MEDDELELSER OM GRØNLAND

Settlements, kinship and hunting grounds in traditional Greenland

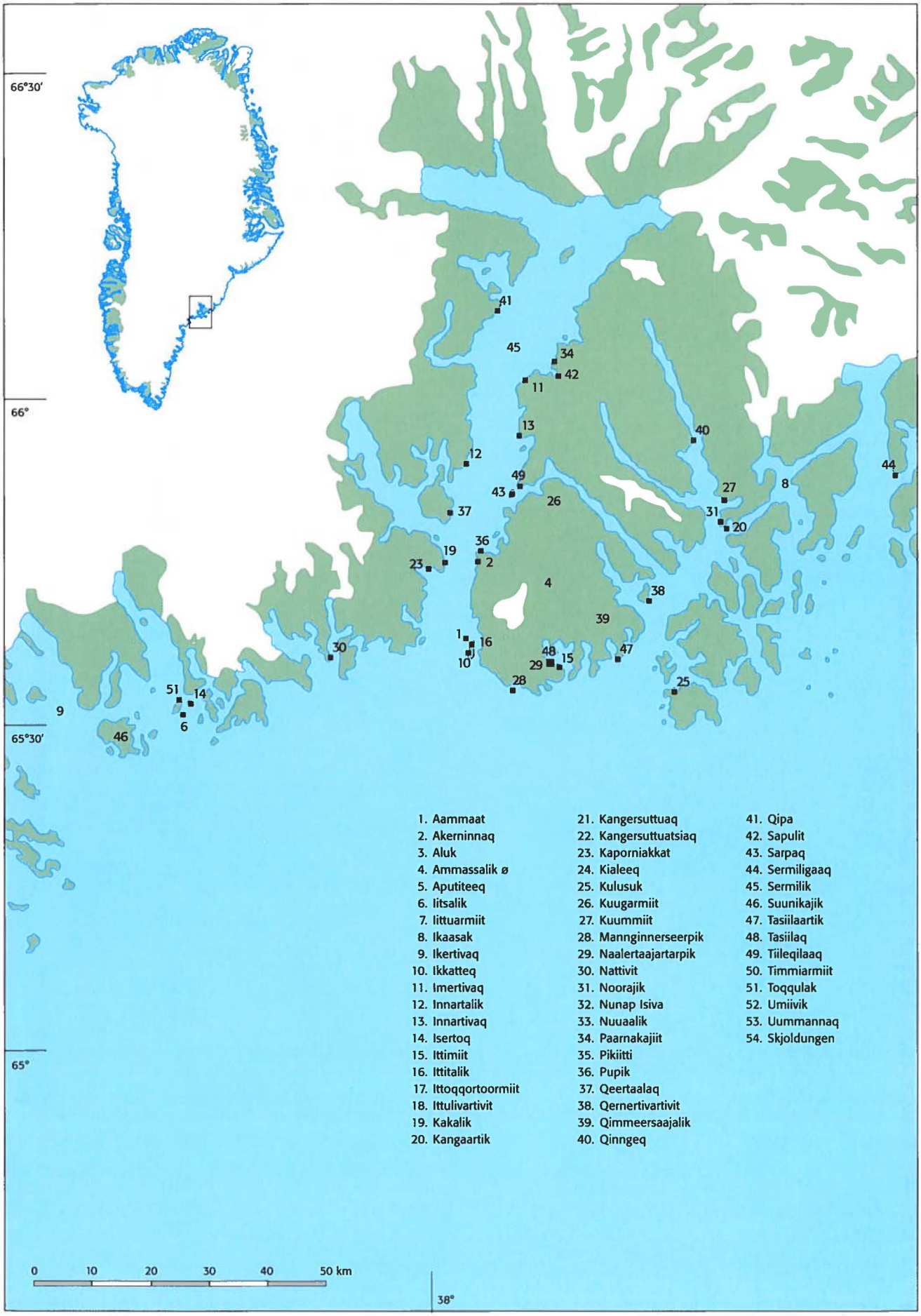
A comparative study of local experiences from Upernavik and Ammassalik

Robert Petersen



MAN & SOCIETY 27 · 2003


80°
76°
72°
68°
64°
60°
Thule
Melville Bay
Upernavik
Uummannaq
Ilulissat
Aasiaat
Taseralik
Sarfannguit
Maniitsoq
Nuuk
17
21
32
5
33
24
22
Ammassalik
35
52
18
54
7
53
50
3
0
100
200
300 km
40°


66°30'
66°
65°30'
65°
38°
0 10 20 30 40 50 km
1. Aammaat
2. Akerninnaq
3. Aluk
4. Ammassalik ø
5. Aputiteeq
6. Iitsalik
7. Iittuarmiit
8. Ikaasak
9. Ikertivaq
10. Ikkatteq
11. Imertivaq
12. Innartalik
13. Innartivaq
14. Isertoq
15. Ittimiit
16. Ittitalik
17. Ittoqqortoormiit
18. Ittulivartivit
19. Kakalik
20. Kangaartik
21. Kangersuttuaq
22. Kangersuttuatsiaq
23. Kaporniakkat
24. Kialeeq
25. Kulusuk
26. Kuugarmiit
27. Kuummiit
28. Mannginnerseerpik
29. Naalertaajartarpik
30. Nattivit
31. Noorajik
32. Nunap Isiva
33. Nuuaalik
34. Paarnakajiit
35. Pikiitti
36. Pupik
37. Qeertaalaq
38. Qernertivartivit
39. Qimmeersaajalik
40. Qinngeq
41. Qipa
42. Sapulit
43. Sarpaq
44. Sermiligaaq
45. Sermilik
46. Suunikajik
47. Tasiilaartik
48. Tasiilaq
49. Tiileqilaaq
50. Timmiarmiit
51. Toqqulak
52. Umiivik
53. Uummannaq
54. Skjoldungen

Settlements, kinship and hunting grounds in traditional Greenland

To Inge

The person I have most to thank for

Settlements, kinship and hunting grounds in traditional Greenland

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Abstract

Petersen, Robert 2003. Settlements, kinship and hunting grounds in traditional Greenland. A comparative study of local experiences from Upernavik and Ammassalik. – Meddelelser om Grønland Man & Society 27. 324 pp. Copenhagen, Danish Polar Center, 2003.

