Canadian Arctic into Greenland (reviewed by Rischel 1986, and Petersen 1986). The expansions of the first and second phases of the Thule culture came to a temporary halt about A.D. 1500, and since later immigrants into the Thule District of North Greenland in about 1700 and 1860 are not considered to have kept up any frequent contacts with the Greenlanders to the south, I feel safe in making use of these findings in the following way:

Corresponding motifs of variants told on both sides of Davis Strait and the southern part of Baffin's Bay are taken to predate A.D. 1500. Motifs belonging exclusively to one party, whether to the Greenlanders or the Canadian Inuit are, with some reservations, considered to have developed after A.D. 1500.

The above mentioned immigration about 1860 into the Thule District serves as a third means of comparison. Amaunalik, who received all of her stories from her immigrant grandmother (Holtved 1951, I: 14f) told variants of the myths under scrutiny. I shall take these variants to reflect the tradition of the S.E. Baffin Islanders about 1840, at which date the immigrants are supposed to have left their settlement north of the Cumberland Peninsula (Rowley 1985).

Also of utmost importance for comparisons are the findings of Fisher (1984) on the extensions, habits and colors of the Atlantic subspecies of fulmars. These findings help date and localize the appearance of variants in which Sea Woman marries a fulmar.

Finally the history of contacts between the Greenlanders and Dutch traders and whalers (Gulløv 1982; 1983; 1985; 1986; 1987) is reflected in stories perfectly suited for comparison with the S.E. Baffin Island variants in focus here.

## Hypothesis and Strategy for substantiation

The main point of the analysis is to substantiate the following hypothesis: Developments in the origin myth of Sea Woman were due to increased trade and collaborations with foreigners, be they other Inuit of distant localities or representatives of the Whites. Increased collaboration with the latter led to further adoption of Christian ideas that became incorporated into myth as well. Although the identification of Sea Woman with the ancestress of *Qallunaat* (the Whites) offers the most conspicuous evidence of this development, other figures that occur in certain mythic contexts do so as well. These are Moon and various species of sea birds.

Analysis of the variants is presented in two parts. The first deals with the cultural meanings and geographical

extensions of the variants. These are arranged according to the types already distinguished by Holtved, and while the interpretations of the cultural bearings of the types are kept separate from the historical enquiry, the latter involves considerations on the cultural meanings of some specific variants, which vary strongly with the types. The marked differences are shown to correspond to ethnohistorical changes.

Having thus mapped out the main currents in the development of the myth, these findings can be used as an analytic frame of reference for the more detailed analyses of the variants from Cumberland Sound.

The second part presents these analyses, after which follow the conclusions and, finally, the discussion of the methods employed.

Table 1.

Type	Origin/ Identification of:	"Label"	Inuit Band	Date of recording	Source
I	Or. Sea Woman		<i>S. Greenland</i>	1737 ca. 1860 1904	P. Egede 171: 68 Lytzen 1871 Rasmussen 1981: 142-148
I	Or. sea mammals	"Kroeber"	<i>Polar Inuit</i>	1890's	Kroeber 1899: 179
I	Or. sea mammals		<i>Ungava Bay</i>	1880's	Turner 1894: 261f
I	Or. Sea Woman, + sea mammals		<i>Netsilik</i>	1923	Rasmussen 1931: 212f, 225f
I	Or. sea mammals		<i>N.W. Alaskan Seward Pen.</i>	ca. 1900	Boas 1894: 205
I			<i>Siberian</i>	ca. 1900	Bogoras 1904-9: 316
<i>Fulmar-stories of origin</i>					
II	Or. Sea Woman	"Rasmussen"	<i>Polar Inuit</i>	1903	Rasmussen 1905: 165f; 1921-25, III: 57f
II	Or. Sea Woman + sea mammals	"Amaunalik"	<i>Polar Inuit</i>	1940s	Holtved 1951, I: 60-63 II: 21-23
II	Or. sea mammals	"Old song"	<i>S.E. Baffinl. Cumbl. Sound</i>	1883/84	Boas & Rink 1889: 127f
II	Or. Sea Woman, + sea mammals	"Aua"	<i>Iglulik</i>	1922	Rasmussen 1925: 83-86
<i>Statements on identity</i>					
IIIa	Sea W. = Dog Husb.'s wife		<i>Iglulik</i>	1822	Lyon 1824: 363
IIIa	same		<i>Aivilik (?)</i>	1890's	Boas 1901: 327f
IIIa	same		<i>Netsilik</i>	1923	Rasmussen 1931: 227
IIIa	same		<i>Back River</i>	1923	Rasmussen 1931: 498f
IIIa	same		<i>N.E. Baffl.</i>	1890's	Boas 1907: 492
IIIa	same		<i>Aivilik (?)</i>	ca. 1900	Boas 1907: 497
IIIa	Sea W. = Dog Husb.'s wife = Fulmar's wife		<i>Iglulik</i>	1922	Rasmussen 1925: 91
IIIa	Sea W.'s dog = Dog Husb.		<i>Cumb. Sound</i>	ca. 1900	Boas 1901: 166
<i>Compound variants</i>					
IIIb	"Dog Husband" + Type I (Or. Whites + sea mammals)	"Whaler"	<i>S.E. Baffl. Cumbl. Sound</i>	1883/84	Boas 1964: 229
IIIb	"Dog Husband" + Type I (Or. Whites + sea mammals + Sea W.)		<i>Netsilik</i>	1923	Rasmussen 1931: 227f
IIIb	same (Or. sea mammals + S.W.?)		<i>Labrador (?)</i>	?	Hawkes 1916: 152
IIIb	"Dog Husband" <sup>1</sup> + "Fulmar" (Or. Hell + sea mammals + S.W.)	"Hell"	<i>S.E. Baffl. Cumbl. Sound</i>	1883/84	Boas 1964: 175-177
IIIb	"Dog Husband" + "Fulmar" (Or. Whites + Inuit + sea mammals + S.W.)	"Peace"	<i>S.E. Baffl.</i>	ca. 1900	Boas 1901: 163-165
IIIb	"Dog Husband" + "Fulmar" (Or. All peoples + sea mammals + S.W.)		<i>W. Huds. Bay Imm. from Pond Inlet?</i>	ca. 1900	Boas 1907: 496f
IIIb	"Dog Husband" + "Fulmar" (Or. Whites + sea mammals + S.W.)	"Orulo"	<i>Iglulik</i>	1923	Rasmussen 1929: 63-67

(Some variants listed by Fischer 1975 are excluded, because their validity is uncertain).

<sup>1</sup> Contains only elements of "Dog Husband".

# Types of variants, their extensions and cultural bearings

## The types of the Sea Woman Origin myth

Following Fischer (1975) who follows Holtved (1966/67), distinctions can be made between two types, I and II, and a mixed category of variants. For convenience the latter, the mixed category, is labelled Type III and further divided into two subtypes, IIIa and IIIb, to be dealt with further below.

Most readers, I suppose, are familiar with some variant relating the origins of both Sea Woman and various species of sea mammals. Yet, within each type, I-III, some variants concern only the origin of one of the two. Thus the origin of Sea Woman and the origin of the sea mammals are not mutually dependent. Naturally, the distinction between origins is an important tool for the historical comparison of variants.

## Type I

### The story

This type, which is labelled the *kayak/ferry* type by Fischer (1975) relates the story of a girl who, due to either her refusal to marry or to her marginal social position, is thrown into the sea. She clings to the gunwale for rescue, but has her fingers chopped off. She sinks to the bottom of the sea and, in cases where she is credited a mythic afterlife, she becomes transformed into Sea Woman, the mistress of the sea mammals. The cut off fingers in most variants become transformed into various species of sea mammals. For this to happen a narratological rule demands that a differentiation be made between several cuts of either the fingers (first finger, second finger *etc.*) or of the fingerjoints (nails, fingertips, second joints *etc.*). But in cases where some fingers or an entire hand are severed in a single cut, no sea mammals arise from fingers or joints. In these variants the girl is invariably transformed into Sea Woman and her maiming, not her severed hand or the fingers cut off from it, defines the character of her future relationship to man.

## Cultural bearings

The origin of rules for a relationship of exchange between humans and the species mentioned in each variant forms the core of the story's message. The figure of Sea Woman as depicted in numerous variants of the

ritual myth relating the shaman's journey to Sea Woman in times of crisis displays this clearly (*cf.* "Shaman's Journey"). Even in details her poor look is modelled on the appearance of the earthly women during periods of tabu: Her hair hangs loose; filth accumulates in her hair and on her body; deprived of her fingers she is barred from doing any work whatsoever; her sight is reduced; she is confined to her "birth hut"; she feels utterly miserable.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly the task of the shaman is to make her feel better by restoring her appearance on the model of an earthly woman *past* her period of tabu. And the tabus in question are, of course, those to be kept during the states of transition<sup>7</sup> in the life-cycles of humans and nature: the death, 'rebirth' (through naming), and puberty transitions of humans; death (in kills by the hunter) and reincarnation of game animals; changes in the annual cycle of human activities with the changing seasons. – Violations transfer the tabus to Sea Woman and consequently the sea mammals remain penned up in her "birth hut". The restoration of Sea Woman brings forth the reincarnated sea mammals anew (Sonne 1975; 1986b; Kleivan & Sonne 1985).

To what extent the Inuit story-tellers and their audiences would have agreed with this interpretation remains uncertain. But the *Netsilingmio*, who told the following variant, undoubtedly would:

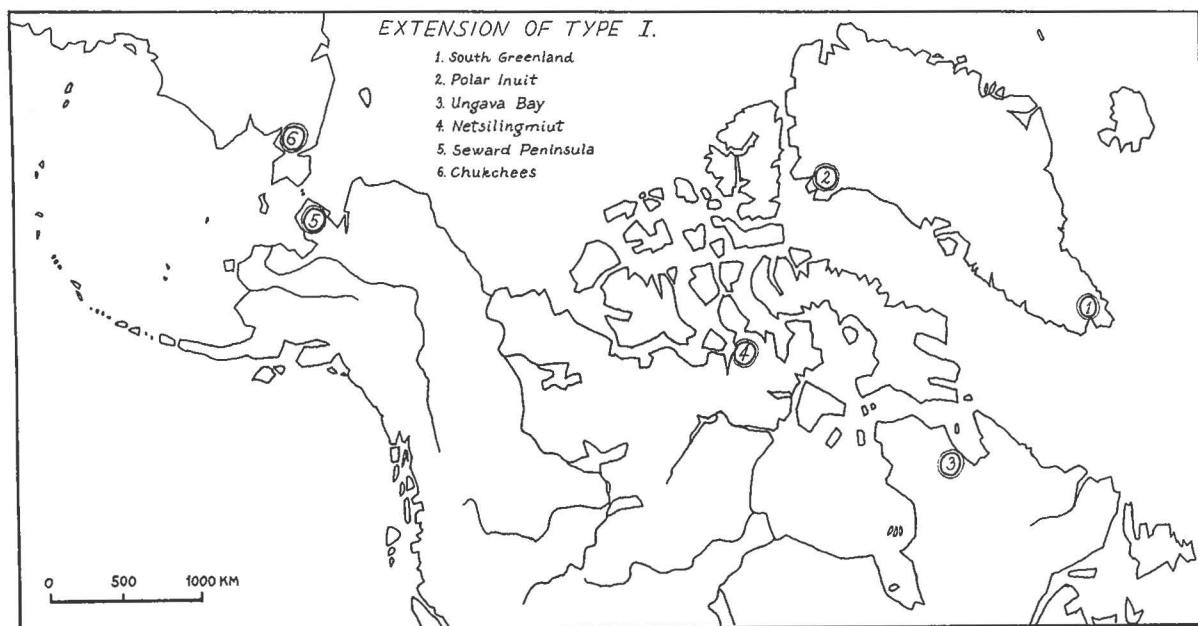
"Everything came from the ground, and people themselves lived on the ground at the time there were no animals to hunt. And they knew nothing of all the strict taboo that we have to observe now. For no dangers threatened them; but on the other hand no pleasures awaited them after a long day's toil.

Then it happened that a little orphan girl was thrown out into the sea ... [the events of Type I] ... and for her [Sea Woman's] sake people had afterwards to think out all the taboo that makes it hard to live. For now they no longer lived on the ground but on shy and live game." (Rasmussen 1931: 212f.)

In sum: The "alliance" and its rules for mutual behavior between humans and sea mammals, originated with the maiming and drowning of a girl marginalized through either her refusal to marry or her lack of kin.

In the case where the girl refuses to marry, the refusal signifies a violation of the obligations put on daughters within the family cycle of provision. Marriages constituted the cement of society binding one family to another in mutual obligations of collaboration and production, sharing and reproduction.

Every member of a family had his or her obligations to fulfill, and Inuit mythology abounds in instances of violations. In myth such violations invariably invite some being or power of nature to become involved with the social affairs of humans. In the end the "alien" is either got rid of for good, or, if some rules for behavior are set up for a relationship of exchange with the "alien", he/she is expelled to the marginal sphere which is outside both society and nature. This "alien" is in some cases nobody but the violator, who becomes transformed into a being of nature as a result of his/her very violation. In other cases the "alien" is an "intruder" into



human society, who fails to live up to the requirements of Inuit social behavior (Sonne 1986b). Finally both figures of “violator” and “intruder” may become transformed into partly socialized “allies” of nature. This is e.g., as later shall be seen, the case with Type II, in which the girl eventually marries a fulmar.

Returning to Type I, most variants concern the transformation of the “violator”, i.e. the girl who refuses to marry. The remainder deal with a member of society, who has already become marginalized by the death of her close relatives (an orphan girl; a widow among strangers). Although she in our sense of morality is without fault in her fate, she is treated on par with the “violator”, because marginalized persons are generally conceived of as potentially dangerous by societies based predominantly on kinship and auxiliary kin-relations (Sonne 1980).

## Extension

Type I variants were told on the border areas of the Sea Woman Origin myth: Among the S. Greenlanders (P. Egede 1971: 68; Lytzen 1874: *Sagnet om Nivigkâ*; Rasmussen 1981, I: 142–148); at Ungava Bay (Turner 1894: 261f) among the Polar Inuit (Kroeber 1899: 179); the *Netsilik* Inuit (Rasmussen 1931: 112f, 225f); the Inuit living at the American whaling station, Port Clarence on Seward Peninsula, Alaska (Boas 1904: 205); the Coastal *Chukchee* (Bogoras 1904–09: 316). Owing to this wide and geographically marginal extension

Holtved (1966/67) considered this type to be of an earlier date than the other types.

Holtved was probably right. Yet the westernmost occurrences of Type I do not necessarily disclose any great antiquity of the story. It may have reached the Western Inuit and *Chukchees* from the east through intensified contacts of trade in late prehistoric times. As has been shown by archaeological studies (McGhee 1984) trade between the Inuit groups of the Western Canadian Arctic and N. Alaska became brisk throughout the century preceding the historical period of Euro-American contact. An increase in intertribal trade across the Bering Strait began at an even earlier date (Black 1984: 24) and most probably its northward expansion set in motion the above mentioned increase in trade farther east, for which the McKenzie Inuit most likely served as middlemen (McGhee 1984).<sup>8</sup>

Our only clues for deciding upon the antiquity of Type I are the date and provenance of the earliest variant on record and the temporary stop in population movements from the Eastern Canadian Arctic into Greenland about A.D. 1500 outlined above.

The earliest variant was taken down by the missionary Poul Egede at Disco Bay in October 1737 (1971: 69). But he received the story from visiting S. Greenlanders on their trading expedition to Disco Bay. The more recent Greenland variants (Lytzen 1874; Rasmussen 1981, I: 142–148) are similarly confined to S. Greenland. And since contacts with the newly arrived Polar Inuit are out of question, we can state that: *Type I of Greenland and the Canadian Arctic predates A.D. 1500.*

The same statement holds good for “Shaman’s Jour-

ney", a variant of which was told by visitors from the vicinity of Ilulissat (Jacobshavn) at Disco Bay in January 1737 (P. Egede 1971: 45ff).

As regards the mythic origins at issue, of Sea Woman and/or sea mammals, only the *Netsilik* and S. Greenland variants concern the origin of Sea Woman, and of these only the *Netsilik* one combines her origin with that of sea mammals. That is, Boas (1964: 179) mentions a bit of information communicated to him by former Inspector H. J. Rink of S. Greenland on a Greenland variant. This variant had the grandfather cut off the girl's fingers, which were changed into sea mammals. Unfortunately no corroboration can be found in the Danish and Greenlandic sources. The only variants on record derive from S. Greenland, and they stress exclusively the significance of Sea Woman's maimed hand, – to be dealt with in due course.