Settlements, kinship and hunting grounds in traditional Greenland is a comparative study of the geographical mobility of hunters in the Upernavik and Ammassalik districts.

The periods dealt with are *c.* 1860 to 1970 for the Upernavik district and 1894 to 1970 for the Ammassalik district.

On the basis of the experiences of local hunters themselves, the study shows how kinship and social organization are important factors for the description of settlement patterns. When one compares the two districts, one finds that the strategies chosen and the results of expansion differ.

Social organization, economic solidarity and traditional rights of use are evaluated against the background of the incest prohibition and exchanges of knowledge.

The size of the hunting area of one local community is estimated, allowing for increases in population and the effect of bad hunting years, two factors crucial to the expansion of the hunting areas. The role of pioneers in the expansion process is described.

In the final chapters, the economy of hunting communities as part of modern Greenlandic society is studied. The economic status of the hunting communities as supplemented by wage income seems to be equivalent to that of the true hunting society, but is controversial as compared with similar present-day communities. The economic situation in the 1990s is discussed for both areas.

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Introduction to the approach

During the work on this study my view of the task itself has slowly changed. At first it was a specialized work attempting to penetrate behind official knowledge and popular theory concerning the factors that played a role in the wandering existence of the Greenlandic hunting communities.

The description arose from some conversations I had with hunters in Upernavik in the 1960s. The information I obtained there was often based on many years spent observing the hunting conditions. At some points this information differed from what the official sources of the previous century said. This information had probably at some time become general knowledge with certain resemblances to the statements recorded in the legendary accounts of the past. But these accounts were often more detailed than certain official information. Large parts of the monograph could be called 'traditional knowledge', but it is not simply a presentation of this knowledge; it is also a critical analysis of it as part of the study of the adaptation of local communities. The popular formulations were subjected to critical treatment before they were used in the monograph.

This made me question both types of information. In one sense I was well trained to reject the information provided by folklore as historical source material. But to reject a particular type of knowledge as unscientific without first giving it closer study would in itself have been unscientific.

Thus at first I had to acknowledge that two kinds of evidence about the past had been passed on: a) material that could be 'documented' through archives; and b) material that had the character of legend. The two kinds of tradition could often live side by side without actually clashing. As long as they did not clash, they did not need to influence each other either.

While all the written sources come from the colonization period, it seems surprising that the stories of the past stop with the generation of people who were adults at the beginning of colonization. This generation's 'knowledge' of the even more remote past in fact consisted only of the shared legends of the eastern Inuit, and lacks the personal character of the family sagas. This difference is so striking that I had to find a probable cause for the chronological limitations of the family sagas.

My attempt to find such a cause meant that I stepped outside the disciplinary framework I had imposed upon myself. I was working with the ethnological aspect of Eskimology. But it was presumably first and foremost a matter of understanding a society with its own history and its own mode of functioning. This is where the subject loses the interest of older ethnology, which is often based on the idea that its object is 'different'. I had to try – to put it rather unsubtly – to find the non-ethnological part of the ethnology.

After that I regarded my task more as the collection and description of information than the expression of a pre-chosen, developed theory. What does underlie it, however, is the idea that an in-depth description of concrete situations in a specific society will often result in greater general usefulness when one carefully analyses and clarifies the concrete situations. Concrete knowledge will very likely remain when the founding theories have been refuted. The thoughts that are presented here have thus grown out of the situation I describe.

Before I deal with the cause I believe I found for the chronological limits of popular knowledge, I must however admit that my conclusion does not form part of the popular knowledge, but is based more on the comparison of popular accounts with the statements of the archives evaluated on the basis of certain fairly old population theories, and with changes in the utilized hunting area that could be found in part of the early historical period.

The Upernavik colony was in fact abandoned twice, most recently in 1814. On their departure the colonists noted that a smallpox epidemic was ravaging the district. The popular tradition spoke of a number of settlements that were depopulated in the northern district, and a few places in the central district. It spoke of illness in the summer, and it mentioned illness in the autumn. The epidemic seems to have raged for several months.

When the colony was re-established in 1826, the

northern district had been depopulated, since the few survivors had moved south. The whole inhabited coastal stretch had then been reduced to a third of what it had been before 1814. In a census of 1840 the population was only two thirds of what it had been in 1811. According to Sauvy an isolate population, without medical help but with space and resource possibilities, could double in about 25 years (Sauvy 1963). On that basis it is reasonable to assume that the population of Upernavik was reduced to one third in 1814, and that it was not least the old who perished. They disappeared, and with them disappeared the knowledge that they could pass on.

The study method I used was much concerned with comparing the reliability of the various sources. Wherever possible, I tried to verify the popular tradition with census lists, but also with catch lists and other written sources. But the written sources were also compared with the assertions of the tradition when it came to very detailed accounts. This was done among other reasons because at first I used census lists not to look at population numbers, but to see how the settlements were distributed. Probably for practical reasons, the population of a very small place was often counted together with that of the closest slightly larger place. In some cases it is explicitly noted that the population in question lived in two or three different places, but that this kind of registration had been done without noting that the population from several small places had been counted together. I have no reason to doubt that the total population in the district was correct, since it was noted with the individuals ordered by family. In other words it was a very detailed registration system.

As support for my description it should be remembered that the local community is a part of the larger Greenlandic society, which is organizationally part of the eastern Inuit area. The basis of the organizational structure is dealt with in considerable detail, with examples from local events which in fact showed small variations in the system, and in the perception of the norms.

The most important background material is the structure of the family as the highest form of permanent organization. What is often viewed as the lack of a common leadership can also be described as a system of administration according to certain norms that no one had the authority to change by order. When the natural surroundings or the population changed, people tried for a long time to observe these norms, but at some point they could no longer ignore the discrepancies between the norms and the reality, and adaptation probably took the form of a collective infringement of the norms, which brought forth new, better adapted norms. This was the kind of possibility a community had when there was no one who could change the rules. The role of 'leaders' was quite the opposite: to ensure that the norms were observed.