All of the remaining Type I variants concern only the origin of sea mammals. Furthermore, when asked about a possible transformation of the maimed girl into a sea spirit, negative answers were given by informants from Port Clarence (Boas 1904: 205) and the Polar Inuit (Kroeber 1899: 179). Nor was there any conspicuous relation between the maimed girl and the Sea Woman-like walrus deity of the *Chukchee* (Holtved 1966/67). – The negative answer of the Polar Inuit is crucial for our later enquiry into the extension of Type II.

To conclude, *Type I originated and, among the Eastern Inuit, it was associated with the existence of Sea Woman prior to A.D. 1500.*

## Type II: "Fulmar"

### The story

A girl who most frequently refuses to marry is seduced by a fulmar in the human figure of a kayaker. Wearing goggles or by using a high seat in his kayak, *Fulmar* has the appearance of a handsome fellow. After having brought the girl offshore onto an ice floe, *Fulmar* reveals his true appearance to the utmost despair of the deceived girl. But with no choice but to be carried on from the ice floe by *Fulmar*, she is transported by him to his distant island/country. The following summer her relatives arrive to fetch her back by *umiaq* and off they row in secrecy. When *Fulmar* discovers the deception he takes up pursuit and claims his right to the girl by asking permission to see her hands. On being denied this favor he raises a storm, which almost upsets the *umiaq*. The relatives, forced to give in, then throw the girl overboard. After which follow the events of Type I.

## Cultural bearings and Extension

This type's symbolic values and extension, or rather gradual diffusion within the Canadian Arctic and fur-

ther to N. Greenland, are intimately intertwined and cannot be treated separately. Our point of departure is the model used for interpreting Type I.

Type II adds to the "violinist", the "intruder" in the figure of a fulmar or, in one case (Boas 1907: 496f), an unspecified sea bird. As pointed out by Savard (1970) and Fischer (1975) *Fulmar* does not fulfill the obligations of a son-in-law living as he does at a great distance across the sea from his father-in law. In the end the latter nevertheless has to acknowledge the marital rights of *Fulmar*. Obviously they rest primarily with the *hands* demanded by *Fulmar* of his human wife. For the storm subsides at the moment the fingers have been severed and changed into sea mammals. *Fulmar* does not get back his wife, but somehow he appears satisfied with the transformations of her fingers and her maimed body into sea mammals and Sea Woman respectively.

In this way *Fulmar* is made part of the human relationship of exchange with certain species of sea mammals.

## The meaning of the hands

The symbolic value of *hands* is worth some further consideration. For the interpretation of Type I it sufficed to define this meaning as being a capability to work, which neither Sea Woman or (temporarily) the earthly women under tabu possess. For the interpretation of "Fulmar", however, amplification of this meaning is essential.

Examples drawn from various sources show that *hands* or, by substitution *mitten*s or even the *flippers* of sea mammals, symbolized a meat sharing partnership.

One case in point is a rite of handing over the right to dispose of a slain walrus as described by James Houston (1971: 131f). The hunter who killed the walrus cuts off the right-front flipper, which he offers ceremonially to his wife. Other hunters acknowledged as meat sharing partners receive the remaining flippers. But in case a young man is not married, *i.e.* still unable to provide for a family, he is supposed to offer the front flipper to the older woman recognized as the mistress of the household.<sup>9</sup>

Another example is Balikci's (1970: 133–137) description of the meat sharing partnerships in force during the winter season of sealing at breathing holes among the *Netsilingmiut*. These life-enduring partnerships were either arranged by the mothers when their sons were still small or, they were inherited in the paternal line. The sharing was reciprocal in that the two partners would give the same part of their slain seals to each other:

"The cutting up of the seal was done by the wife of the hunter who harpooned it [the "harpooner"] ... First the wife cut off the *front flippers* with her *ulo* ... *Netserta* (the harpooner) ...



[retained] *the ends of the front flippers* and the skin ... when a *nangmineriit* (partner) was absent from the camp, it was necessary to replace him by some other hunter present in the winter settlement ... The shares of these temporary partners, however, were slightly smaller than those of *real nangmineriit*; for instance, they *did not receive the flippers*, which remained attached to the skin and became the property of the lucky harpooner." (Balikci *op. cit.* Except for the Inuit terms the italics are mine.)

The flippers evidently signified a genuine alliance in contrast to a temporary substitutional one.

My last example<sup>10</sup> belongs to the late period of American whaling in Hudson's Bay:

"Around 1900 a whaler entering Hudson Bay and intending to winter would proceed immediately to Whale Point or Cape Fullerton to meet the Eskimos. Here the captain would take on native whaling crews, usually men who had worked for the ship before but perhaps others as well, to assist in whaling during the remainder of the summer. He would release them in time for their autumn hunt but would expect them to arrive later at the vessel's winter harbour, to act as hunters through the winter and to serve again as boat crews in the following summer.

At the first meeting with Eskimos on the whaling ground, the captains traded for produce that they had obtained during the previous winter. Once an Eskimo began service on board a whaler, however, all the products of commercial value obtained by him went automatically to the ship. Native Harry, for example, met the *Canton* at Whale Point in the summer of 1895, traded nine musk-ox skins, two bear skins, 68 pounds of deer meat, *one pair of mittens* and *a pair of sealskin gloves* (Canton 1895-96: 20 Aug. 1895), then took up duties as a ship's native ..." (Ross 1975: 79. Italics mine.)

Did the captain of *Canton* realize the meaning of these gloves and mittens? With these gifts Native Harry no doubt confirmed his contract of a year for providing for the ship by hunting on land (the mittens) and at sea (the sealskin gloves).

All of which leads to the preliminary conclusion that *Fulmar*, in his acknowledged right to the transformed hands of *Sea Woman*, was for one reason or other conceived of as a meat sharing partner.

Now, fulmars do not catch sea mammals, but they feed on the carcasses. So, too, do gulls and other species of sea birds. And the notion of carrion eating sea birds, as expressed in the ideological figures of partners, were by no means restricted to Inuit bands telling variants of "Fulmar".

## Big Gull and Equngasooq

In the ethno-ornithology of the Yup'it (S.W. Alaska) various species of gulls are classed with the fulmar under the heading of *naruyaq* (sing.). In the dual form, *naruya* means a person sharing food with another person (Jacobson 1984: 252).<sup>11</sup> Phonological equivalents to (C.Y.) *naruyaq* are (N.AL.) *nauyaq* and (W.G.) *naaja*, with the identical meanings of the *Larus marus* species of gulls. *Larus marus* is also included in the class of

(C.Y.) *naruyaq*. Which means that *naaja* of the Greenlanders may reflect an ancient idea of gulls as partners of nature. This assumption is supported by the mythic figure, *Naajasuaq* (Big Gull), whom the S.W. Greenlanders made one symbol of their own annual trading expeditions to the northern locales of Amerloq (Sydbay) and Disco Bay during the eighteenth century. They obtained baleen (for deep-sea fishing lines) from the whale hunting Greenlanders up there, as also ironmongery and luxury goods from the Dutch whalers at anchor off the same localities in summer (Gulløv 1987). Fox skins desired by the Dutch became a valuable article of trade.

According to myth (Rink 1866: 230-232; Rasmussen 1981, II: 63-65) *Big Gull* and *Snail* were meat sharing partners who became deadly enemies, because *Big Gull* had allowed foxes to plunder their joint store of dried meat. Despite his nasty trickery *Big Gull* comes out the hero of the story. For upon his return from trade in the North, he generously handed out his acquired baleen to the visiting fellow-men of *Snail*.

Another figure also associated with the trade, *Equngasooq* ("Twistmouth") served several functions in ritual and myth. As a helping spirit of the shaman he relieved the tense audience of their fears in his role of a ritual clown in the seances (Rink 1871: 53-56, 201). But in the S. Greenland mythology *Equngasooq* was also the cousin and housemate of *Niungmâq* ("Experienced trader"), a prolific hunter and trader. Resembling *Big Gull*, *Niungmâq* cunningly uses the household's storehouse of seal meat as a fox trap and bestows his surplus of meat and acquired White commodities on his fellow men. In addition he welcomes quite a number of affinal widows to his household. They serve primarily as his bearers, whether of his great number of slain caribou or of the heavy amount of goods brought to the Dutch Whalers for trade. But the Dutch call on both *Niungmâq* and *Equngasooq* for trade, and as if a mascot to his cousin, the fragile figure of *Equngasooq* follows the big, fat *Niungmâq* at the head of the long line of female bearers (Rink 1866: 277f). According to another story, though, *Equngasooq* far exceeds *Niungmâq* in the art of love (*ibid.* p. 278f). *Equngasooq* appears inseparable from the ideal of the experienced trader, *Niungmâq*, who would qualify to the title of "Entrepreneur" or "Big-Man". Although ridiculous in his imitation of a White captain using bearers, *Niungmâq* has *Equngasooq* in the comical role of lightning rod.

*Big Gull* is a sinister figure compared to *Niungmâq*. He ends up in a feud with his partner, *Snail*, who appears moderately ignorant of the conditions for keeping up a partnership based on the sharing of meat with a trader of the Big-Man class. The latter needs fox skins for barter in the North.

But *Equngasooq*, what kind of a being was he, human or animal? The answer is found in the sources to the E. and S.E. Greenlanders, who also participated in considerable numbers in the S. Greenland trading expeditions

to the North (Gulløv 1986). They would not consider *Equngasooq* all that ridiculous. On the shaman's bidding he would arrive full speed in the human form of a kayaker from his dwelling on the outermost skerries. In his most powerful appearance he represented the species of fulmars (O. Rosing 1957: 81). Guillemots and little auks provided less powerful spirits of the *Equngasooq*-class (*ibid.*; J. Rosing 1963: 189).

The figure of *Equngasooq* will be dealt with in more detail later. At the moment it suffices to state a probable all-Eskimo connotation of carrion eating sea birds as partners in meat sharing or, by extension, *in trade goods*.

The "Fulmar"-variants point to this end as well, the more so by *Fulmar's* acknowledged bonds of marriage to Sea Woman, to the "products" of her hands, *i.e.* the sea mammals, and to the tabus that rule the relationship of man to the sea mammals.

## Further connotations of *Fulmar*. The companion of whales and ships

Several reasons why it was *Fulmar* who married Sea Woman, rather than any other meat sharing partners of nature, lie ready at hand. Fulmars follow whales; whether wounded or alive, or if the carcass remains floating, dead (Fisher 1984: 409–413). To judge from a description quoted by Fisher (*ibid.* p. 410) flocks of feeding fulmars will be the first to announce the presence of a whale carcass at a distance from the shore to people atop a coastal cliff for look-out. Furthermore, unlike gulls, fulmars feeding on carcasses are not to be driven away. They pay no heed to intervening humans threatening their lives (*ibid.* p. 410). Thus they claim their right to a share in the meat with outstanding success.

*Fulmar* of the story reveals his red rimmed eyes to the girl by removing his goggles. This may refer not only to the intensity of the glaring sun in spring, when snow and ice reflect its rays, since fulmars arrive in spring. Another threat to the eyes is the gasses rising from the fermenting carcass of a whale (*ibid.* p. 410).

It may have been the peculiar oil which courting fulmars vomit and feed to their chosen females (*ibid.* p. 333), that placed *Fulmar* in his rank of first among avine lovers. In myth vomiting means ejaculation as can be seen from the origin myth of female pregnancy. The "dog" of a copulating father *in-spe* vomits "dog food". It means semen, which is thought to feed the embryo (Boas 1907: 403).

Finally fulmars win the prize among fliers in stormy weather. At low altitudes they follow the tops of the waves on the rough and open sea (Muus *et al.* 1981:

172). In this way fulmars are excellent "kayakers" (their human appearance in myth) and they faithfully accompany ships (*umiarsuit*, big boats) as do human kayakers the *umiaq* of their household.

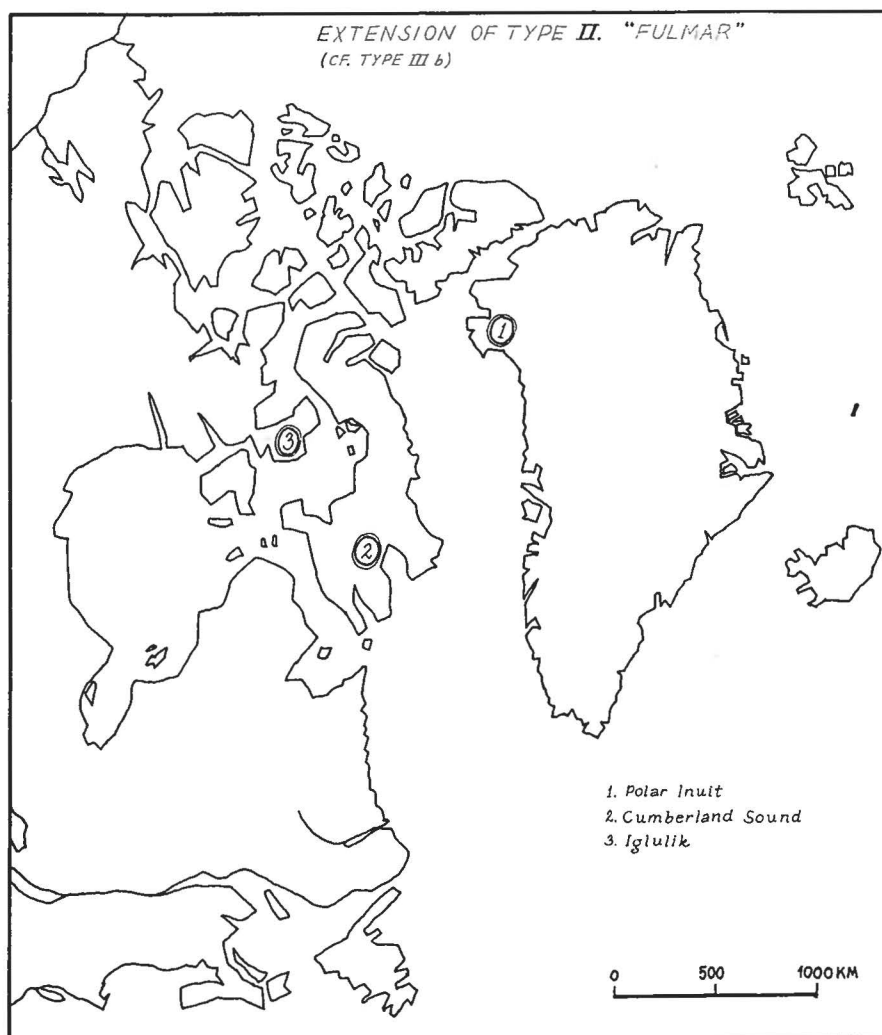
In short, the peculiarities of the species fit in nicely with the connotations of *Fulmar* in myth.

Considering the continuation of the Thule culture whale hunt at Cumberland Sound and Pond Inlet far into the seventeenth century (McCartney & Savelle 1985), the relation between fulmars and the origins of sea mammals and Sea Woman presents no mystery. Whales are mentioned first among the species that originate from her fingers, the nails forming the baleen. Ground seals and common seals make up the remaining species of the S.E. Baffin Island variants (Boas 1964: 176; 1901: 165).

## The extension of "Fulmar"

As can be seen from Table I and the maps p. 12 and p. 13, the extension of the story was restricted to the Baffin Islanders, the *Aivilik*, the *Iglulik*, and the Polar Inuit. A variant not connected with the origins of either sea mammals or Sea Woman was obtained by Rasmussen among the *Netsilik* Inuit in 1923 (1931: 403–406). Holtved (1966/67) considered this to be the original "Fulmar"-story into which Type I had later been inserted by other Canadian Inuit. Yet, since the *Netsilik* variant is the only one on record to represent the supposed original, the *Netsilingmiut* may just as well have adopted the story on their trading expeditions to the South throughout the period of American whaling in Hudson Bay from 1860 to 1910 (Ross 1975: 125f). I would suppose that the *Netsilik* story-teller of 1923 has retold the story in consonance with the then current local ideas about Sea Woman. According to these she was originally an orphan that received a bad treatment. She was no obstinate girl inviting a fulmar to meddle in the social affairs of humans. The concluding sentence of the storyteller goes: "Now I don't know any more." This further points to an originally fuller and more comprehensible account of his "Fulmar" story.