I attempt to describe the various fundamental tasks of the family, and touch on the old question of why marriage became the basis of the family. Marriage was a kind of pact between a man and a woman – and the word 'pact' is used here consciously, although the marriage took place without ceremonies. But marriage was not really meant to secure the solidarity of woman and man. It was primarily meant to ensure good growing conditions for the children of the marriage, with a father and mother. The father became the man to whom the mother was married. It is probably necessary to emphasize this in a society where wife-swapping took place. It was the mother's husband who had a duty to guarantee economic potential for the family, to teach the boys what they had to know as adults; but at the same time he could also count on being taken care of in his old age. For all these things to come to pass, a marriage had to fulfil three requirements: the couple had to live together, they had to own the family's resources jointly, and they had to share out the tasks of the family in accordance with the traditional, gender-determined duties. These rights and obligations were clearly more crucial than ceremonies, at least in the Greenlandic society.

These descriptions are supplemented with the family's relations with others in the local community. That a family was sovereign in itself, but subject to the norms that the society considered right, also meant that all other families were sovereign, since in fact no one else had any right to interfere in the family's internal circumstances. This could work until two families had problems with each other, and there was no one to mediate. When society provided no other possibilities, it was the task of the family to obtain justice for itself. This could then take the form of a demonstration of power, or of peacemaking through a 'singing-duel'.

Both of these required certain resources, and as in so many other societies, here too one could find families that were unable to obtain justice for themselves.

In the Eskimological context property rights have always been rather sketchily described. I attempt to describe them here in terms of who can make decisions about the use of things, and who has the right to use them without having to wait for permission. In addition I deal with the way this right can be transferred to other people. What normally makes the descriptions confusing is the consideration of so-called 'meat gifts' as part of a system of so-called communal ownership. In this respect it is often forgotten that a 'gift' is a form of transfer from an owner who renounces ownership by transferring it to someone else. This in fact requires the existence of private ownership. Another thing that actually clearly suggests private ownership is the concept of theft, of which there are a number of accounts. These accounts would be meaningless without private ownership. Here I deal with the concept of 'meat gift' in terms of who decides, and thus demonstrate that it is a gift in its form, but a form of voluntary insurance in its function. This can be seen for example from the fact that the exchange relationship continues even though there is no balance in the system. These concepts are discussed, and I conclude with the ownership of non-material goods, which is probably the clearest form of private ownership.

In connection with ownership I discuss the ordinary necessities that each household had to be able to procure, but because of the uneven distribution of resources some form of barter would have been necessary from the time of the very first population group in Greenland. The very fact that from the beginning the population spread out over the areas where the sharp 'tool stones', especially silica slate, clay slate etc. are to be found, makes it meaningful to assume that there were trade and trading places from the oldest times. But trade without accumulation of goods means that the profit from a transaction must be evaluated in terms of the consumption value of the object bought. The very fact that many of the trading goods were materials to be worked by the purchaser meant that it was precisely the consumption value that created the profit, and that both parties in a trade must have a 'profit' from the trade. I give an account of the ownership of the things that are used in ordinary trade, and this may well explain why the purchased goods were not shared with others.

One of the things that can be said to have been unevenly distributed was precisely the knowledge that certain people had. Purchases and services were therefore also used in connection with the use of special knowledge. A problem which must therefore be passed over is the content of this knowledge, which was normally kept secret from others. It is said that a trainee shaman spent several years on his apprenticeship; but this was secret knowledge which is now forgotten, and therefore is not dealt with here either.

The sizes and annual variations in catches are dealt with over a period of many years. Hunting catches could not be dealt with as a whole, since bird catches and certain other types of catches like fish for household needs etc. are not included in the statistics. But there are good statistics for the most important hunting segments, and these show increases and decreases in the catches. For the period before catch statistics, skin trade statistics are used once they have become so integrated in the hunters' economy that they too have begun to fluctuate with the actual changes in the catches. This was an important detail, since most changes in the settlement distribution took place in connection with a decline in hunting yields. This was one of the triggering factors in settlement mobility.

In the two districts dealt with here, along with a growing population, one could clearly see a tendency towards geographical expansion. There were very great differences between the two districts in the form this tendency took, the reason for this being the natural conditions in the two districts, which permitted continued contacts with the neighbouring settlements in one of the districts, but led to isolation in the second. This makes it possible to view the expansion not only in terms of the economic conditions, but also in terms of social needs.

Traditional technology is described with special reference to geographical mobility, and the innovations are linked with this, among other reasons because they contributed to changes in the seasons and in the utilization of the areas. But the most important contribution they made is probably related to the radius of action of certain vehicles and craft in relation

to the hunting activities. In particular, the fairly limited radius of action of the kayak as a towing vessel permitted a certain settlement density which in many places at the same time prevented the settlements from having populations greater than 20-30 people at each place. A number of settlements occupied by fewer than ten people were also registered.

Part of this analysis involves an estimate of the size of the hunting area for the individual places. In both districts, land-based hunting was of no economic importance, although it could provide a modest supplement. What is counted as the resource area is the area of sea from the permanent coast out to the permanent ice edge in the winter, or to the outermost islands. The area of the larger islands is deducted and the result indicates a roughly calculated hunting area. It has to be roughly calculated because there are no fixed boundaries between two settlement areas, and there can be overlapping of the areas.

This estimate of the total area of course includes areas for everyday hunting, areas for longer hunting trips, areas that are used by several settlements, and finally areas that are unexploited at any given time. This division makes it possible to use parts of the total area for more intensive utilization, perhaps even to make certain unutilized resources usable. The analysis then turns out to be considerably more interesting than it looked at first. For it has made it possible to link this utilization area with the changes in the population. It emerges that there is an almost magical number, 5 km^2 of total hunting area per inhabitant. This is the second settlement distribution factor. When the total hunting area per settlement inhabitant falls below this figure, some families move away with the first decline in the hunting, if suitable areas exist at an accessible distance. There are of course some exceptions, but it is possible to give a reasonable explanation of these.

For people who live within an impassable geographical barrier, the hunting must fall somewhat below this limit before they take the first step – that is, if they can cross the barrier at all – and in the local communities of today people instead find other income resources that permit them to maintain a certain economic standard in spite of everything. Finally, one must also remember that the two districts investigated have uninhabited reserve areas on both sides, which most other Greenlandic districts do not.

All the same one must be aware that area was just one of the factors that played a role in the geographical movements. Social factors played an important role, as part of the material will show. Such factors could be at the family level – for example the loss of a supporter – or at the settlement level – for example an epidemic. And in reality one should probably translate the economic-territorial conditions into social conditions before one uses them.

The last chapter deals with the hunting community as part of the larger Greenlandic society. Chronologically, this is not related to the rest of the treatise; but since the penultimate chapter ends with the hunting area becoming too small, it nevertheless provides an illustration of the perspectives outlined there.

The development of the communities was thus described with a point of departure in a pure hunting society, mainly earning its living from sealing, moving towards an economy where income from hunting products, wage incomes and even social incomes take on greater and greater importance.

In the choice of the two districts it has played a certain role that they can both easily be isolated, in that they have uninhabited areas on each side; but it also plays a role that one can see differences in the form of resource utilization.

One resemblance between the two areas is that the hunting of land animals actually plays no role at all, since from ancient times their economies were based on the hunting of marine fauna. The exploitation of land animals has played no major role in the settlement strategy during most of the period discussed.

In the case of Upernavik municipality, the period dealt with is from c. 1860 to c. 1970, and in the case of Ammassalik it is from 1894 to c. 1970. In both cases the last chapter deals with examples from the 1990s where social conditions had changed substantially. Other sources of income had grown up, not all of which can be exemplified, and the districts as a whole can be treated in the last chapter as fishing districts, although the individual settlements have not changed so much. But even in the discussion of the hunting society, fishing was always one of the adaptation strategies.

The most important part of the material comes from the purchasing lists of the Royal Greenland Trading Company (Kongelige Grønlandske Handel),

Greenlandic catch lists and census lists. Their relationship to the settlement strategy is very much a matter of the degree of dispersal, and in particular area expansions are dealt with in connection with the growing population. In cases where there are no such lists, journals and the like are used as part of the description of the hunting conditions.

Part of the treatment is based on memoir material from both districts. From Upernavik in particular memoir articles in Greenlandic periodicals have been used. But these too have to be scrutinized closely, confirmed by other sources or subjected to critical comment. In these memoirs important elements may be missing. The author Martin Nielsen, Marteeraq, for example, says nothing about the catch distribution rules in the settlement of his childhood. This should undoubtedly be understood to mean that they were just like the distribution rules he observed in his settlements as an adult. If he had been struck by differences, he would probably have mentioned the subject. What he said about his childhood settlement was about the things he only experienced there. The girls from the neighbouring family were only mentioned when they lived there for a short while, and this accords well with the fact that girls moved in with their husband's family when they married. Some of these memories are recounted in great detail – too much detail, some people might think. But when one uses such memories it can be important to show that these are not isolated statements whose value can be difficult to see. It should also be emphasized that many of these items of information can be confirmed from other sources. There are very few cases where they have to be corrected. On the other hand it may also be necessary to take a similar critical view of the official sources.

In order to deal with this material I have reviewed the organizational structure of the society and the rights that regulated various social conditions, insofar as they are of importance to our understanding of geographical mobility. This means that a number of old familiar disciplinary questions have been discussed. But I hope the answers are not old and familiar.

For a long time I had scruples about using the total hunting area as such a central factor, since after all the distribution of the catch could vary locally. But the catch was distributed such that for each settlement there was in fact a stock of permanent game, and in the spring and summer season and to some extent in the autumn hunting season, the migrating animals that came through past all the inhabited places were hunted. This was when the surplus was stored for winter consumption, and this evened out the differences in the catches of migrating animals so much that the use of the hunting area as a parameter seems meaningful.

But the issue under discussion was really the resources. Some resources are more strictly localized than others, and in particular migrating animals come from outside the area, and migrate on over the whole area. The migrating game in particular means a great deal for the distribution of the resources, and the differences that could be observed in connection with the status of permanent stocks are being smoothed out a great deal. Hovelsrud-Broda (1999, Table 3-4) estimated the edible share of 4,103 ringed seals as 106,678 kg; but from 1,332 hooded seals caught, she estimated that there was 167,320 kg in edible shares, so a catch of hooded seals in the ratio of 1:3 to ringed seals produces one and a half times as much meat as the ringed seals together. The fact that the summer hunting means so much for the winter economy makes it reasonable to use the whole hunting area as an economic area.

On the other hand, this use of area requires that one distinguishes between the intensively exploited everyday hunting grounds and the extensively exploited reserve area. Since in many cases these are very small settlements, one often sees that they are sited close to sledge and boat routes, and this in itself suggests that settlement was not just a matter of economy, but also of social factors.

But the work is also very much about accepted traditional knowledge; and about traditional communities; and some of my questions are also traditional. In my attempts to collect popular knowledge I avoided taking a theoretical point of departure at first. After all, theory is the basis for understanding the knowledge that has been collected, and is often about the side of the situation that is not covered by specific knowledge – not just about the things, but also about the relations between them. Some of the knowledge I have gathered is people's general knowledge, which is either mentioned or appears directly in the Greenlandic literature, or occurs in the oral 'grapevine'. It often has negative associations in the ears of researchers; but if researchers, without having investigated the matter,

speak negatively of the oral tradition because it consists of – or is based on – oral formulations, this is very close to professional prejudice. It can be said a little simplistically that data provide knowledge, while analysis and theory provide understanding.