The original "Fulmar" can with few reservations be located with the Baffin Islanders. Fulmars of the Eastern Arctic breed along Davis Strait and Baffin's Bay, Lancaster Sound and Admiralty Inlet (Fisher 1984: 71–78). They never enter Hudson Bay proper (*ibid.*), while stray specimens have been encountered in Fox Channel and Fox Bassin (*ibid.* p. 71, 309). But these incidents are most probably due to a fairly recent expansion of the species, which Fisher convincingly shows to have been caused by the Euro-American whaling of the nineteenth century (*ibid.* p. 76, 433–453). Lyon, during his two years stay (1821–1823) in the same waters, saw not a single specimen of fulmars. In July 1821 when stuck in the pack ice at the entrance from Davis Strait



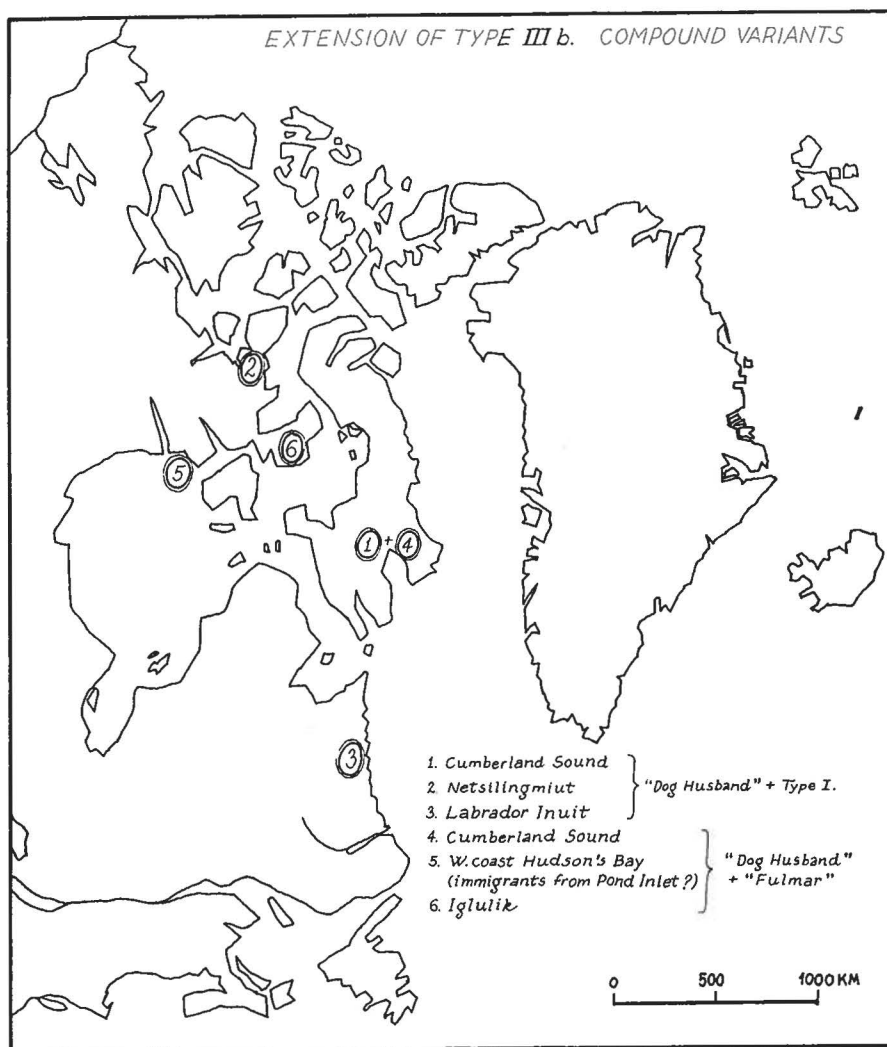
into Hudson Strait, Lyon made some observations on fulmars (1824: 12). More than two years later, when on October the 24th 1823 he eventually reached the open Atlantic sea off Resolution Island he wrote as follows:

"Numerous flocks of *malemucks* [fulmars] and kittiwakes hovered round us all day; and being now new to us, as none had been seen since July, 1821, enlivened the scene very much." (Lyon 1824: 465. *Italics mine.*)

For these reasons "Fulmar" hardly originated with the *Iglulik* Inuit at Fox Bassin or the *Aivilik* Inuit. About 1900 the latter did tell a compound variant of "Dog Husband" and "Fulmar", the only one on record to substitute an unspecified sea bird for *Fulmar* (Boas 1907: 496f). But up to that date the *Aivilik* Inuit were apparently content merely to identify Sea Woman with the girl who married a dog, without adding any story about the girl's transformation into Sea Woman. After that time "... some new customs have been introduced

lately, on account of the immigration of some people from Ponds Bay, who claimed that the customs of the *Aivilik* were wrong ..." (*ibid.*). Boas may be perfectly right in his assertion (*ibid.*) that the immigrants from Pond Inlet introduced "Fulmar" to the *Aivilingmiut*.

The mere identification of Sea Woman with the girl who married a dog and thus became the ancestress of the Whites, was already made by the Inuit at Iglulik in 1822 (Lyon 1824: 361-364). Unfortunately Lyon failed to ascertain the possible existence of a story about her descent into the realm below. A century later Rasmussen took down two variants: One was of "Fulmar", to which the informant, Aua, added the statement that Sea Woman had previously been married to a dog (Rasmussen 1925: 83-86, 91). The other variant told by Aua's wife, Orulo, combines "Dog Husband" with "Fulmar" into one continuous narrative. Both of these "Fulmar" variants do, however, resemble those told by the nineteenth century S.E. Baffin Islanders (see below) in most



details pointing to a diffusion of such variants to the north. One point is especially worth mentioning in evidence of the fairly recent adoption by the *Iglulik* Inuit of the "Fulmar"-story. According to both *Iglulik* variants of 1923, the father of Sea Woman finally commits suicide by drowning and thus he becomes the house mate of his daughter at the bottom of the sea. This motif does not fit in with the ideas held about Sea Woman's father a century earlier, when Lyon stayed with ancestors of Rasmussen's informants at Iglulik. In 1823 the informants of Lyon told him that the father of Sea Woman lived in a house apart, location not specified, but inaccessible to most shamans on account of its guard of fierce walruses and polar bears. The house of Sea Woman was accessible to less powerful shamans, though, and as regards her father he was said to be in control of the terrestrial animals (Lyon 1824: 364). Boas, who had read Lyon in preparation for his stay among the S.E. Baffin Islanders in 1883/84, found no trace of

the *Iglulik* tradition that Sea Woman's father was the protector of land animals (1964: 180). Boas' informants held the idea that the father of Sea Woman had joined his daughter in her house at the bottom of the sea. Thus, with the Inuit at Iglulik the notion that the father of Sea Woman became her house mate below was most probably introduced together with the "Fulmar" story. And the introduction postdated the stay of Lyon in 1823.

Turning now to the "Fulmar" variants of the Polar Inuit, I shall argue that the story was introduced by the immigrants of 1860 from S.E. Baffin Island. Amaunalik's variant (Holtved 1951, I: 60-63; II: 21-23) is one, and she received all of her stories from her grandmother, who immigrated from S.E. Baffin Island. Consequently Amaunalik's variant combines the origins of sea mammals and Sea Woman and has the father of Sea Woman join her by suicidal drowning, in correspondence with the more recent variants of S.E. Baffin Is-

land. But neither idea seems to fit in with the notions held about Sea Woman by the Polar Inuit proper.

As mentioned earlier the Polar Inuit informants of Kroeber were explicitly opposed to the idea of identifying Sea Woman with the girl from whose fingers the sea mammals sprang. The story, a Type I variant (*ibid.*), even takes caution to prevent the girl from becoming transformed into Sea Woman. In contrast to all the other Type I variants, the girl is not thrown into the sea. She remains in the boat both during and after the severing of her fingers by her father. The fingers drop into the sea for transformation, not the girl (Kroeber 1899: 179). Correspondingly a "Fulmar" variant collected by Rasmussen (1905: 165; 1921–25, III: 57f) concerns only the origin of Sea Woman. One of her hands is severed by a single cut and no sea mammals arise when it drops into the sea. In contrast to Amaunalik's variant and to all of the remaining "Fulmar" variants, Rasmussen's "Fulmar" variant lacks the origin motif of the sea mammals. Local tradition apparently prevented an adoption of the complete "Fulmar" story as told by the immigrants of 1860.

The idea of Sea Woman's father joining his daughter at the bottom of the sea was repugnant to the "traditional" Polar Inuit as well. In Kroeber's Type I variant the father, who cuts off the fingers of his daughter, remains in the boat together with the fingerless girl. In the "Fulmar" variant of Rasmussen's recording, *the brothers* are explicitly mentioned as going in search of their sister seduced by *Fulmar*. But at the moment the severing of her hand is imminent, her *grandfather* unexpectedly (to the reader) enters the scene of execution. No mention is made of her father, who was obviously substituted by the weaker elements of brothers and grandfather. Nor does the variant of "Shaman's Journey", with which the Rasmussen "Fulmar" variant ends, show the slightest trace of the father's presence in the house of Sea Woman. This is in open contrast to Amaunalik's variant, to which "Shaman's Journey" is added as well. The father of Sea Woman in this variant is appointed the task of tickling certain visitors of Sea Woman's almost to death. – To this motif we shall later return.

To conclude: "*Fulmar*" originated among the *Baffin Islanders* along the North and East coasts of the island in the environments where the species of fulmar breeds. Although fulmars also breed in the Thule District, the Polar Inuit did no whaling (on right whales) and thus were supposedly less inclined to develop the "Fulmar" story. Their reluctance to identify Sea Woman with the girl from whose fingers the sea mammals sprang supports this assumption. Like the Inuit at Iglulik, the *Aivilik* and the *Netsilik* Inuit, the Polar Inuit received variants by diffusion. Furthermore, since the Greenlanders told no variants of "Fulmar", the story most probably was not known to the first and second phase Thule expansions to Greenland before ca. A.D. 1500. Yet,

*Fulmar* in his mythic figure of a kayaker undoubtedly predates A.D. 1500, as will be shown in the following.

## The E. and S.E. Greenland *Equngasooq*

This figure, who in his most powerful appearance represented a fulmar, bears a striking resemblance to *Fulmar* of the Baffin Islanders. Like *Fulmar* he appeared in the human form of a kayaker and was clearly associated with the onset of spring. *Equngasooq* further was located at the outermost skerries in the avine form of either a fulmar, a guillemot, or a little auk. Similarly *Fulmar* reveals his true identity to his human wife on an off-shore ice floe. And like *Fulmar*, *Equngasooq* managed to travel further across the sea beyond the horizon in correspondence with the transmigrating habits of the bird species he represents.

*Equngasooq* of the E. and S.E. Greenland stories was associated with the "life-and-death-route" of humans and its parallel one of sea mammals. The route started atop a steep coastal cliff, from where deceased humans destined for the submarine abode of death were thrown into the sea (Rasmussen 1938: 78). Wrapped up in skins the body was supposedly given a stone as a means of transportation along the bottom of the sea. The shaman intending to visit that realm of death would take the same route, going down from the top of the cliff astride a boulder (*ibid.* p. 110f).

The first station along this route was the country of the *innersuit*, the fire spirits living beneath the foot of the cliff. Although they lacked the bladder float they were excellent kayakers to whom the shaman could turn in time of starvation. They possessed the faculty of chasing the seals in towards the coastal waters (*ibid.* p. 137; Holm 1972: 125). To acquire an *innersuaq* as a helping spirit might mean dangers that required earlier obtained helping spirits for defense (Sandgreen 1967, I: 73–82; 1987: 106–116). Armed with his powerful weapon, a bladder dart, *Equngasooq* made a perfect ally to this end (Rasmussen 1921: 375).

Farther out along the bottom of the sea, a short side route leading to the realm of death, branched off from the main route proceeding to the distant house of Sea Woman. *Equngasooq* might guide the shaman on visits to both abodes (*ibid.* p.34).

While other classes of powerful spirits might serve as guides along the same route, and save the shaman from the initial threats of the *innersuit* (Sandgreen *op. cit.*) as well, *Equngasooq* alone possessed the power to stop a falling boulder that threatened to smash the longhouse at the foot of the towering cliff. When loosened from its position atop the cliff at the melting of snow in spring, the boulder came rumbling down with a force superior



to the joined powers of the shaman's other helping spirits. But *Equngasog*, who arrived last from his distant skerries, successfully fought the boulder and saved the settlement from ruin (Sandgreen 1967, I: 156f; 1987: 205f; Rasmussen 1921–1925, I: III. opp. p. 168, 375).

In a substitution for the boulder-element, Moon could come down atop the cliff, proceed to a nearby skerry and threaten to smash the longhouse by means of his huge black stick, in punishment for some breach of tabu. Again *Equngasog* was called upon to chase off Moon with the superior power of his bladder dart (J. Rosing 1963: 224f; Holm 1888: 324; 1957: 281).

Finally, a huge polar bear mistaken at first glance for a dog could approach from the sea with an identical intention of attacking the settlement. *Equngasog* keeps the monster at bay for some time, but in this case the shaman has to resort to additional assistance from his falcon-spirits. They chase the monster-bear up the slope of the look-out cliff and they devour its body on top of the cliff (Rasmussen 1938: 166–168).

The falcon-spirits are needed because this bear is a *tupilak* (an artificial monster) sent by a sorcerer living at the settlement. *Tupilak* were considered extremely dangerous and would demand stronger defence spirits than *Equngasog*. Falcons were thought to possess such strength (J. Rosing 1963: 234–236; Rasmussen 1921–1925, I: 285–291, 375).

All of the variants point to ideas held about the powers displayed by Moon at the onset of spring:

First, the superiority of *Equngasog* over Moon is intrinsic both in his kayak and his bladder dart. Spring means hunting by kayak in reopened waters, and Moon has no kayak or any other gear for hunting in the open sea. Supplied with dog sledge and ice pick he is restricted to hunting at holes in the ice and at the ice edge.

Second, although Moon is thus associated with winter, his powers are particularly active with the onset of spring. He presides over the tide, which breaks up the shore ice in the spring flood. Being the sire of all earthly beings he sees to the reproductions of humans and animals alike (Thalbitzer 1926: 56ff). The latter bear their young in spring. Spring also means the melting of snow, which is sent in winter by Moon. He blows out the snow from his belly through the tube he puts to his mouth (Rink 1866: 88). His production of snow is thus likened to “vomiting”, that is to ejaculation. Thus the snow he emits would, most likely, be his semen.

The old love affair of Moon with his sister, Sun (the origin myth of Sun and Moon as told by most Eskimos), seems also to be repeated in spring. The reappearance of Sun at that season obviously reawakens the sexual desires of Moon, as expressed in ice breaking floods and the melting of his snow. Currents of fresh water come thundering down the mountain slopes for the reawakening of life on earth.

At the moment, however, when the white stuff of Moon comes into contact with female beings, it turns into the red flow of fertile blood. The root of melting,

*aaneq*, is *aak*, which means blood. In fact, the snow turns red in the glowing rays of Sun in early spring when, at these latitudes, she hardly rises above the horizon. Correspondingly Moon calls forth the menstruation of young girls (Thalbitzer *op. cit.*) and with the complete take-over of Sun in summer, Moon is said to disappear. *Aasaq* (*aak* + *-saq*) i.e. summer, reigns.

Returning now to *Equngasog*, he evidently rivals Moon at that particular season when Moon grows wild at the reappearance of his sister, the glowing Sun. The forces at play are necessary but dangerous. But fortunately *Equngasog* knows how to curtail their reckless unfolding. In phenomenological terms *Equngasog* thus turns out to be the familiar hero of the cosmological forces at war in spring.

Third, the spirit name of the boulder, *Aqajarormiorsiorpua* (Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 168f, 375), bears the same phallic connotation as does Moon. Etymologically *Aqajarormiorsiorpua* means “his personal property seeking (to become) the dweller of a womb”. The idea of an intruding penis suggests itself, and accordingly the inhabitants of the longhouse, connoting “womb”, are in great danger of being crushed by the boulder.

Fourth, the huge black stick of Moon bears identical phallic connotations (Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 90–95; 1938: 81) and fifth, so does also the dog sometimes sent by Moon to substitute for his own person. But the dog arrives from the sea in the figure of a monster mistaken at first glance for a polar bear (J. Rosing 1963: 19, 161). The opposite transformation mentioned above, from dog into a polar bear with the functions of a *tupilak* would derive from the notions held about the initiations of shamans. In order to obtain the corona or radiation that will attract his future helping spirits, the apprentice should let himself be devoured by a huge polar bear or a giant red dog (Sandgreen 1967, I: 61–65, II: 20–23; 1987: 91–97, 231–235; Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 23f; 1938: 106f, 112, 135f; J. Rosing 1963: 173f, 290f). The appearance of that monster, whether dog or polar bear, is always preceded by the rising waters of a jet at the center of a lake or, by a current altering its course to run upstream. Rising waters are associated with Moon, and thus the bear or dog that vomits the devoured pieces for a fresh recovering in flesh of the apprentice connotes the phallic bear/dog of Moon.