Often the antipathy towards oral tradition is justified by claims that memory changes things with time. But what one can observe accurately is not always related to the role of time. It often happens that an oral news item very quickly develops into several variants. Some of these variants can be verified, and often remain, while others disappear again. This process of change is not really due to memory lapses, but to the fact that several variants are involved in the retelling of the stories. They are often about well known people of the region, and will thus often accord with what the region views as correct or incorrect. Many of the people mentioned in the memoirs can be found in the parish registers, others in expedition accounts, which include personal observations if nothing else. In Canada in the 1970s one has the 'opposite' situation in interviews about what could be remembered about the use of the land fifty years before in 'Land Use and Occupancy Studies' (Freeman 1976). At the beginning of the 1920s Knud Rasmussen wrote about the use and users of these regions (Rasmussen 1930, 1931), and more than 70% of what was remembered agreed with Knud Rasmussen's notes.

But the truth value of the oral tradition need not lie in its description of the events. The norms one can infer from it will often correspond to the generally existing norms, and sometime these can be more interesting than a description of the specific situation.

What one can ascertain from the study of these oral accounts is that their reliability generally grows with the degree of detail with which they describe things. In some cases the oral tradition is more detailed than certain written sources, but this does not change the fact that it is often through the literature that one can confirm or refute its statements.

A number of people have played a role in the realization of this work, which actually took another direction than originally intended. The late Professor Johannes Nicolaisen inspired me to carry on, and to make more of the analysis of the organizational structure; and Professor Agnete Weiss Bentzon pointed to a number of aspects of the treatment of the statistics. Brita Poulsen, who fair-copied much of the original version and the supplementary material, drew my attention to some material which I then did not know existed. A number of hunters had granted me some of their time for interviews, and Massanti Aqipi had drawn up a list which he made available to me. When a number of files became completely mixed up because of a lightning-strike, Jørgen Emborg Pedersen of the Greenland Home Rule Government made it possible for me to repair the text, and perhaps I should also thank the lightning for the extra word-processing. Finally, I would also like to thank Research Professor Hans Chr. Gulløv, who read the text and suggested the tightening-up of certain parts. But I must myself assume the responsibility for the actual formulation.

Last of all I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Velux Foundation of 1981 for kindly granting support for an English translation of the work.

Robert Petersen

Chapter 1

Hunting and Settlement

I have chosen to make the community life in Upernavik and Ammassalik municipalities my object of study because these two communities can easily be isolated from other Greenlandic local communities, since each is surrounded on both sides by uninhabited stretches which they incorporated as their resource areas. The designations *district* and *municipality* indicate the same areas, but the term *district* is mainly used of the period before 1950, while *municipality* is used of the same area after 1950, in accordance with the official terminology.

Upernavik Municipality

The landscape

Upernavik is the northernmost West Greenlandic municipality, with its southern boundary at Qinnivik slightly south of Sigguk/Svartenhuk at 71°29'N, with Uummannaq Municipality as its neighbour, and its northern boundary 450 km to the north at 75°N, that is in Melville Bay. At the same time this is the boundary between Kitaa/West Greenland and Avanersuaq/North Greenland. The coast from the southernmost township, Søndre Upernavik, is uninhabited all the way down to Illorsuit-Nuugaatsiaq in Uummannaq Municipality, a stretch of *c.* 170 km. To the north the uninhabited stretch is *c.* 250 km.

The widest ice-free area is to the south, and it is *c.* 100 km from Svartenhuk in to the ice sheet. It narrows to *c.* 50 km by the time it reaches Søndre Upernavik. But it is continuous up to Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord. North of this the country consists of a number of large peninsulas separated by productive glaciers, and this coast is sheltered from the open sea by large and small islands.

In the southernmost part, south of Qeqertaq/Skalø, the coast is open to the sea, but from Qeqertaq to the north a number of large islands protect the coast as far as Upernavik. Around Upernavik, a little south and north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord, there is a true archipelago with many small islands, which continue with some gaps up to the southern boundary of Melville Bay.

South of Aappilattup Ikera there are a few fells that reach 1000 m in height, and this area is mainly highland. North of the same ice fjord the landscape is not so elevated, but a few summits reach *c.* 800 m. These summits are not only important as landmarks; since ancient times they have been used for gauging weather conditions.

Around Upernavik one also sees many rocks, while things look greener in the basalt area in the municipality's southern part.

In the southernmost part the rocks consist of basalt, which covers the bedrock until the middle of Søndre Upernavik Island. North of this, the bedrock is dominant, and this gives the landscape a different appearance. In Melville Bay the ice sheet forms the actual coastline, interrupted only by scattered small peninsulas.

In general I will not discuss the landscape much, since the land hunting is only of historical interest. But the sea will be discussed a little more in connection with the ice conditions.

The climate and annual light

The summer temperature is not much lower out at the coast than farther south. But the summer heat is rather shorter in duration. At the beginning of July I saw for myself that there was thin ice at night in the pools on the fell behind Upernavik. The height was less than 200 m above sea level.

But inside the fjords there are quite clear differences, for the warmth does not become as strong as in the central West Greenlandic fjords, and is a little shorter-lasting. There can be very few days with temperatures as high as 20°C.

The winter temperature probably reaches its lowest in March, and especially at the northern end paraffin can become viscose when the temperature drops to around –40°C.

At Upernavik itself the average temperature for July was 4.9°C in the years 1876-1930. July can alter-

nate with August as the month with the highest average temperature. In the years 1930-1938 the average July temperature rose to as much as 6.8°C (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:391-393). But from 1951 until 1960 it fell a little again to 6.1°C (*Grønland* 1968).

February is the month that in some years has the lowest average temperature. In the years 1876-1930 at Upernavik itself it was as low as –23.2°C. In the period 1930-1938 it only got as low as –19.5°C (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:391-393). In 1951-60 March was colder, with an average of –21.1°C, while February had –19.4°C. The average temperature for the year was then –7.3°C (*Grønland* 1968).

Precipitation mostly takes the form of snow, but in the summer months some rain may fall. Some of the water in the ground is meltwater. The annual rainfall is 202 mm (Bøcher *et al.* 1975: 132). It falls mostly in the summer and the autumn, least in the spring.

At all times of the year there can be sudden strong winds, especially in the autumn. But in most months the wind is fairly calm for about ten days. The north wind is the most frequent, and often brings fog. In the winter the east wind is however very common (Amdrup *et al.* 1921, I:445).