Another light, namely the light of visions or the capability to see beyond the limits of ordinary human sight, was also connected with Moon. In order to obtain this light the shaman might visit Moon, who invited the shaman to survey, through the circular hole in the floor of his house, settlements compressed in scale via an extended field of vision (Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 83f; 1938: 60; Rink 1866: 88, 358; J. Rosing 1963: 21). Another means was the shaman's drum if used in a particular way during a seance (Sandgreen 1967, I: 109–112; 1987: 148–151; Rasmussen 1921–15, I: 15, 34). The drum symbolized the entire world and was called *jajaaq* (Thalbitzer 1928: 377). *Jajaaq* was the name for Moon

in the "spirit language" used by shamans in conversations with spirits (*ibid.*).

For all of these reasons I take the *tupilak*-bear, mistaken at first glance for dog, to represent the Moon-power acquired by the sorcerer during his apprenticeship, but used to the detriment of his fellow-men.

The transformation of Moon's white polar bear into a red dog merely repeats the color symbolism of Moon's white stuff turning fertilising red in spring. The opposite transformation of dog into bear would consequently connote the onset of winter, *i.e.* the season of Moon's reappearance and increasing powers. The events of the attacking *tupilak*-bear are actually said to take place at that time of the year (Rasmussen 1938: 166–168). No wonder the *tupilak*-bear in substitution for the early winter Moon equals *Equngasog* in strength, but must give in to the powers of the falcon-spirits.

Finally, the reproductive powers of Moon may place *Equngasog* in the function of an accoucheur. According to an E. Greenland variant of the "Transmigrating Soul", who passes from one species of animals into another and eventually from a killed seal into a woman, the soul refuses to be born when it has developed into a full-grown fetus. But then *Equngasog* appears in the entrance to the uterine house of the fetus, and out it comes, because of its fright for this spirit of delivery (Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 121f).

To sum up: the E. and S.E. Greenland *Equngasog* connotes forces of spring that curtail or "civilize" the powers of Moon for the benefit of man.

Still, the semantics of *Equngasog* are worthy of further considerations. Etymologically *Equngasog* means "the wry or twisted one", but semantically the designation refers to his mouth being twisted (Rasmussen *op. cit.*). Of the bird species belonging to the *Equngasog* class, however, only the fulmars possess a beak of a peculiar twisted form. Guillemots and little auks do not. Nor do any of these bird species including fulmars, breed along the E. and S.E. Greenland coasts (Muus *et al.* 1981: 172, 306, 310). Fulmars are seen in spring beyond the pack ice looking for food, while guillemots and little auks do not arrive until late in fall, when they pass by riding the pack ice on their southward migration (*ibid.*).

Considering the connotation of Spring associated with *Equngasog*, the autumnal arrival of the two species fit the pattern badly. Yet, the breeding and migration habits of all of the three species fit in nicely with the E., S.E., and S. Greenlanders' habits of assembly and migration during the eighteenth century.

## *Equngasog* as a symbol of assembly and trade

The migration route in question covered the entire coastal stretch from Ammassalik in the east via Cape Farewell in the south to Disco Bay on the west coast.

Intertribal trade was brisk at various localities of assembly along this extended route.

A few miles north of Cape Farewell, Aluk attracted a great number of families in autumn for the fall hunt on guillemots in joint efforts made by kayak and the use of bladder darts (*Equngasog's* powerful weapon). The spring hunt on bladder-nose seals at the islands off Aluk was the second annual occasion for assembly and trade. For many years spring would also bring Dutch traders in to Greenland, to stop at Cape Farewell for fresh supplies of drinking water (Gulløv 1987).

Farther to the west and northwest the outermost islands off Nanortalik and Qaqortoq (Julianehåb) were famous gathering points for the bladder-nose sealing in spring. Provisions for the trading expeditions to Sydbay and Disco Bay were procured during this spring hunt as also by hunting caribou on the opposite mainland (Gulløv 1983).

Now, little auks, if in small numbers, have their southernmost breeding places on these islands (Muus *et al.* 1981: 311). Guillemots, *appat*, breed no farther to the south than Appamiut (*ibid.* p. 312–316) in the vicinity of Sydbay. The story previously mentioned of *Equngasog's* superiority in the art of love is located to that place, where native feasts of assembly were celebrated, and where the Dutch used to stop for trade with the Greenlanders. Finally, colonies of breeding fulmars were not encountered until the travellers reached Disco Bay (*ibid.* p. 306, 172; Fisher 1984: 63–71).

As earlier mentioned some E. Greenland families traveled the entire route, together with great numbers of S.E. and S. Greenlanders. Ironmongery and other Western commodities were obtained from the Whites, baleen from native whalers, and surpluses were later traded on to partners and neighbors.

All of which goes to say that the *Equngasog*-class of sea bird species seems to have connoted trading expeditions to places for assembly, besides connoting the conflicting forces of spring.

*Equngasog* in the mythic figure of a cooperative trading partner to his S. Greenland cousin, *Niungmâq* (see above), supports this interpretation. Further evidence is found in the role of *Equngasog* in a variant of the S. Greenland story "Qujâvârssuk" (Rasmussen 1921–25, II: 216–133; Lynge 1978: 191–210). The story is located to Ikersuaq, Brede Fjord at Narsaq in S. Greenland. Towards the end of the story *Qujâvârssuk* travels north to Sydbay, and despite his total lack of experience in whaling, he proves a more successful whaler than the local natives. But prior to his departure to the North, the "crisis" of this protagonist must be solved. Assistance is secured from a female shaman who has immigrated from the south. Yet, several details of her inserted life story indicate her E. Greenland origin (Sonne n. d.). The events of the "crisis" and its solutions are those told in "Shaman's Journey":

At the end of a prolonged winter the ice cover of the sea prevents *Q.* from hunting in his kayak, the only way

of sealing he knows. (The location is close to Alluitsoq, meaning "the place without breathing holes".) Starvation is imminent and the female shaman is paid by Q. to undertake a journey to Sea Woman in order to have the ice cover removed. During a seance she is thrown far out beyond the horizon by a polar bear and a walrus, but suddenly they disappear. Returning towards the settlement she reaches the outermost skerries, at which location a ferocious storm overtakes her and breaks up the ice. Seeking refuge on a huge iceberg she is soon surrounded by rough open waters. This is the moment for *Equngasoq* to turn up. He invites her to jump down to his kayak, and he brings her safely across the turbulent sea to the country of Sea Woman. Once again the shaman is forced to make a risky jump, namely from the kayak riding on the crest of a huge wave and down to the shore. After which follow the familiar events of "Shaman's Journey".

The E. Greenland mythic drama of spring is recognized in the disappearance of the polar bear and walrus followed by the arrival of *Equngasoq*. To repeat, polar bears are particularly associated to Moon and so, too, are walruses. In their heavenly bodies they crowd in the puddle positioned at the entrance to the house of Moon (Rasmussen 1939: 60; 1981: 146). The human dwellers of heaven play ball with the skull of a walrus and in so doing they emit the *Aurora Borealis*. In their first appearance to the shaman, the polar bear and the walrus are two big waves of light, connoting the lights of heaven. And finally, despite their capabilities for swimming in actual life, these animals of our story feel no inclination to remain on an ice cover soon to break down. So, like Moon in myth, they shun the open waters of spring.

The story's cosmological setting is similarly set in coastal mountains on whose tops the first signs of the ice-breaking storms are spied by the female shaman. The outermost skerries and the iceberg for rescue serve as her stepping stones en route to Sea Woman. And the shaman is forced to jump down twice, as did the E. Greenland shaman from the coastal cliff when intending to visit the submarine abodes of death or of Sea Woman (see above; J. Rosing 1963: 181f; O. Rosing 1957: 83). Thus *Equngasoq* significantly appears with the rising of turbulent waters in spring.

Of equal significance is the insertion of *Equngasoq's* E. Greenland functions into this particular variant of "Shaman's Journey" making it part of a story about a S. Greenlander's success at the whaling grounds in the north. *Equngasoq* is thus connected not only with partnerships of trade between E. and S. Greenlanders but also with Sea Woman and whaling.

Furthermore, Sea Woman of the S. Greenlanders was associated with this whaling in the far north. The S. Greenlander who told Poul Egede the origin myth of Sea Woman in 1737 further identified her father with the mythic Greenlander, who once upon a time towed Disco Island up north from its former position at Nuuk

(Godthåb) in the south. Several variants exist of this myth, which was told by most W. Greenlanders, but none of them identify the remover of Disco Island with the father of Sea Woman. Only the informant of Poul Egede did, at a date when the trading expeditions to Disco Bay and its whaling grounds were undertaken annually by the S. Greenlanders. They further used to stop en route at Nuuk in order to obtain soapstone for private use as well as for sale to the whale hunting Mid-West Greenlanders. In return they got baleen and whalebone for their manufacturing of deep-sea fishing lines and sealing gear (Gulløv 1983; 1985). Since both means of production were indispensable for subsistence activities within their own local waters (*ibid.*), the S. Greenlanders had good reasons for associating Sea Woman with the whale hunt in the north. Attention should be paid also to the soapstone acquired at the deposit at Nuuk. In the soapstone lamp of Sea Woman's house, the souls of the slain seals received their fresh bodies to be hunted later by the Greenlanders (Rasmussen 1921-25, II: 227; and other W. Greenland and Canadian Inuit (Hutchinson 1977) variants of "Shaman's Journey").

Further evidence of Sea Woman's association with the northern whale hunt is found in a contemporary statement also made by a S. Greenlander. He likened the hand of Sea Woman to the tail of a whale (H. Egede 1971: 119). And a more recent variant about her origin is visually explicit concerning this hand of Sea Woman. At the moment that she, an orphan maiden, clings to the gunwale, her cruel master cuts off three of her fingers, sparing her thumb and her little finger. The maiming transforms her into the mistress of both sea mammals and sea birds, which follow her out to sea. She builds her house on the sea bottom, and when the spring hunt on bladder-nose seals seems promising she ascends to the surface and shows her maimed hand as a good omen (Lytzen 1874: Sagnet om Nivigkå): The flukes of a sounding whale would, most likely, be the actual model for this sign.

Thus the southern mistress of the creatures of the sea at the same time served as a "deity" of trade relations to both Greenland and Dutch Whalers at Sydbay and Disco Bay. I take the maimed hand of the S. Greenland Sea Woman to be the whaling sign of Classic Thule which is still being used in N.W. Alaska, and would thus serve as one symbol of this activity.

Even the geography of the S. Greenland origin myth alludes to this trade. The sequence of events is localized to the islands of assembly for the bladder-nose sealing in spring off Qaqortoq and Nanortalik. The islands cited in the story are Kunneriit, five miles south of the Moravian mission at Lichtenau in the Qaqortoq District, and Kingittuarsuk of the Northern Kitsissut Islands off Nanortalik. Sea Woman is thrown into the sea at Naajarsuit, at big bird-cliff midway between the Kunneriit and Kingittuarsuk Islands, and from there, along the bottom of the sea she travels south to Naajat, the out-

ermost skerry of the Northern Kitsissut Islands (Lytzen *op. cit.*).

The two place names of Naajarsuit (Big Gulls) and Naajat (Gulls) are significant, in that *Big Gull*, as earlier noted, served as another symbolic figure of that trade. The story of *Big Gull* was told by the S. and the S.W. Greenlanders, and a further variant is on record from Aasiaat (Egedesminde) farther north. But the informant gives Lichtenau as the precise location of the story (Rink 1866: 230–232, 363; Rasmussen 1981, I: 63–65). And Lichtenau as shown is situated within the very geography of Sea Woman.

Thus while the S. Greenlanders' trade to the north had for its mythic figure *Big Gull*, associated with the origin of Sea Woman, so *Equngasooq*, the antagonist of Moon in spring, and also a guide to Sea Woman, seems to have symbolized their trade relations with Greenlanders of more southern and eastern locations.

We cannot know the E. Greenlanders' prototype for *Equngasooq*, but the meaning of his name points directly to the species of fulmars as having a peculiar "twisted" beak. His further associations with guillemots and little auks were most probably added during the intercourse with S. Greenlanders along the trade route to Sydbay and Disco Bay.

## *Fulmar* as a symbol of trade among the Baffin Islanders?

We have traced the ease with which the fulmar alias *Equngasooq* could attain a part in the ideas about Sea Woman in her association with trading at whaling grounds and soapstone deposits. And we may then pose the following question: Would similar events have induced the Baffin Islanders to have *Fulmar* marry Sea Woman? Such an hypothesis is not completely out of question.

Of prime importance would be the restricted continuation of the Thule culture's whale hunt at Pond Inlet and Cumberland Sound right up to c. 1650. Both locales would thus have served as places of assembly and trade to groups living at more distant localities. Rare deposits of soapstone definitely added to the traffic (Ross 1985: 228f) as did occasions to obtain ironmongery from visiting groups of Whites.

As regards the visits of the latter, Fitzhugh (1985) has reviewed the archaeological and historical evidence of early contacts on S.E. Baffin Island. They point to possible, if rare, visits paid by Norse settlers of S. Greenland. Due to causes still imperfectly understood, the Norse disappeared from Greenland about A.D. 1450 and thus no longer played a part in Inuit trade. But their successors would soon arrive. The stays of Frobisher and Davis in S.E. Baffin Island during the late 1500s provided fresh stores of ironmongery and other goods in the intertribal trade among the Inuit. More

were later to come with various explorers, and from an early date the Hudson Bay supply ships passed annually, and occasionally stopped to trade at islands off the north coast of Hudson Strait (Ross 1975: 61ff; Cooke & Holland 1978: 36ff).

Yet, having in mind the association of fulmars with whales, the most decisive event would have been the onset of European whaling in Davis Strait after its modest beginning from about 1670 (Gulløv 1987) and on a much larger scale from about 1717 (Haan 1914). About the same date S.E. Baffin Island became known to the Dutch whalers through Feykes Haan's exploring trip north along the coast to 70–72° North (*ibid.*). He traded with the Inuit and got fresh supplies of drinking water as occasionally visiting traders and whalers (Jochimsøn 1733) also did at later dates. But the secondary effects of their whaling would have been of far greater importance from the Inuit point of view. Wounded whales that had escaped from immediate death would sooner or later succumb and be washed ashore at high tides. To Inuit on the look-out, fulmars would announce all these visitors, *i.e.* the ships of the Whites and the approaching whale carcasses.

After 1819 European whalers followed the recently found return route along the East coast of Baffin Island, and in this way fresh, if still irregular, opportunities opened for obtaining Western commodities along the N.E. coast of Baffin Island (Ross 1979; 1985: XVI).

Finally came the wintering of whalers in the Arctic beginning from 1853 (Ross 1985: 155f), and then exchanges of goods and services between Whites and Inuit became the order of the day. This increasing collaboration obviously called for a rethinking of the myths connected with Sea Woman. For during Franz Boas' stay in 1883/84, *i.e.* after thirty years of whalers' wintering in Cumberland Sound, the local Inuit made serious attempts to combine "Fulmar" with the origin of the Whites as related in "Dog Husband".

## The incorporation of *Fulmar* into the Sea Woman complex

The widely extended myth of "The three girls"<sup>12</sup> would most likely be the mythic material which served to incorporate *Fulmar* into the relationship of exchange with the sea mammals.

Playing "house" on the shore the three girls look around each for a husband to complete the play. One girl invites the skull of a whale, the next some bones of an eagle (or a gull), and the third a stone (or skeleton remains of a deceased human) to become their husbands. These invitations imbue the objects with fresh powers. The third girl, who puts her hands on the stone, sticks on to it and turns into stone herself. In one variant she receives offerings of food during the process of petrification (Boas 1901: 319). Such offering were, in



fact, made to stones to further success in sealing by Greenlanders and Canadian Inuit alike (Søby 1969/70: 54f; Rasmussen 1921–25, I: 11, 1925: 424f; 1938: 200; Boas 1901: 149).

The substitution of a man's skeletal remains for the stone shows the connection of stones to the submarine abode of death where the offerings presumably were intended to end up (Sonne 1978). The "revived" deceased man of the story immediately takes the third girl to that very abode, where she remains.

The second girl is brought by the reincarnated eagle (or gull) to his nest at the top of a bluff. Being a great hunter he provides well for his human wife and in some variants he even drops parts of his catches at the house of his human in-laws. Neither the girl or her relatives are, however, particularly pleased with the arrangement. She escapes by means of a line twisted from the sinews of her bird husband's catches, and the bird who turns up at the house of his in-laws is asked to spread out his wings. So he does and is easily killed.

The reincarnated whale brings the first girl to his island out at sea. They stay together inside his house (connoting birth hut), but at the time her relatives arrive by *umiaq* to fetch her, she asks permission to go outside to relieve herself. Hesitantly the whale gives in, but he fastens to her body the end of a cord and holds on to the other end himself. Out of doors the girl fastens her end to a stone (connoting death), orders it to answer on her behalf, and enters the *umiaq* to escape. Having discovered the trickery the whale eventually leaves his house (uterine womb) and takes up pursuit. Time and again he catches up with the fugitives, who throw the clothes of the girl piece by piece into the water. The whale plays with or fights one piece after another and is thus repeatedly delayed. The last piece of clothes, the trousers, is particularly effective in delaying the sexually agitated whale. The fugitives reach the shore safely, and the whale, who is washed ashore by the surf, is either killed or turns into a scull again.

The first and the second girl evidently serve their relatives as decoys by establishing bonds of marriage that are later broken through deception. And the story concerns *whaling* within the ideological setting of three points: 1) the deceased relatives in their role of providing game (Sonne 1978), 2) the death or birth tabus also in force on women during the whale hunt and 3) the carnivorous or carrion-eating birds used as symbolic allies in the hunt.

The geographical structure of "Fulmar" that corresponds to the life-and-death route of *Equngasoq*, similarly structures the events of "Three Girls": The eagle's nest at the top of the bluff, the skeleton remains or the stone on the shore, and the distant island of the whale mark off the visible parts of this route. The off shore island connoting the "uterine house" and perhaps also the huge body of the whale, parallels the ice floe, where *Fulmar* reveals his true identity, and the outermost skerries to where *Equngasoq* belongs.

The motifs of flight and pursuit, including the offering of clothes to the whale, are identical in essence with the corresponding motifs of "Fulmar". Only the line and cord, which seemingly symbolize the mastery of humans over game (caught in snares (birds) and held fast by cords (sea mammals)), have disappeared from "Fulmar". The human beings of "Three Girls" deceive the animals. Conversely *Fulmar* deceives the girl by means of disguise, and he cannot be paid off with her clothes. In his particular association with whales and forbidding storms his rights to the bodily parts of the girl are acknowledged. The eagle of "Three Girls" might share his catches with his in-laws. Inversely humans are bound to share the carcasses of whales with *Fulmar*. He guides the hunt.

Supposedly *Fulmar* was married to *Sea Woman* in myth sometime after the Dutch took up whaling in Davis Strait, and the fulmars would announce carcasses drifting towards the shores of S.E. Baffin Island.

## Type III: Identification of Sea Woman with the Ancestress of the Whites

### The subtypes

To one subtype, Type IIIa, belong the number of meager "Statements"<sup>13</sup> that identify the girl who married a dog with *Sea Woman*. Since some of the dog-children brought forth by this girl are invariably transformed into the Whites, *the Whites are thus made part of the relationship of exchange between the Inuit and the sea mammals regulated by tabus, and controlled by Sea Woman*. With the same effect in meaning another "Statement" identifies the girl who married a fulmar with the other girl, who married a dog (Rasmussen 1925: 91 (Iglulik)), while a third identification of the latter dog with the watchdog of *Sea Woman* (Boas 1901: 166 (Cumbl. Sound)) evinces a less complete integration of the Whites.

Within the other subtype, Type IIIb, are classed the "Compound Variants", i.e. any serious attempt of combining "Dog Husband" with either Type I or "Fulmar"<sup>14</sup> into a coherent narrative.

### "Dog Husband"

It relates the story of a girl who refuses to marry properly and is then married to a dog. Most frequently the dog belongs to her father's household. Since the litter of dog-children she bears annoys her father, he brings the young family to an island and asks the dog to bring food from his (the father's) catches by swimming the distance, whenever the isolated family's supplies run low.



Eventually, however, the father grows tired of his unproductive son-in-law. He fills his food-bag with stones covered with a thin layer of food on top, and thus causes him to drown. After which the father brings fresh supplies to the island by kayak. Enraged by the death of her husband-dog, the daughter orders her dog-children to kill their grandfather on his next visit. This they do by devouring his entire body. Now left without providers the daughter sends out her dog-children into the world to care for themselves. Each group of dog-children receives the future characteristics which will mark them off from every other race of humans or humanoid beings. To this a few comments on the fate of their mother are sometimes added.

## Cultural bearings<sup>15</sup> of “Dog Husband”

The story concerns the differentiation into races or ethnic cultures. The “races” mentioned may include species of animals and spirits. But the variants told by the Greenlanders and most Canadian Inuit invariably contain as a minimum the Whites and a race of humans or spirits. The latter receive cultural features in structural contrast to those conferred on the Whites, who are supplied with a ship made by their mother from her bootsole, and are sent away across the open sea. Most frequently they further receive their future skills in making small desirable objects (according to Canadian and Greenland variants alike). Or, they are told to be always of a friendly disposition towards the Inuit. The opposite group of dog-children are dispatched to the hinterland as swift runners of an aggressive disposition. Whether they are called *Adlet* or *Erqigdlit* (*eqqilit*) they become either some spirit race of the inland or, in areas where Indians are encountered, they become Indians.

The rules for future relationships of both races to the Inuit are set by their differentiation as well as naturally: the Whites are to bring the desirable objects of their manufacture by ship to the Inuit, while the inland people should preferably be kept at a distance. “Dog Husband” is thus also a “cargo myth” placing the pristine knowledge leading to the technical superiority of the Whites in their Inuit mother. But the initial feud brought about by the girl’s refusal to marry defines the future relationship in terms of a “truce” between the Inuit and the Whites.

In cultural terms dogs belong to the margin of Inuit households and they further connote sexual liaisons (references are *passim*). By offering their favors to the dog-like Whites the Inuit daughters serve as mediators in obtaining their desirable goods.

## The extension of “Dog Husband”

The extension of “Dog Husband” by far transcends the borders of Eskimo geography, but the element of

Whites by terms phonologically equivalent to (W.G.) *qallunaat* occurs only in the Greenland and most of the Canadian Inuit variants.

The earliest documentation of *qallunaat* meaning “Foreigners” or “Whites” is found in a vocabulary deriving from S.W. Greenland and the mid-1600s (Petersen & Rischel 1985: 156, 172, 177). Undoubtedly the earliest contacts of the W. Greenlanders with Norse settlers on visits to Disco Bay (*Nordrsetur*, McGovern 1979) and farther north along the West coast (*ibid.*; Krogh 1982: 157), gave rise to the designation. According to Kleinschmidt (1871: 138) the basic meaning could be: something having lost its taste or color through prolonged stay in water or old urine (used for tanning skins). The “pale-skinned ones” would thus be the correct translation of *qallunaat*.

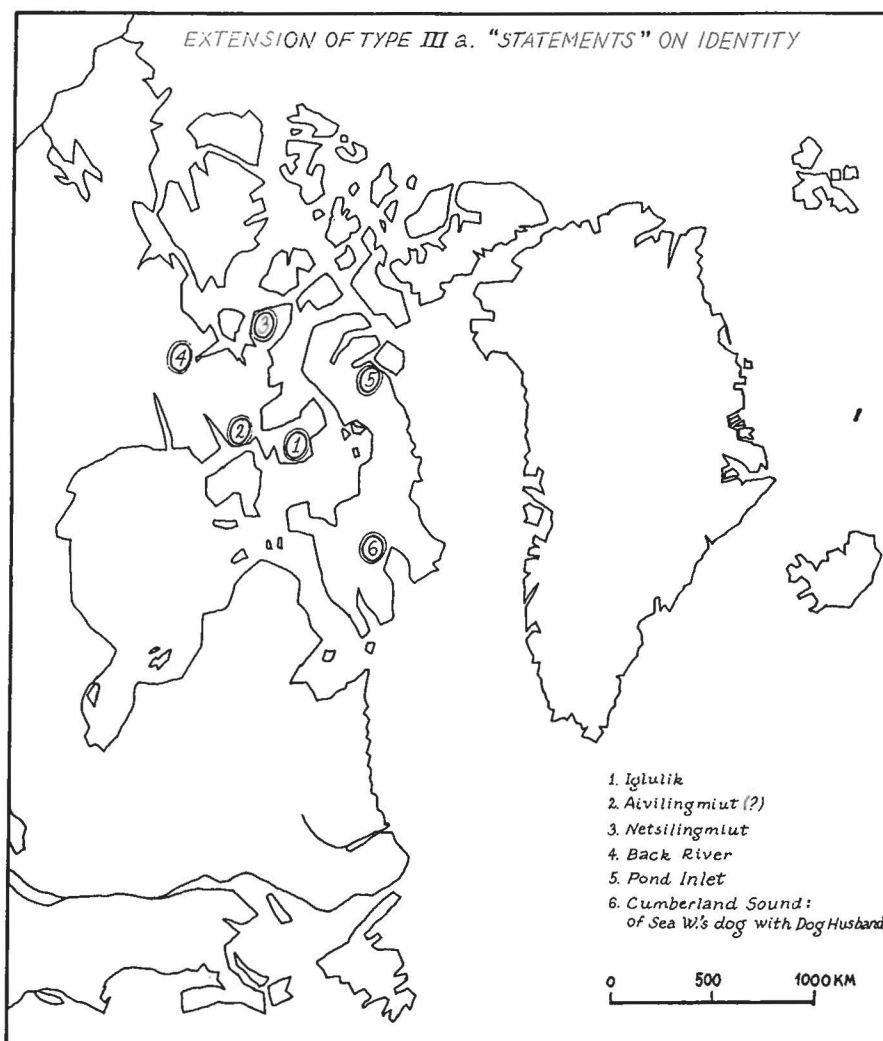
The antiquity of the designation among the Canadian Inuit is harder to ascertain. It may have been brought along with the Moravian missionaries expanding their field from Greenland to Labrador in the late 1760’s (Crantz 1770: 314f). On the other hand, *Ka-blu’-nan* had been heard of by the N. Alaskan Eskimos from their Eastern neighbors prior to 1837 (Simpson 1875: 271), and it was also used by the Inuit at Iglulik in 1823 (Lyon 1824: 360, 363).<sup>16</sup> Although the evidence is uncertain, insofar as the designation may have reached Iglulik and the McKenzie Inuit from Labrador over a period of fifty years, I suppose it goes way back to the early encounters with the Norse. Along intertribal trade routes the designation would have spread together with the goods obtained from the Norse. And the insertion of *qallunaat* into “Dog Husband” may go back to these early dates as well.

## The “Statements” of Type IIIa: Extension and meaning

Among the sources of this subtype only the earliest one on record from Iglulik (Lyon 1824: 363) is relevant for our further enquiry. All of the remainder are much younger. They either coincide with or postdate the period of Euro-American whaling, in which families of the bands in question participated and thus met for exchanges of stories and ideas.

How long the Inuit at Iglulik had identified Sea Woman with the ancestress of the Whites cannot be ascertained. But that it was at a fairly late date can be maintained, because neither the Greenlanders nor the Polar Inuit made any such identification.<sup>17</sup>

I would suggest the establishment of Fort Churchill by the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1717 as the cause of the identification. The Inuit at Iglulik did not undertake journeys to Fort Churchill, but every now and then some of them would join their affinal relatives, the *Aivilingmiut* of Repulse Bay, who regularly met with southern Inuit at Wager Bay to obtain European goods (Lyon 1824: 344f; Ross 1975: 32f). The native name of



Wager Bay, Utkusiksalik ("provided with soapstone") points to this place as being an ancient meeting point. Furthermore, "... The Aivilik say that Nuliayoq [Sea Woman] is particularly sensitive to transgressions of taboos made near Wager River." (Boas 1901: 145.) Thus once again Sea Woman, trade, and a soapstone deposit are found together as was the case in S. Greenland.

The cultural reasons why Sea Woman became identified with the ancestress of the Whites would be inherent in the effects of the goods exchanged. In return for their products of hunting at sea the Inuit received the ironmongery that considerably increased the effectiveness of their sealing weapons. This means that the keeping of tabus alone did not suffice to secure a successful outcome of sealing, but it had also become dependent on goods brought along by the Whites.

A rise in importance of Sea Woman is likely to have occurred with the said identification,<sup>18</sup> which symbolized the increased exchange with the Whites. At a later

date, Christian ideas brought back also by Inuit individuals, who had gone with whalers to Great Britain on visits, became decisive for the process of acculturation. To this process we shall turn in the following and more detailed analysis of the three "compound variants" from Cumberland Sound.

## The Cumberland Sound variants

### Analysis in depth

#### Presentation

In 1823 Lyon was not told any story connected with the identification explicitly made by the Inuit at Iglulik of Sea Woman with the ancestress of the Whites. In fact, the earliest stories on record, showing attempts at amal-

gamating "Dog Husband" with Type I or with "Fulmar", were taken down by Boas in 1883/84 during his stay among the *Oqomiut* of Cumberland Sound. The stories consist of two variants, one of "Dog Husband" (Boas 1964: 229; Boas & Rink 1889: 124f) and the other of "Fulmar" (Boas 1964: 175–177). Yet neither of them actually identify Sea Woman with the ancestress of the Whites. On the contrary they seem to avoid such identification. The "Dog Husband" variant relates the origin of the foreign races and includes the origin of sea mammals. But it lacks the origin of Sea Woman. Similarly the "Fulmar" variant combines the origin of Sea Woman with that of sea mammals, but lacks the origin of the foreign races. The latter lacuna strikes the reader the more so because motifs that obviously belong to "Dog Husband" have been inserted into the sequence of events. To judge from these two compound variants, the origin of Sea Woman excludes the origin of foreign races, and vice versa. Not so in a more recent compound variant, in which the three origins are combined (Boas 1901: 163–165). I shall deal with this curious discrepancy below.

## Dating of the amalgamation

First, however, an argument should be made, that the earliest attempts of the S.E. Baffin Islanders to combine "Fulmar" or Type I with "Dog Husband" took place some time between 1840 and 1883/84. Two variants of "Fulmar" lacking motifs from "Dog Husband" serve as my evidence. One takes the form of a song and was collected by Boas (1964: 177f; Boas & Rink 1889: 127f). His *Oqomiut* informants declared that the song was very old, and taken together with its rhythmic form, the stated age permits the assumption that the song's sequence of events reflects a more ancient tradition than the contemporary variants in prose. The other variant is the one told by Amaunalik, which I still take to reflect the tradition of her grandmother's people north of the Cumberland Peninsula about 1840.

Amaunalik's "Fulmar" variant resembles the content of the Old Song almost in every detail. Only the suicidal drowning of Sea Woman's father in Amaunalik's "Fulmar" does not occur in the Old Song. As a substitute, the expired body of Sea Woman is brought to the shore by her father and given a decent burial. He covers her body with a *dog skin* and leaves it to the tide to carry her out to sea.

Does this skin of a dog allude to "Dog Husband"? The question will remain an open one, because the idea about a huge dog guarding Sea Woman's house, to which mention of a dog skin might allude, was present not only among the notions held by the contemporary *Oqomiut* (Boas 1964: 180), but was also shared by the Inuit at Iglulik in 1823 (Lyon *op. cit.*) and the S. Greenlanders about 1850 (Lytzen 1874; Rink 1861: 92; 1866:

210). But while no trace of an identification of that dog with the ancestor-dog of the Whites is found in the Greenland sources, the Inuit at Iglulik made it in 1823. The Inuit of Cumberland Sound also did so at some date between 1884 and 1900. Their identification occurs in still another variant of "Dog Husband", which has Sea Woman adopt the drowned dog (*i.e.* the father of the Whites) as her watchdog (Boas 1901: 166). This means that the variant does identify the dog-ancestor of the Whites with the watchdog, but not Sea Woman with his ex-wife on earth, *i.e.* the mother of the Whites. Consequently the possibility that the dog skin of the Old Song did connote "Dog Husband" in 1883/84, can neither be verified or totally excluded. Yet, as no element of Dog appears in Amaunalik's variant, I take the possible identification in the Old Song to be more recent than 1840. Closer contacts with Whites at Cumberland Sound commenced shortly after William Penny rediscovered the Sound and reported on its rich population of whales in 1840.

The avoidance of identifying Sea Woman with the ancestress of the Whites may simply have been due to narratological difficulties in combining "Fulmar" with "Dog Husband". The female character's father is active in both stories until he is killed and devoured by the dog-children in "Dog Husband" and, in "Fulmar", until he commits suicide. To combine the differing ways of death would meet with some obstacles. Such obstacles were, however, overcome in various ways, at various locales, and at various dates.

In 1923 the *Iglulik* Orulo let the dog-children *nearly* kill the girl's father, after which they are sent out into the world. Their mother returns to her parents and is thus ready to be seduced by *Fulmar* (Rasmussen 1929: 63–67). The compound variant of assumed Pond Inlet derivation (Boas 1907: 496f) solves the problem in using as its frame story that of "Three Girls" (dealt with above), who married a whale, an eagle (or a gull), and a stone (or a deceased human). A dog is substituted for the whale, a sea bird for the eagle, and, although the variant opens with three girls, the motifs of the third girl have been eliminated. "Dog Husband" and "Fulmar" are recognizable as the stories of the two girls, who in the end of the variant are simply dissolved into one and the same girl for no obvious reasons. A definitely less elegant solution to the problem. The most recent compound variant of the *Oqomiut* has also found a solution and, as will be shown later, a more comprehensible one.