In Upernavik itself the sun does not appear over the horizon from 11th November until 30th January. But because of the terrain it cannot be seen from the town from 4th November until 5th February. In the middle of this period the stars can be seen at midday. In the summer it does not set from 12th May until 1st August (Vibe 1970:589).

Of these climatic parameters, heat and cold are the most important factors.

Plant life

The plant life is Arctic, generally with a few small hardy species. Throughout the district, landscapes are dominated by rocks, but in the valleys there is often a moraine landscape with a number of Arctic and Alpine plants.

To the south, in the basalt area, there are green stretches with grass, crowberry, willow species and some high moorland plants. In the bedrock area it is especially in the valleys that one finds the same plants, as well as the more water-requiring species. The northernmost scrub in the district is found at Orpiit in Eqalugaarsuit/Laksefjord behind Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven.

Nevertheless there are a few plants that are utilized. In the summer fuel is gathered in the form of crowberry 'heather' *(Empetrum nigrum)* and Lapland cassiope *(Cassiope tetragona)* and branches of greyleaf willow *(Salix glauca)* as well as dwarf birch *(Betula nana)*. It is gathered from camps and often used for cooking, and crowberry heather in particular is also used for smoking sea trout. The use of these plants is directly associated with the seasonal hunting of the summer, especially in the southern part of the district. For want of better, dryas *(Dryas integrifolia)* has been used as fuel.

Moss *(Bryophyta)* has been used, especially in the past, partly as lamp wicks, and during summer trips as covering when meat was fried on a flat stone. In the first half of this century it was also used as insulation in wooden houses. In the same period people also cut peat in the summer and used it as fuel in the winter.

Some plants were gathered in the summer and used in the autumn – and early in the winter – as diet supplements. Scurvy grass *(Cochlearia groenlandica)* and mountain sorrel *(Oxyria digyna)* could be eaten raw or could be preserved in blubber for use in the winter. Crowberries *(Empetrum nigrum)* are also gathered and eaten raw and fresh, or can be put in blubber-bags for later use, and the same could be done with leaves of broad-leafed willow-herb *(Chamaenerion latifolium)* and of willow species *(Salix sp.)*. Bog whortleberry *(Vaccinium uliginosum)* is also eaten fresh (Hertz 1968); but it does not appear to be preserved in blubber.

There are other plants that are used as infusions such as marsh or Labrador tea *(Ledum palustre)*, whose leaves are boiled, and the tea is drunk for health reasons, but it does not appear to have been used in prehistoric times.

It goes without saying that the use of plants as diet supplements is common in the southern district, but knowledge of these has persisted in the middle district up to Tasiusaq.

Animal life

Much of the description of the animal life is based on A. Jensen's works (Jensen 1928).

Although land animals play a negligible role today, the Arctic fox *(Alopex lagopus L.)* has been hunted in the southern part of the district. The skins were sold to the Royal Greenland Trading Company

(*Kongelige Grønlandske Handel*), but not in such large quantities. There was no sign of deliberate fox-hunting for a long period. But it was a supplement that could be used when the occasion arose.

Caribou *(Rangifer tarandus sp.)* is now so rare that it is not hunted. But there have been stocks both north and south of Aappilattup Ikera. The biggest population was behind Svartenhuk, and places like Aputituut and Qaarajuttorsuaq were visited by families on caribou hunts from both Upernavik and Uummannaq districts. Because of the terrain, caribou could not migrate seasonally to the south and to the north. In the winter they came closer to the coast, and could be hunted earlier in the southern district on short trips in to the coast. Around 1940 there were difficult years for caribou, and the hunting was then abandoned, and until now it has been of no significance, and people have abandoned caribou hunting. How great a role caribou hunting played for the economy in the district is difficult to say, but in the northward expansion that is to be discussed later, the migrants travelled away from the areas where the caribou were hunted. The importance of caribou hunting has probably been exaggerated in people's memories. Its greatest significance may have been social, that is variety in everyday life and meetings between families from the Upernavik and Uummannaq districts.

But around Nutaarmiut, an island a little south of Aappilattup Ikera, there used to be caribou hunting in both summer and winter (Rink 1855:131). Rink mentioned a place that can only lie just south of Upernavik Isfjord as somewhere caribou could be hunted in both summer and winter. We have no information about when this stock disappeared, nor is there any information about caribou-hunting in this area from the twentieth century. There are stories that there was a population of caribou on Tuttoqqortooq, and one also finds a few cast-off caribou antlers on the island; but they disappeared in prehistoric times.

There are also memories of a caribou population north of Upernavik Isfjord, that is around the Qassersuaq peninsula. Giesecke spoke of local caribou hunting in the area in 1807 as far as the Qassersuaq country (*Kasorsuak zum festen Lande gehörig)* (Johnstrup 1878:57). This whole area was depopulated in 1814, and when it was repopulated around 1850, the caribou had gone.

There is a good deal of bird life. Especially in the summer large flocks of razorbill *(Alca torda)* and Brünnich's guillemot *(Uria lomvia)* breed in various places. The most important places were Qaarsorsuaq a little south of Upernavik, and Apparsuit and Kippaku north of Tasiusaq. One could count on several million breeding birds on these fells, but stocks have been greatly depleted. The decline began in the 1960s, when the guillemots on winter migration to the Davis Strait were caught in tens of thousands by accident in the drift nets of the fishermen. But for some reason stocks are still declining. The usual reason, overhunting, has earlier been claimed not to be the explanation, and this is still difficult to assess. In that case there must be serious breaches of the ban on using guns at the bird cliffs, and perhaps the use of speedboats in the hunt. At one time ships would blow their horns, as a 'tourist attraction', just off the guillemot cliffs; many birds were frightened and flew out from the cliff, and a few eggs fell out in the sea or were smashed against the rocks, and since the guillemot lays only one egg at a time, this was severely destructive, but hardly enough to explain the extent of the decline.

But the guillemot was an important resource. Eggs would often be collected in parts of the fell, and large parts of the breeding ground were in fact inaccessible.

Common eider *(Somateria mollissima)* was also an important resource, until the Greenlandic provincial councils introduced protection of them in the very period when they were in the Upernavik district. Of course people protested against this prohibition of exploiting an ancient resource. People on the southern part of the west coast were in fact unable to understand why people in Upernavik would not support the good idea of protecting the eiders in the summer. There were a few islands with eider stocks, and the largest colony was up at Kitsissorsuit/Edderfugleøerne ('the Eider Islands', also known in English as the Duck Islands) north west of Nuussuaq. It was not unusual to see several layers of eggs where the lowest ones simply rotted away. After the introduction of protection, eiderdown was mainly gathered on the islands, but since they are remotely situated in the northern part of the district, people preferably had to have another reason to go there too, and this had a limiting effect.

But after 1920 the gathering of eiderdown became a secondary resource, where the hunters could reserve

the rights to an island for themselves, and they often built breeding shelters so the down was not blown away. One could send in an application to the municipality, and then one could reserve the island in question for oneself.

What was probably Greenland's biggest colony of puffins *(Fratercula arctica)* was at Kingittuarsuk near Tasiusaq (Olsen 1964:33), but the importance of the puffin as a resource is less than that of the two above-mentioned species. An experiment at Sarfannguaq with the exploitation of the puffin was quickly abandoned (Nalunaerutit 1931:5).

South of Upernavik there are also large colonies of fulmar *(Fulmarus glacialis)*, which often share a cliff with several gull species *(Larus marinus, L. glaucoides, Rissa tridactylus)*. But the razorbills are the most important bird resource.

There are a few other bird species that are hunted on occasion, but they play a minor role in the household economy.

Before I discuss true sea mammals I must mention the polar bear *(Thalarctos maritimus)*. Some people count it among the land mammals, while others prefer to speak of it as a marine mammal. It has mainly been hunted on the ice in the winter, and in the nineteenth century it was in fact hunted both in the northern and southern parts of the district; but it was agreed that the chances of encountering the polar bear increased towards the north. It was always in the northernmost townships that the polar bear hunting was best. In our own day much of the polar bear hunting takes place in Melville Bay, usually by sledge, and some dogs are described as 'bear dogs'. They can stop a fleeing bear. There can be trichina in bear meat.

The narwhal *(Monodon monoceros)* and the beluga *(Delphinapterus leucas)* often come in the spring and in the autumn as migratory game along the ice edge. They were hunted from the ice edge during their migrations, but sometimes they changed their route and times, especially in the autumn. But the narwhal is hunted from kayaks around Kullorsuaq and in the southern part of Melville Bay in August. Sinews from these whales were preferred for sewing thread, and the tusk of the male was also used for harpoon heads, while other bone parts where used in hunting equipment and in the kayak. The whaleskin, *mattak*, was considered a delicacy, and was a good vitamin supplement.

The walrus *(Odobenus rosmarus)* is also found along the coast, and is also most frequent north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord. Earlier, a few walruses were hunted around Tussaaq. The tusks in particular, which could be used as material for harpoon heads, dog-trace buckles, etc., were important to the hunter. In addition, walrus meat was known to be particularly heat-generating food in the cold period. But trichinae in the meat could make things difficult. Trichinosis (called 'walrus-sickness') was something people knew about in the region.

The seal stocks, which were the basis of the traditional community economy, consist partly of migrating seals, which come through the whole district in the summer. The most important are the harp seal *(Pagophilus groenlandicus)* and the hooded seal *(Cystophora cristata)*. Much of their meat was dried for winter use, but their skins could be used to cover kayaks and umiaks, and the skin of the harp seal could be used for kamik (boot) soles.

The bearded seal *(Erignathus barbatus)*, a large seal, formed a local population. The skin was a particularly good resource, especially in earlier times, because it was used for kayak and umiak skins, for thongs, and as kamik soles. There can be trichinae in the meat.

The most important seal species for the local community is the ringed seal *(Phoca hispida)*, which is a non-migratory stock, although in the early summer it may swim out from the coast to the Western Ice – the drifting ice area between West Greenland and Canada. It can be found everywhere. It is often found in the ice fjords, and is hunted there from kayaks. When the ice settles, it is caught in nets which are set out early in the autumn from the beach, and later in the winter also from icebergs. When the warmth of the spring comes, it crawls on to the ice and basks, and is then caught as *uuttoq*. The *uuttoq* hunting takes place throughout the district, but is best towards the north, also outside the inhabited area.

These sea mammals must have something to live on. The Greenland halibut *(Reinhardtius hippoglossoides)* is probably the most important fish species. It is found throughout the district, and there are some local stocks in a number of ice fjords. It often becomes larger and fatter towards the north. It is eaten, but is mostly used dried as dog food. In the 1990s its importance grew since fisheries were promoted, which turned many young people into fishermen.

The Greenland shark *(Somniosus microcephalus)* is also found throughout the district, and was once a useful resource, since one could sell its liver, and at one time also its skin. Today exploitation is limited to the use of the meat in the dried state as dog food. It is not used fresh, since it makes dogs (and humans) 'drunk'. Today it is often regarded as vermin, since it cuts halibut lines and one often only retrieves the head of the halibut.

The spotted wolffish *(Anarrhicas minor)* occurs in the southern part of the district, and a few are caught around the two southernmost townships. At the beginning of the 1960s it reached as far as Tasiusaq (Olsen 1964), but moved back a little south again later.

Char *(Salvelinus alpinus)* is caught at some rivers in the southern district, and Eqalugaarsuit is probably the most important locality for this fishing, but Eqaluit in Søndre Upernavik also has exploitable stocks. In the southernmost resource area of the district, as at Umiiarfiup Sullua, it is caught too in the summer. Around Narsaq, south of Sigguk/Svartenhuk, char rivers are known, but are rarely exploited, since the distance is a little too great.

In the northern district no char rivers are known today, although it was said that the legendary Simon Bjørnejæger (Simon Bearhunter) caught char at a river somewhere north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord (Olsen 1964:39). Today the whereabouts of this stock is not known.