Why then did the obstacle of identification still exist at the time of Boas' stay in Cumberland Sound? Several reasons can be conceived, but for our immediate comprehension of the problems at issue it suffices to state the following: the variants cover a historical period of acculturation, during which the *Oqomiut* had to cope with confusing moral and ideological changes. Apparently the disorders diminished in the late 1890's when the most recent variant was recorded.

For reasons to be elucidated below I shall label Boas'

compound "Fulmar" variant in prose the "Hell"-variant; his "Dog Husband" the "Whaler"-variant, and finally the most recent compound story the "Peace"-variant.

## The "Hell"-variant

This variant of "Fulmar" leaves no one in doubt as to the influence of Christian ideas. The sequence of events not only concerns the origins of Sea Woman and various species of sea mammals, it further relates *the origin of Hell*. Naturally the latter event occurs at the end of the story:

When maimed, Sea woman-to-be is permitted to re-enter the boat of her father. Back home the infuriated girl orders her dogs to gnaw off the hands and feet of her father. Whereupon he curses first himself, next his daughter, finally her dogs. The effect is dramatic: the earth splits open and swallows up the house of the father together with all of its cursed inmates. In this way Sea Woman, her father and her dogs came to live in *Adlivun*.

In contemporary belief *Adlivun* served as a purgatory for deceased humans, who were to pass through the house of Sea Woman. Her father grasps the entering dead with his right hand, on which three fingers have apparently been spared by the voracious dogs. And for a year on end he torments the poor soul, which eventually is permitted to proceed to the less painful abode of the purified dead, the *Adliparmiut*. However, murderers and other felons are to stay forever in the house of Sea Woman (Boas 1964: 180f).

## Sin and moral violation

The influence of Christianity on the beliefs, as also on the Sea Woman myth, is obvious. None of the other variants, no matter of which type, has the earth crack and swallow up the main characters. The maimed girl either descends immediately to the bottom of the sea or, as is the case in the Old Song, she may be given a decent burial in the sea by her father. He then either lives on or he commits suicide by drowning. In the latter case he ends up in the house of Sea Woman and is thus given a mythic afterlife. A descent through the earth is out of the question, nor are any curses uttered in any variant but the "Hell"-variant. The popular Christian myth of the fallen angels, who in disobedience to God's commands were toppled from Heaven and became the first inhabitants of the horrid abyss of Hell, would probably have served as the model.

As regards the idea of purgatory, it appears recent as well. Difficult passages to the abodes of death freeing the deceased S.W. and E. Greenlanders of their

"earthly juices" (P. Egede 1971: 71f, Rasmussen 1921-25, I: 73, 75, 79) were not connected with ideas of *sin*, in the moral sense. In Eskimo traditional religion moral transgressions are not identical with religious ones. The latter concern the relations to nature, not to one's fellow-men. Among the few exceptions to this rule, failures to live up to the obligations of the family cycle of provision are conspicuous. In myth they will invariably call forth dangerous forces of nature that embody creative powers as well.

The only early source to state punishments for sins committed on earth is Lyon (1824: 362f). In his understanding of *Iglulik* ideas, Sea Woman's watchdog, *i.e.* the dog-ancestor of the Whites, punished wicked individuals en route to the submarine abode of death. Yet, the sense in which they were wicked eludes proper evaluation.

The minute recording of Amaunalik's variant constitutes a better source to scrutinize. It does, in fact, ascribe to the father of Sea Woman the role of a tormentor. Only he does not pose a threat to the souls of deceased humans.

Like the "Entrails Snatcher", *Erlaveeritsoq* (Greenland) or *Uluernang* (Baffin Island) who lives close to Moon,<sup>19</sup> the father of Sea Woman presents a danger only to live human beings. Earthly visitors, whether to Sea Woman or to Moon, risk the loss of their vital forces. Among the live visitors to Sea Woman in Amaunalik's variant, some are tickled almost to death by her father. They laugh and laugh, and when eventually they return to earth, they are soon to die. Similarly the Entrails Snatcher does her utmost to make the live visitors to Moon laugh. If successful, she cuts out the visitors' entrails.

According to Amaunalik's variant, the visitors to Sea Woman are invariably shamans whose intention is to make her release the sea mammals by combing her hair and cleaning her house. They arrive on their own accord, but only the great shamans are permitted to perform the tasks. "... Ordinary humans, although they have practiced shamanizing ..." (Holtved 1951, I: 63, II: 22) do not. Only these inferior shamans are given the life-reducing treatment by her father.

Obviously the distinction at issue marks off great shamans from minor ones, who merely pretend to be great. Due to their acquired powers the former pass freely between earth and the abode of Sea Woman (Sonne 1986b). Shamans of lower degrees have not gone through the initiation of death and recovering, and count for little more than ordinary human beings.

Similarly S.E. Baffin Island shamans paid visits to Moon on their own accord (Boas 1964: 190f). The shaman's prerequisite for a safe return to earth turns out to be his helping spirit in the figure of a huge polar bear. Without this he is doomed to loose his entrails to *Uluernang* (Boas 1964: 190).

Sometimes, however, Moon invites an ordinary human to visit his house. Particularly women maltreated

by their husbands evoke the pity of Moon. Having brought such a woman into his house, Moon tells her how to avoid smiling. By following his instructions the woman not only succeeds, she even chases off *Ulu-liernang*. The woman shows her left hand first to *Ulu-liernang* with the middle finger extended. "... Then the latter said: I am much afraid of that bear. She thought the woman's hand looked just like a bear's paw ..." (Boas 1901: 198f).

The power of a bear is evidently the *sine qua non* for escaping the threat of *Ulu-liernang*. The woman receives instruction in the sign denoting these powers from Moon. The shaman has acquired them in advance and he thus possesses the greatest powers available to a shaman apprentice: "... the bear seems to be the most powerful among these [helping] spirits." (Boas 1964: 183).

So once again a distinction is made between great shamans and humans of minor capabilities. Deceased humans are not in question.

Rasmussen (1929: 76) followed by Savard (1966: 105ff; 1970) have pointed to the symmetry in functions of Sea Woman's father and *Ulu-liernang*. My response to this is that the symmetry holds good only as long as the figures' traditional functions of sorting out weaker shamans from greater ones are concerned. Christian influence, which transformed Sea Woman's father into a purgatory devil, spoils the symmetry, since *Ulu-liernang* never attained to a similar role. Why? The cosmology of traditional Inuit religion includes (at a minimum) two abodes of death. The only sources unaffected by Christian influence give no preference of one abode to the other. Caribou, fish and fowl are numerous in the upper realm situated in the vicinity of Moon. Sea mammals abound in the submarine abode en route to Sea Woman (P. Egede 1971: 45, 51). The dead traveling to the upper abode are not encountered by the Entrails Snatcher. Nor do the dead heading for the lower abode meet with Sea Woman or any being related to her household. Influence from Christian ideas cannot be excluded for all of the remaining sources. At the moment from which Christian notions get the upper hand, the lower abode receives a negative value, the upper a positive one. Consequently the role of a purgatory Devil is conferred on Sea Woman's father, while *Ulu-liernang* remains neutral in so far as the deceased humans are concerned.

The conceptual change by which dangerous acts from being breaks of tabu become punishable moral transgressions further bespeaks the novelty of the purgatory. Parallel with contemporary Christian conceptions of grave sins, murderers and felons are eternally doomed to stay in *Adlivun*.

## The aggravation of immoral acts in the "Hell"-variant

Sea Woman, her dogs, and her father are all eternally condemned to *Adlivun*. And the crucial point is that their moral transgressions on earth have been aggravated in the "Hell"-variant as compared to the remaining "Fulmar" variants.

First, the girl's refusal to marry leaves her father completely in the lurch, because they share a lonely life deprived of relatives and co-villagers. Through her marriage to a proper Inuk both she and her father would have been reintegrated into Inuit society. In the other variants her family is complete with at least one brother.

Second, the father not only deceives *Fulmar* by stealing away with the daughter. For no obvious reasons he kills off *Fulmar*, his son-in-law. After which the bereaved fulmars take up the pursuit of the fugitives, raise a storm, etc.

Third, the father deceives these fulmars further by letting the maimed, but still living daughter reenter the boat. The fulmars believe, in complete correspondence with more ancient variants, that the girl is drowned, leave the scene and the storm subsides. The deception thus signifies a denial of *Fulmar's* right to his former position as the select meat-sharing partner of nature.

Fourth, the intra-family feud is extended in that the maimed girl orders her dogs to gnaw off the hands and feet of her father. He then utters his curses and off they go, father, daughter, and dogs, to a just created Hell.

If compared to the main characters of the other variants, Sea Woman and her father of the "Hell"-variant are wicked sinners indeed. The origin of Hell and their eternal stay in that place are justified on Inuit moral terms.

The dogs of Sea Woman-to-be deserve some further comments. Their plurality is conspicuous because a single dog would have sufficed to provide *Adlivun* with its watchdog. Furthermore, the dogs enter the scene without previous explicit warning. Implicitly, however, the father's killing of *Fulmar* foreshadows their later presence. Narratologically they serve as a metonym for "Dog Husband" according to which story the father kills his son-in-law, the dog. By inserting this crime into "Fulmar" the Whites are implicitly made parties to the origin of Hell, for the obvious reason that the idea was introduced by them. On the other hand, the dogs of the "Hell"-variant do not become transformed into Whites. They end up in Hell together with the members of their human household. They remain merely proto-Whites in the same sense as the marginalized daughter and her father remain outside the society of proper Inuit. Consequently neither the proper Whites nor the proper Inuit are to blame for the origin of Hell. The original sin, which also led to the origin of the tabu rules, was committed by the recalcitrant girl, who refused to have herself and her father reintegrated into Inuit society. As



proto-human beings the Whites and Inuit cooperated in originating moral rules which, if transgressed, doom both parties to the torments of Hell.

According to this interpretation we understand why the original sinner, Sea Woman, could not become identified with the Inuit "Culture Heroine", who provided the Whites with their cultural skills.

The maiming of the father is a peculiar feature added to the "Hell"-variant. But this feature also occurs in the "Whaler"-variant, which offers the clue to the unraveling of its meaning. We will presently return to this issue.

## Influences of Christian ideas prior to the establishment of missions

The above interpretation plainly presupposes influences of Christian ideas. True, a mission did not become established at Cumberland Sound until the arrival of Rev. E. J. Peck in 1896. But a famous native of Cumberland Sound, Eenoolooapik, is likely to have brought some Christian ideas from his stay in Aberdeen from 1839 to 1840 (Rowley 1986; Ross 1985: 109–126). The missionary zeal of William Penny, who took him there and returned him, is well documented (Harper 1981), and Eenoolooapik lived for another seven years after his return to Cumberland Sound. Later the sister of Eenoolooapik, Tookoolita and her husband in 1863 went to England for a year's stay with a whaler. She achieved a fairly good command of English and together with her husband she was baptized. Both Hannah, which was the Christian name of Tookoolita, and her husband served Hall as his faithful interpreters on his expeditions during the 1860's (Loomis 1986). In my view they put an unmistakably Christian stamp on the translations of the data Hall received on religious ideas from various Inuit groups (Hall 1879: 277). The most impressive teacher of Christian ideas was, however, the Moravian missionary Warmow. During his eleven months stay at Cumberland Sound from 1856 to 1857 his full command of West Greenlandic enabled him to communicate freely with the native speakers of *Inuktitut*. To his astonishment they were already fairly familiar with the ideas of Christianity (Harper 1981). Warmow was certainly the person who knew how to explain the notions of Sin and Hell in a more comprehensible way than Eenoolooapik and Hannah may have done. Thus Peck was not the first person to introduce the *Oqomiut* to the Gospel.

## The "Whaler"-variant

"Savirqong, and old man, lived alone with his daughter. Her name was Niviarsiang (*i.e.* the girl), but as she would not take a

husband she was also called Unigumissuitung (she who would not take a husband). She refused all her suitors, but at last a dog, spotted white and red, whose name was Ijirqang, won her affection and she took him for a husband. They had ten children, five of whom were Adlet and five dogs. The lower part of the body of the Adlet was that of a dog and hairy all over, the soles excepted, while the upper part was that of a man. When the children grew up they became very voracious, and as the dog Ijirqang did not go out hunting at all, but let his father-in-law provide for the whole family, it was difficult for Savirqong to feed them. Moreover, the children were awfully clamorous and noisy; so at last the grandfather got tired of it, put the whole family into his boat, and carried them to a small island. He told the dog Ijirqang to come every day and fetch meat.

Niviarsiang hung a pair of boots round his neck and he swam across the narrow channel. But Savirqong, instead of giving him meat, filled the boots with heavy stones, which drowned Ijirqang when he attempted to return to the island.

The daughter thought of revenging the death of her husband. She sent the young dogs to her father's hut and let them gnaw off his feet and hands. In return Savirqong, when Niviarsiang happened to be in his boat, threw her overboard and cut off her fingers when she held to the gunwale. As they fell into the sea they were transformed into seals and whales. At last he allowed her to climb into the boat.

As she feared that her father might think of killing or maiming her children, she ordered the Adlet to go inland, where they became the ancestors of a numerous people. She made a boat for the young dogs, setting up two sticks for masts in the soles of her boots, and sent the puppies across the ocean. She sang: "Angnaijaja. When you arrive there across the ocean you will make many things giving you joy. Angnaija." They arrived in the land beyond the sea and became the ancestors of the Europeans." (Boas 1964: 229).

The person who told the "Hell"-variant may have told the "Whaler"-variant as well. The initial social setting of both variants is identical: The girl and her father lead a lonely life. Their marginal position explains the extension of the intra-family feud, which also in the "Whaler"-variant includes the maiming of the father. As pointed out by Boas (*ibid.* p. 179) even the name, *Savirqong* ("a person in possession of an iron knife") identifies the father with the father of Sea Woman according to the "Hell"-variant. *Unigumissuitung* identifies the girl with Sea Woman of the Old Song. And sea mammals arise from the severed fingers of the girl.

Notwithstanding all these similarities, the maimed girl and her equally reduced father do not undergo further transformations, and the origin motif of Hell is absent. So, however much the identifications of this girl with Sea Woman and of her father with the Devil are implied, making this identification explicit is shunned. There are several reasons to account for this avoidance. First, the absence of "Fulmar" elements prevents including the origin of Sea Woman, who according to local tradition was married to a fulmar in her earthly life. Second, ethnocentric pride of the story-teller would prevent the identification of Sea Woman, alias the daughter of the Devil, with the Culture Heroine and ancestress of the Whites. And third, the origin at issue is not that of Hell, but of the relationship of exchange between the Inuit and the Whites in the contemporary state of affairs.

## Interpretation of the “Whaler”-variant within its ethnohistorical frame of reference

In 1883/84 the *Oqomiut* of Cumberland Sound had served as “Ships’ Natives” for three decades on end (Ross 1985). They provided vast quantities of fresh meat, preferably caribou, but in times of need also sea mammals, to feed the wintering Whites. In return for their services the Inuit obtained guns, ironmongery and wooden boats. The latter were used for hunting at sea and for Inuit participation in the whale hunt in particular. In fact, the kayak had fallen into disuse due to the preference for boats (Boas 1964: 78). The daughters of the Inuit hunters also served the Whites, as seamstresses and as dancing partners at the frequent balls held on the ships in winter. Liaisons, of course, occurred and the girls, who received “nice little things” such as beads and steel needles, bore half-breed children adding to the obligations, not of the White fathers, but of the Inuit grandfathers (Ross 1985).

When seen against this background, the “Whaler”-variant becomes perfectly logical, even in its most illogical sequence of events.

Take a second look at the event following the maiming of the father by his doglike grandchildren! How in the world could a person deprived of his hands and feet manage to throw his daughter overboard and cut off her fingers? The irrationality of the event not only points to the insertion of Type I as being recent and ridiculous. For *Savirqong*, although deprived of his hands, has a knife made of *iron*. And although his feet have been devoured by the dog-children as well, he owns a boat in substitution for his loss of bodily mobility.

Given the choice he might have preferred to retain his own means of production and his personal freedom of mobility. But due to his primordial stinginess the loss of hands and feet became his investment in the deal made with the Whites.

The father’s failure to live up to his duties as a provider has been *aggravated* in this variant. The stress on this failure is enhanced by contraction in processual time and in space, and also by a weakening of the revenge carried out by the dog-children.

The dog-father, *Ijirqang*, never gets the opportunity to carry food to his isolated family. He is cheated into death in his very first attempt. Nor does the girl’s father ever show up at the island with gifts of food. He stays at home and thus deprives the troublesome family of food from the moment they have been brought to the island. Conveniently, however, the distance to the island has been contracted into a narrow channel, which is easily crossed by the dog-children, who are thus able to carry out the act of revenge. This latter act has also been weakened: In retaliation for the death of their dog-father, the dog-children ought to have killed and de-

voured the murderer, *i.e.* their grandfather. But they are content to gnaw off his hands and feet. Why? Because the message of the story concerns the grandfather’s total failure to live up to his obligation as a provider. He owes what his hands and feet produce to his grandchildren, and so they are justified in feeding on these parts of his body. – In a figurative sense, the Whalers also did this at the date of recording. – Owing to their mythic grandfather’s denial, the Whites have justifiably become dependent on Inuit providers for survival in the Arctic.

The *Adlet*, being neither proper dogs or proper human beings, are dispatched to the inland of no return. They receive no cultural gifts from their mother, as do the Whites, who being born as proper dogs indeed belong culturally to the households of proper Inuit. But the Inuit have become dependent on the technical superiority of the Whalers to boot. Bound hand and foot to the Whites, Inuit hunters now receive more effective hunting weapons for feeding the increasing numbers of wintering Whalers and half-breed children.

The insertion of Type I turns the Whites with their acknowledged superiority in whaling into the meat sharing partners of the Inuit to the exclusion of *Fulmar*. While still proto-Whites, the dogs carried out the act of revenge, which led to the origin of sea mammals through their grandfather’s act of counter-revenge. The Whites are thus made the blood relatives of the sea mammals, and through the skills they are given by their Inuit mother they have been made the masters of the hunt.

Does all of this mean that the acknowledged superiority of the Whites also prevented the transformation of their mythic mother into Sea Woman? The answer is affirmative in so far as the Whites occupy the traditional position of *Fulmar*, to whom the origin of Sea Woman was bound by tradition. But had the Whites accordingly attained to the position of Sea Woman defined by her controlling the tabu rules? Hardly. The actual ceremonies in honor of Sea Woman that were still celebrated annually (Boas 1964: 195–201) indicate the contrary. Yet, the “Whaler”-variant reveals a tendency to replace the controller of man’s relations to sea mammals, *i.e.* Sea Woman, with the Whites in recognition of their technical superiority. Still, the Whites alone are not in command of the hunt, and this fact is expressed in the peculiar figure of the dog-father, *Ijirqang*.

*Ijirqang* of the “Whaler”-variant diverges in several respects from the dog of most other variants. He bears a name, *Ijirqang*; his coat is spotted white and red; prior to his marriage *Ijirqang* apparently does not belong to the household of the girl’s father.

Oosten (1976: 60) has called attention to the identity in colors and pattern of *Ijirqang* with the *dog of Moon*. Hutchinson (1977) fails to see that identification, but concentrates on the meanings of the colors and the name. White means semen, she says, and red means menstrual blood. Both interpretations fit nicely with the

E. Greenland connotations of Moon, as detailed on pp. 14–16: The engendering powers of Moon unfold in spring through the transformation of his white polar bear into a red dog, or by the melting or “bleeding” (*aaneq*) of his snow (semen) into fertilizing water with the gradual prevalence of Sun.

Hutchinson takes *Ijirqang* to mean “Big Eye”. Although the idea that Moon watches the doings of mankind through the circular hole in the floor of his house supports this interpretation, the affix *-rqang* does not mean “Big”. Provided that Boas’ *-rqang* is the correct affix, *Ijirqang* means either “the first person to make himself invisible” or, “a person who makes himself invisible before doing something else” (Prof. Michael Fortescue, personal comm.). Both meanings correspond to the activities of Moon, who according to myth was the first person to make himself invisible when illicitly copulating with his sister, Sun, and who makes himself periodically invisible during the period of winter and, from an Inuit point of view, is invisible throughout the period of continuous sunlight in summer.

In our attempt to unravel the reason why the engendering powers of Moon became part of the “Whaler”-variant, Oosten’s (1983: 150) analysis is helpful: The origin myth of Moon shows his association with the winter season, while the origin of Sea Woman connotes spring. Again the interpretations accord with the cosmological ideas of the East Greenlanders (pp. 14–16). Furthermore, since the “Whaler”-variant concerns the relationship of exchange with the Whites, who also demanded fresh food during the entire period of winter and exclusive moonlight, the insertion of Moon connotations into the story is not unsuitable. Yet, the meanings of the insertion are far from exhausted merely with reference to the wintering of the Whalers. Their preferences in food, which can hardly have failed to make a deep impression on the collaborating Inuit, give us the hint for continued enquiry:

The Whites preferred the flesh of caribou to all other kinds of meat (Ross 1975: 65f; 1985: 155f). And as Boas (1964: 93) says, “... The tribes possessed of firearms can easily procure deer all the year round ...” which means that the weapons received from the Whites made the latter’s favorite food accessible to the *Oqomiut* hunters throughout the period of winter.

The recycling of the killed caribou was linked to Moon. The transmigrating beings of caribou roamed the plains of Moon, and his house was “... nicely covered with white deerskins, which the man in the moon used to dry near it.” (Boas 1964: 190f.)

These albino deerskins point to still another connotation of the name *Ijirqang*. In the meaning of a power to make oneself invisible, this dog of Moon is related by name to the *ijiqqat* (*ijeraq* meaning “Small eye” or “Eye-young”, in the plural). The *ijiqqat* possessed the power to make themselves invisible. Their skins were of a white color. They lived exclusively on caribou in a village at *Aukinerbing* (Boas 1901: 167, 213) the literal

meaning of which is: “genuinely short of melting”. Obviously the place name refers to the ice cap on the inland mountains.

In consonance with my earlier interpretation of E. Greenland cosmology, the ice cap would represent the winter-powers of Moon, because it remains frozen and thus resistant to the powers of Sun during her prevalence in summer when Moon is otherwise invisible.

Besides *ijiqqat*’s apparent association to Moon further likenesses to the Whites were added. This can be seen from two variants of “Dog Husband”, one told at Cumberland Sound during the 1890’s and the other at Pond Inlet shortly after 1900 (Boas 1901: 165–167; 1907: 491). In the former story the *ijiqqat* have been substituted for the *Adlet* in their traditional position of structural opposition to the Whites, whereas the latter variant even identifies the *ijiqqat* with the Whites. Also, despite Saladin d’Anglure’s (1983) assumption that the notions about the *ijiqqat* at Iglulik of today were never contaminated by those about the Whites, a recently told variant of “Dog Husband” replaces the the *eqqilit* with the White Men of the inland in structural opposition to the White Men of the sea (Paniaq 1987: 41–43).

The skin color of the Whites, as well as their delicate taste in meat, would account for the insertion of the Moon dog by the name of *Ijirqang* into the “Whaler”-variant. Despite their superiority in the whale hunt, the Whites would never eat any part of the whales killed (Ross 1985: 85f). The Whites stored the blubber and baleen, served up the whale skin to the “Ships’ Natives” and their families, but they despised the flesh of the carcasses shorn of the blubber, which the Inuit were free to secure for their own consumption. In times of scarcity the Whites would welcome fresh meat of other species of sea mammals. But *unlike fulmars*, the new meat-sharing partners considered the whales unsuitable for food. They relished only the meat of caribou. Thus by both their peculiar taste and white appearance, the Whalers bore a much greater resemblance to the white *ijiqqat* of the innermost hinterland than to fulmars of the open sea. Such notions would account for the identification of the Moon-dog with the dog-father of the Whites.

## The “Peace”-variant

Captain Mutch took down the story (Boas 1901: 119, 163–165) of Type IIIb, which I label the “Peace”-variant. It combines “Dog Husband” with “Fulmar” and postdates 1896, when the mission at Cumberland Sound was established by Rev. E. J. Peck (*ibid.* p. 4). *Vide* p.13.

Compared to the “Hell”- and “Whaler”-variants the changes in tone and themes of the “Peace”-variant are striking. Gone is the extended feud between the members of the same family, who are now localized to the

village of *Padli* (north of Durban Harbour). Gone is also the grim personality of the girl's father, who has changed into the ideal of a careful provider:

"... Every day Avilayoq [Sea Woman] sent her husband across to her father's hut to get meat for herself and her children ... The old man filled the boots with meat, and the dog took them back to the island".

The father never grows tired of his unproductive son-in-law, the dog, whose eventual drowning appears to be due to a moral and merciful act on the part of his father-in-law.

Also excluded is the revenge carried out by the dog-children on their Inuit grandfather. The murder occurring in the more traditional variants led to a fragile "truce" between the Inuit and the Whites. In the "Whaler"-variant the weakening of this function into a mere maiming of the grandfather established a relationship of exchange between the two races. In the "Hell"-variant the purgatory which ensues receives Inuit and Whites alike, bound as they are to each other in original sin.

The "Peace"-variant eliminates the cause for mutual enmity at the beginning of the story:

"In *Padli* lived a girl named Avilayoq. Since she did not want to have a husband, she was also called *Uinigumissuitung*. There was a stone in the village, speckled white and red, which transformed itself into a dog and married this girl. She had many children, some of whom were Eskimo, others white men, others *Inuarugdligat* [coastal dwarves], *Ijijat*, and *Adlet*" (*ibid.*).

Obviously the various races are differentiated by *ontogenesis* and thus enabled to take care of themselves at an early age. The motif of the girl dispatching her offspring into various directions is therefore eliminated as well. Nor do the dog-children get any opportunity of revenge because the drowning of their dog-father occurs after the transformation of their Mother into Sea Woman. And immediately upon the death of the dog, their grandfather commits suicide himself. So the various races, to which the *ijiqat*, the *inuarulligat*, and the Inuit themselves have been added, have no reason for interracial conflicts in the future. *Brotherly Love* transcending the racial boundaries arises as a new message of this "Peace"-variant.

Another new command is abstention from *Adultery*. The introduction of this "cardinal sin" even suppresses the traditional (Inuit) immorality of the girl's refusal to marry. No restricting effects on Inuit life follow in the wake of the girl's marriage to the dog. The mesalliance merely gives rise to a peaceful peopling of the world with races differentiated at birth by their inborn cultural qualities.

Adultery alone brings about the restrictions that are to rule the ways of the Inuit. These are the familiar tabus on the relations to game:

"... One day, while the dog was gone for meat, a man came to the island in his kayak, and called *Uinigumissuitung*: "Take your bag and come with me!" he shouted. He had the appearance of a tall, good-looking man, and the woman was well pleased with him ... Finally they came to a place where there were many people and many huts. He pointed out to her a certain hut made of the skins of yearling seals, and told her that it was his, and that she was to go there. The woman went up to the hut, while he attended to his kayak. Soon he joined her in the hut, and stayed with her for three or four days before going out again sealing. Her new husband was a petrel.

Meanwhile her father had left the dog, her former husband, at his house, and had gone to look for her on the island. When he did not find her, he returned home, and told the dog to wait for him, as he was going in search of his daughter ..." (*ibid.*).

Subsequently "*Fulmar*" unfolds along its ancient course of events, and the girl is accordingly neither allowed to reenter the boat alive, nor is her dead body taken ashore for a burial in the sea: "She fell backward into the water then he [her father] paddled ashore." (*ibid.*).

The next motif is the drowning of the dog, the girl's first and therefore rightful husband, with whom she is reunited at the bottom of the sea. Immediately afterwards the couple is joined by the father through his suicide.

## Influence from Christian mission on the "Peace"-variant

The preachings of Rev. Peck, who spoke *Inuktitut* fluently, undoubtedly guided this rearrangement of the motifs. The sexual liaisons going on between the White men and the Inuit women hardly suited the moral views of this Christian missionary.

The contempt in which the Inuit held the licentious and boisterous Whites, who despite their technical superiority were no better than dogs, contradicted the Christian message of brotherly love.

For these reasons the effects of the "Dog Husband" motifs were neutralized.

As regards *Fulmar*, he is neither killed, nor are his fellow-fulmars defrauded of the body of Sea Woman. Reinstalled in his traditional role of a meat-sharing partner *Fulmar* is even rehabilitated as a hunter. No longer does he present the figure of a poor fisherman unable to provide properly for his human wife, which was his role in the Old Song and the "Hell"-variant. Like *Fulmar* in Amaunalik's variant he again catches seals, and his hut is nicely lined with the pelts of yearling seals, a valuable article of trade in great demand by the Whites throughout the period of whaling.

But what has become of the ethnocentric pride that made the Whites receive their cultural skills from their Inuit mother? Apparently this idea has been sacrificed to the message of brotherly love. Implicitly, however, pride in traditional shamanism rules the entire course of



events. The peculiarities of the dog-father demonstrate this.

Like *Ijirqang* he is far from being an ordinary specimen of his kind. He is a spirit-dog residing in a white and red speckled stone, from which he emerges at the girl's implicit invitation addressed to Nature through her refusal to marry an Inuit man. Bits of information on shamans received by Boas explain, in Inuit terms, the politeness shown by the girl's father to this spirit-dog of a stone:

"The tornait [*tornaq*, helping spirit, in the plural] of the stones live in the large boulders scattered over the country. The Eskimo believe that these rocks are hollow and form a nice house, the entrance of which is only visible to the angakoq whose genius lives in the stone. The tornaq is a woman with only one eye in the middle of the brow. Another kind of tornaq lives in the stones that roll down the hills in spring when the snow begins to melt. If a native happens to meet such a stone, which is about to become his tornaq, the latter addresses him: "I jumped down in long leaps from my place on the cliff. As the snow melts, as the water is formed on the hills, I jump down." Then it asks the native whether he is willing to have it for his tornaq, and if he answers in the affirmative it accompanies him, wabbling along as it has no legs." (Boas 1964: 183.)

Our spirit-dog, being a male, must belong to the latter category of stone spirits. By his colors and pattern he further connotes the procreative powers of Moon, and his marriage to a human girl accordingly takes on the character of a relationship between a shamaness and a helping spirit, derived from Moon, on a more intimate level. Although the notion may have been implied already in the figure of *Ijirqang* of the "Whaler"-variant, the explicitness introduced here serves to explain the elevated position accorded to the dog-spirit. For good feelings continuously reign between the two in-laws.

The Christian idea about God, the creator of man, may have inspired to greater explicitness. For it amalgamates Inuit shamanism with Christian ideas, and it confers the honour of the racial ontogenesis on the Inuit girl, who married the fertilizing spirit-dog of Moon.

The bodily appearance of Sea Woman as pictured in the conclusion of the story may also support my interpretation: "... [she] cannot walk, but slides along, one leg bent under, the other stretched out" (*ibid.*). This posture enabled the E. Greenland shamans to undertake their spirit flights through the air and up to Moon (Sandgreen 1967, II: 102ff; 1987: 329ff offers a detailed description of the technique). However, I have found no unambiguous evidence of this tradition among the S.E. Baffin Islanders.

Be this as it may, the E. Greenland cosmological ideas of a hurtling boulder as a substitute for either Moon or his dog, are recognized in the "Peace"-variant. Even the temporary victory of *Equngasooq* over Moon in spring reappears in the functions of *Fulmar*. He wins the favour of the girl already married to a substitution for Moon, and he calls forth the sea mammals by means of a storm, while *Equngasooq* in the "Shaman's Journey"-variant assists the female shaman during a storm to

to reach Sea Woman and make the sea mammals reappear.

*Fulmar* has certainly reattained his more ancient position as the master of the spring hunt on the open sea, in opposition to the winter-powers of Moon.

In sum, by neutralizing the immoral acts of "Dog Husband" the story-teller has not only managed to identify the ancestress of the Whites with Sea Woman. By the same means he/she also brought the story to rest within the tradition of the past.

Apart from the teachings of Peck that evidently put their stamp on this variant, his moral authority may have had some civilizing effects on the whalers' crews. The moral disorder and spiritual anxiety to which the "Hell"- and "Whaler"-variants bear sinister evidence no longer stain Inuit relations with nature in this "Peace"-variant. The tabu restrictions remain in force, but the more severe restrictions imposed on the Inuit through their dependence on the licentious and clamorous Whites appear to be obliterated.

## Early Christian influence in other Inuit areas

I feel less sure, however, that the story-teller of the "Peace"-variant in his/her views represented the majority of the *Oqomiut* at that early date. Peck was not highly successful at the beginning of his mission (Lewis 1904: 303ff), and the great fear of Hell expressed by Boas' informants (1964: 182) could hardly be dispelled from one moment to the next. The idea lingered on and had probably been spread by Hall's baptized Inuit interpreters (see above p. 25). The spread of Peck's hymn booklets together with self-taught literacy in *Inuktitut* syllabics (Harper 1983) widened the diffusion of Christian ideas prior to the establishment of missions in the North. The same effect should be ascribed to Turquetil's second sojourn among the *Qaernermiut* south of the *Aivilingmiut* (Turquetil 1986/87), and the continuous missionizing at Chesterfield Inlet after 1912. The native Christian movement, which influenced Rasmussen's informants at Iglulik, bears witness to a strong syncretism of native beliefs, Anglicanism, and Catholicism (Rasmussen 1925: 319-321). The idea of a purgatory Hell was part of this amalgam (*ibid.* p. 88) and according to Carpenter (1955: 72) the *Aivilingmiut* still identified Sea Woman with the Devil and her abode with Hell in the 1950's. Caution must therefore guide enquiry into the variants and sources recorded at these recent dates. As do the Cumberland Sound sources, they show influences from early diffusion of Christian ideas.

## Conclusion

When Sea Woman or her father became identified with the Devil, and her abode with Hell, both the breaking



of tabus and moral violations became liable to punishment in Hell and thus the fear of these deities increased correspondingly. When further opportunities for the employment necessary for continuous access to Western goods diminished with the disappearance of the Euro-American whalers about 1910, anxiety increased. The former collaboration with the Whalers gave way to dependency on credit systems introduced by the Hudson Bay Company's clerks. Meanwhile the missionaries did their utmost to introduce Western morals in the names of God and the Devil. Consequently Sea Woman became the main focus of fear.

Savard (1970) was perfectly right in his assumption that Sea Woman's predominance with the Canadian Inuit was due to a fairly recent development. But the cause of this development was far from being the 'evolution' of some modern cult that became fashionable through diffusion. Acculturative changes in all spheres of Inuit social life were the more probable causes. The most unsettling changes were caused by the arrival and wintering of the Whalers and subsequently, their later disappearance from the established network of collaboration and trade.

In Greenland the changes took another course since the Whalers did not winter there and thus were less dependent on collaboration with the Greenlanders. Nor did the Whalers employ Greenlanders in whale hunting. To this should be added the early arrival of Danish missionaries, who did not identify the Devil with Sea Woman or her father (who besides did not exist as an ever-present figure in Greenland cosmology). They chose *toornaarsuk*, one particular helping spirit for this innovative role. And early attempts by the first missionaries to relate *toornaarsuk* to Sea Woman, whom they assumed to be the daughter (or great grandmother) of the Devil, left no traces in the Greenland stories (Sonne 1986a). Nor did Christian ideas about punishment for moral sins become associated with Sea Woman.

Sea Woman nevertheless appears to have either grown in importance, or remained important with the S. Greenlanders. The only variants on record of her origin myth were told by the S. Greenlanders, who further associated her figure with bird species symbolizing trade relations and the whale hunt 500 miles to the north.

The trading expeditions of the S. Greenlanders during the eighteenth century accordingly stand out as the most plausible cause for their particular preoccupation with Sea Woman. They brought about seasonal get-togethers of numerous families, extension of the "marriage area", and trading partnerships with migrating and extra-local Greenlanders as also with Dutch whalers and traders.

Similarly Sea Woman of the Canadian Inuit was closely associated with exchange relations at points of assembly and trade. Increased opportunities of obtaining Western goods led to an early identification of Sea Woman with the ancestress of White traders. Only the

S.E. Baffin Islanders were reluctant to make this identification.

We then are left with two questions: First, why did Sea Woman in most locales become associated with trade to the exclusion of, for example, Moon?

Second, would ideological obstacles other than those assumed in the analysis have prevented the S.E. Baffin Islanders from identifying Sea Woman with the ancestress of the Whites?

The female gender of Sea Woman offers one answer to the first question. Alliances, not only the marital ones that linked one family to another, but also extra-family partnerships, most frequently involved transcending sexual rights and temporary sharing of meat. Women were indispensable for the establishment of affinal bonds and auxiliary kin ties between mutual strangers. Fathers and brothers could not be used for similar ends. Moon, a male, was accordingly less suited to serve as a symbol of trade.

A supplementary answer is this: that Sea Woman figured as a symbol of trade relations, whether with extra-local Inuit or other foreigners such as the Whites, merely meant an extension of the notion that she served as a marginalized human ally of nature, in mediating the exchange relations between proper humans and the semi-human sea mammals.

Among the Inuit of the N.W. coast of Hudson Bay, at Fox Channel and Fox Bassin, this extension caused Sea Woman to be identified with the ancestress of the Whites. The extent to which she might have symbolized the inter-tribal trade prior to the advent of the Whites, appears to open another question until the significance of her lamp is considered. Made of soapstone available only at scattered locations, her lamp provided the food for reincarnating the transmigrating souls of the killed sea mammals. Inuit from more distant localities could hardly do without encounters at soapstone deposits, and trade *etc.* ensued.

However, as soon as meat-sharing partners such as fulmars or gulls enter into an intimate relationship with Sea Woman, either by marriage or association, the probability of a pre-contact tendency to connect Sea Woman with trade increases. *Fulmar*, through his strong association with whaling, constitutes the most convincing case in point. Considering the general decline in the Thule culture whale hunt after c. A.D. 1400, and the few areas where it continued for another couple of centuries, the Inuit of these locales would have been the only ones to provide other groups with whale products. The importance of baleen for the manufacturing of all sorts of gear and utensils during the centuries preceding the decline is well documented by archaeology. The need for baleen would thus have been urgent, though decreasing with gradual adaptation to the use of other materials.

On S.E. Baffin Island the whale carcasses which washed ashore on account of Dutch whaling in Davis Strait after c. 1670, and in increasing numbers from

about 1719, would most likely have added to the mythic importance of *Fulmar*. Since the Dutch appear to have visited S.E. Baffin Island every now and then during the eighteenth century, the local Inuit could not fail to realize who was responsible for the carcasses. I suppose that accordingly *Fulmar* acquired the additional value of a mediator to the whaling Whites, and the more so because the onset of Dutch whaling followed shortly after the decline in the native whale hunt at Cumberland Sound. A further increase in the number of carcasses would be the effect of the opening in 1819 of the Whalers' Return Route along the East coast of Baffin Island.

In that event the answer to the second question lies ready at hand. Granted that the whaling Whites had already been made part of the exchange with the sea mammals in the symbol of *Fulmar* – the faithful companion of ships and whales – the further addition of "Dog Husband" was unnecessary. Yet, when the American and Scottish Whalers began to winter in Cumberland Sound, the former alliance with *Fulmar* as master of the hunt in spring and summer gave way to the new masters, *i.e.* the Whites on an annual basis. *Fulmar* was killed, and his fellow-fulmars were deprived of the body of Sea Woman, although their right to her hands was still in part acknowledged. Sea Woman moved into Hell together with the Devil and the proto-Whites, who had bound the Inuit hand and foot. Both parties would go to Hell on this account.

The problem was insoluble. Collaboration with the Whites was a boon, but the demands of the White grass-widowers were such that a sojourn in the purgatory was the inevitable result of the deal.

According to at least one story-teller, however, the problem faded with the advent of Rev. E. J. Peck. Brotherly love came to replace the relations of sin between Inuit and Whites. The dog of Moon substituting for the ordinary dog of "Dog Husband" became spiritualized within the contexts of shamanism and Christianity, and *Fulmar* was back in his ancient role as the master of the hunt at sea. Eventually Sea Woman could become identified with the ancestress of the Whites.

## Discussion of method

Among the analyses discussed in the first section, only Oosten's takes into consideration the impact from acculturative agencies. These have been decisive, Oosten says, for changes in social organization and consequently for changes in various aspects of religious life. However, Oosten seeks the causes of change in the structure of myths in environmental changes of the prehistoric past. Similarly Holtved looks to prehistory for an explanatory model, and although he adheres to the ritual-myth theory, he finds no evidence for its applicability in the case of Sea Woman. Savard, on the con-

trary, makes the ritual-myth theory serve as his main historical criterion, and he further identifies an assumed process of increased explicitness in structure with a cultural development of rationalization.

None of the remaining analysts pay any heed to historical issues. Though Fischer and Sabo & Sabo do, in so far as they claim an absence of Western (*i.e.* Christian) influences at the time the variants were recorded. As does Holtved.

I fail to see why historical impact cannot be taken into consideration.

First, according to the structural theory of myth historical changes do not necessarily spoil the structure *per se*. They may lead only to transformations, inversions, mediations *etc.*

Second, would Christianity when introduced invariably and immediately call forth a breakdown in mythic structure? Apparently it did not with the S.E. Baffin Islanders. When the role of the Devil was conferred on the father of Sea Woman, but not on the Entrails Snatcher, this did spoil the traditional symmetry in their functions. This asymmetry may correspond to the fear of Sea Woman's abode expressed by the then contemporary Inuit. But the "Peace"-variant bespeaks a *restoration* of structure in so far as its functional relations correspond to those operating in the E. Greenland "World view" when still "untainted" by Christian ideas. So basic structure remained in force among the S.E. Baffin Islanders despite the preaching of the Gospel.

And third, new religious ideas do not operate in a social vacuum. Whether these ideas are accepted on account of the superior technical know-how and the authority exerted by the foreigners, or rejected in ethnocentric pride, the ideas are intimately related to the character of the social relations at work between the two cultures in contact. Changes of meaning in myth reveal the impact of such relations. These changes do not necessarily entail either a breakdown in structure or the development of a new cult.

Although acculturative changes brought about by early contacts between the Inuit and the Whites have been studied for decades and found to be both pervasive and profound, the tendency is still there to consider religion more resistant to change than any other sphere of life. It is to be hoped that my analysis has challenged that preconception which is, of course, utterly wrong.

The definition of the diachronic aspect of Lévi-Strauss' (1958) structural theory does not spontaneously lend itself to the construction of operational devices for analyzing effects of historical changes on myth. Yet, the definition does not exclude historical analyses. Miranda (1972: 12–17), for instance, handles it nicely. But what appears to me the crux is the fact that analysis of structures depends on the meanings of the elements in relation to each other in various positions as deduced by the analyst. And the deduction of meaning is not only dependent on the ethnographic data employed by the analyst. Equally decisive is her or his preconception of

the data employed. A fresh preconception such as, *e.g.* my focus on the presence of the Whites in the origin myth of Sea Woman, alters the meanings considerably. And the enigma is not solved by the proposition adopted by both Oosten and Savard that structures are more implicit in some variants than in others.

Oosten may be the one who makes the correct use of the structural idea of explicitness, in that he considers the more explicit structures of the compound variants to be older than the independent stories with weaker structures. These latter he judges to be fragmentary in the sense of being remnants. His judgement, however, is contradicted by an analysis in terms of the comparative historical method as has been shown. The theory of diffusion, upon which the latter method is based, is far from being above criticism in all aspects. But when used with care, that is, when based on source criticism, archaeological and linguistic findings, and those of zoology and other natural sciences as well, there is every reason for employing a historical method.

To return to the proposition of explicitness, Savard takes the opposite view of Oosten's which fits the historical findings. The compound variants are younger than the independent stories of which the former are made up. But Savard's idea that an increased explicitness in structure forms a proof of increased rationalizing capacities in the story-tellers, would call for some critical comments:

First, the premises of structural method as defined by Lévi-Strauss would be rendered invalid if the analysts were to wait, *e.g.* for acculturative changes to call forth a greater explicitness in myth, in order to be able to carry out an analysis.

Second, myths are not combined with the purpose of making explicit structures only implied in the previously separate stories. Social and ideative changes lead to a rethinking of myth, or religion, or political ideas. Combinations of stories and rearrangements of elements and motifs have the purpose to make explicit a new meaning, a new "truth", which better corresponds to the contemporary state of affairs. Otherwise one might had to admit that modern comic strips reveal eternally true meanings of the old myths that they frequently employ, whereas the people who once composed the myths were ignorant of their wonderful implications for our present-day Western culture. Naturally such an exegetic point of view is out of the question. The independent variants will have been perfectly explicit within the structures of the local mythology extant at the dates of their telling.

Finally, the method built on the premise of explicitness – no matter how this concept is understood in terms of history – is rendered invalid by circular conclusions in the process of interpretation, which further involves a *petitio principii*: for the meaning deduced from the more explicit variant will unavoidably guide the interpretations of structures and meanings in the simpler variants leading to the following outcome: greater explicitness in

structure is considered to be equivalent to greater explicitness in meaning. The circularity remains.

To refute these views, and obversely, in addition, to demonstrate the fruitful applicability of historical method to analyses of myth, have been the main 'implicit' purposes of this paper.

But there still remains the need for a theory and procedure to distinguish between meaning and structure.

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3. Cf. Leach (1970: 97-114) for a sound critique of the applicability of that model.
4. Oosten's early Thule culture corresponds to its second phase of development and expansion.
5. Although indirect influences on the East Greenlanders from Christian missions in S. Greenland are evident in some respects (Sonne 1986a) they do not concern our present enquiry.
6. Hultkrantz (1962: 396) reaches a similar conclusion.
7. In the meaning defined by Turner 1964.
8. Similarly the age of the deities and spirits resembling Sea Woman, such as *ne-givik* (= *Nerrivik* of the Polar Inuit) at Tigara (Rainey 1947: 258) and the N.E. Asiatic sea deities (reviewed by Paulsson 1961), cannot be settled. I do not personally try to advocate an Eastern Inuit origin of these related spirits. Western Eskimo and N.E. Asiatic origins are equally possible. The earliest immigrants of the first phase of the Thule culture into Greenland about 1100 A.D. may also perfectly well have brought rites and ideas connected with Sea Woman along with them. But all of the sources are too young to permit a final decision on the matter.
9. The scene belongs to a novel, the purpose of which is to show discrepancies in customs of Inuit and Whites. And since Houston did have the opportunity to observe the ways of the *Seekooseelarmiut* during several prolonged stays, I take his description at face value.
10. Since little attention has been paid to the significance of flippers and hands in the ethnographic literature, I have *p.t.* not been able to assemble a comprehensive sample of instances.
11. Although Jacobson (*ibid.*) considers *naruyaq* in the singular to be related to *naruya* in the dual, he does not know how to explain the relation in linguistic terms. Perhaps the riddle can be solved by application of the cultural meaning of "dyadic meat sharing partner" in both cases?
12. Variants are found in most of the story-collections listed in the bibliography.
13. Lyon 1824: 363 (Iglulik); Boas 1901: 327f; 1907: 497 (W. coast of Hudson Bay); 1907: 492 (Pond Inlet); Rasmussen 1931: 227 (*Netsilik*), 493f (Back River).
14. Boas 1964: 175-177, 229; 1901: 163-165 (Cumbl. Sound); 1907: 496f (*Aivilik*, due to influence from Pond Inlet immigrants?); Rasmussen 1929: 63-67 (*Iglulik*); 1931: 227f (*Netsilik*. Only one old man knew this variant, which combines "Dog Husband" with Type I); Hawkes 1916: 152, which inserts the origin of sea mammals into "Dog Husband", but lacks the origin of Sea Woman (Labrador: Atlantic coast or Ungava Bay?).
15. The interpretation made by Fischer (1975) forms my point of departure for further considerations.
16. I am indebted to Prof. Inge Kleivan for the Canadian and Alaskan references.
17. Rasmussen (1929: 68) claims to have heard a Greenland variant relating the ultimate transformation of the girl who married a dog into Sea Woman. Since no trace of a corroboration can be found, the statement must be due to R.'s editing his notes for publication. The statement is identical with that made by his *Netsilik* informants (1931: 227) and *after* the event described in 1929: 68.
18. Hutchinson (1977: 122) mentions still another identification, namely that of Sea Woman with the creatress of caribou and walrus. No corroboration can be found except for Boas' entirely private assumption (1964: 179) that the two mythic females were one and the same person, and statements made on this identity by the *Netsilingmiut* in 1923 (Rasmussen 1931: 212f).
19. Holtved 1951, I: 33f, II: 9f; Rink 1866: 87; Rasmussen 1921-25, I: 88f; 1939: 59; 1929: 76, 81f; J. Rosing 1963: 20f, 227; Boas 1964: 191.

## Notes

1. Usually I prefer the spelling used by authors on the Canadian Inuit. Inuit place names are in plain style, *e.g.* Iglulik, whereas identical names used as "tribe"-names are in italic, *e.g.* *Iglulik*. As regards Greenlandic words spelling is according to the authorized orthography of 1973, except for the proper names of human persons of the stories and Greenlanders baptized before 1973. *Equngasog* presents a mixed case. When introduced in this paper he is a human person in a story and thus ought to have been spelled according to the pre-1973 orthography: *Equngasog*. However, since in later sections this name denotes a class of spirits: *Equngasog*, I have chosen the latter spelling throughout the paper.
2. Sonne 1986a discusses some effects of this theory on former research in the field of Eskimo religion.



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