There are actually a few other fish species, such as the sculpin or sea scorpion *(Acanthocottus scorpius)*, which can be eaten, and rough dab *(Hippoglossoides platessoides)*, which is especially used as dog food, but on a very small scale.

Ice conditions

With the inland ice sheet behind the whole municipality, and with the low temperatures, especially in the winter, the ice is a very important factor in the economy and communications of the social formation. Ice is formed in the calm waters in October, and in December the ice becomes passable between the various settlements.

The ice forms throughout the district, partly between the islands, but also outside the islands. Around the Nunavik/Svartenhuk peninsula, the ice forms a strip along the coast some 10 km wide. But all the way from Søndre Upernavik and on to the north it covers the sea 30-35 km from the coast at the end of the winter (Haller 1979). This is what can be described as the total hunting area. When one deducts peninsulas and the large islands, this area is slightly more than 9000 km^2.

In the southern part of the district, around Kangersuatsiaq and Søndre Upernavik, there are none of the ice fjords that otherwise almost always bring a strong current, so the ice cover of the southern district is often solid, and easy to travel on. But sea currents can form eddies, for example around Kingatak at Søndre Upernavik, and there can be many eiders in these ice holes (Olsen 1964:23).

Around Upernavik itself the ice is much less solid, and therefore also dangerous. A strong current flows out from Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord and forks between the islands both north and south of the actual ice fjord (*ibid.* pp. 30, 58). This was where much of the district's population lived, and the danger caused by the eddies in the ice may historically have been very important to the virilocality that was practiced throughout the municipality; not only in terms of good hunting, but also of the safety of the hunter himself – and thus of his family, it was very important to know about the ice conditions all winter, so many hunters remained living in an area that they themselves knew well.

That communications could be difficult in this central area was suggested by Rink, when he mentioned that women and children at 'Narsaarsuk' had hardly ever seen a white man (Rink 1855:131); that is, they had never been to Upernavik. No place with that name is known, but the mention of the ice conditions and the occupational situation only fits the area by the island of Nutaarmiut, some 15 km east of Upernavik. In the 1900s people at Upernaviarsuk (which could well be Rink's Narsaarsuk) had much easier contacts with Saattoq south of Qaarsorsuaq island than with Upernavik. At Aappilattoq, which is close to the ice fjord, one could often use the kayak in the middle of winter (Olsen 1964:29). From 1814 until about 1850 the fjord Upernavik Isfjord formed the northern boundary of the settlement.

North of Upernavik Isfjord, in the closest region, there are also many currents between the islands, but when one gets farther north the ice becomes much safer. However, there are places with currents, for example at Sarfaq by Kangerlussuaq/Giesecke Isfjord, where there was open water (*ibid.* p. 36).

In general the ice starts forming close to land, especially in the calm waters. At Tasiusaq we have a good example in that Aqajarua, which is in a bay, is covered with ice in October, while the point at Noorliit, a few hundred metres farther out, can only be passed in a dog sledge from a month to six weeks later. On the other hand, this is where the ice breaks up first.

The first colonial complex was built in 1769 at Eqaluit inside Søndre Upernavik (Ostermann 1921: 510). For some reason it lay south of the then inhabited part of Upernavik district, but when the colony was moved a couple of years later to its present position, the most important reason was that the ice at Eqaluit remained solid too long in the early summer.

Farther north the cold is so severe that one can travel much more safely on the ice, and places with poor ice were better known than they were around Upernavik. The ice cover can remain for a long time; this was the case in 1966 for the first supply ships that came to Kullorsuaq around 6th July. The open sea was so close to the township that the ship could berth at the ice edge, and the supplies could then be transported on with dog sledges.

The district was thus ice-free from some time in July until some time in October-December. But especially at the northern end of the district one could find many icebergs and drifting ice floes that could hamper navigation when adverse winds arose.

The ice fjords, from Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord, Kangerlussuaq/ Giesecke Isfjord, Nasaasap Saqqaa/Ussing Isfjord and Nuussuup Kangia/Ryder Isfjord, and at several places farther to the north, all end with productive glaciers which produce large icebergs. One therefore sees very large icebergs all the time. Some of them, the so-called *maniitsorsuit*, are said to be formed in the winter, when the winter ice has become so solid that the icebergs formed cannot be carried away with the current; instead, along with new pieces, they regelate into large pieces composed of many small and very irregular pieces, since the ice sheet too calves in the winter. This kind of iceberg is the most feared, not only because of its size, but because once it begins to break up it carries on calving until there is nothing left but the small pieces of which the iceberg was composed. One of these icebergs beached in a basin at Aappilattoq; the depth of the basin was more than 700 m around the place where it was observed.

There is good reason to give Aappilattup Ikera special mention. As already indicated, the whole population of the district lived south of this fjord from 1814 until about 1850. South and west of Aappilattoq, a couple of townships had arisen, which meant that there was a strain on the hunting in the Aappilattoq area towards 1850, but it was considered too dangerous for a family to go alone and settle north of this fjord, because the fjord could not be crossed either in a kayak or on a dog sledge from some time in November until February. The first settlement could be expected to consist of a few families, and they would be very dependent on the life and health of the individual hunters. If they were unable to go out hunting at the beginning of the closed period, the family risked hunger and perhaps death by starvation. When the first family had moved north of the fjord, it became safer for those who followed to move to the area, and now the safety situation was so much better that there was later northward expansion, which only stopped 75 years later.

Ammassalik Municipality

The landscape

Ammassalik lies at about 65°N in a bend of the coast, which creates some dispersal in the field ice that otherwise blocks the East Greenland coasts. In historical times the coasts both north and south of this were uninhabited, or at any rate were not permanently inhabited. The permanently inhabited part lies around four fjords, farthest north Sermiligaaq, then Ammassalik, next Sermilik, and farthest south Ikertivaq. In that sense this part of the district greatly recalls Upernavik in the years up to 1850. The distance between the Sermiligaaq settlements and Iserteq at Ikertivaq is also about 70 km as the crow flies. This part of the district will here be called the core area, and is in fact south of the Arctic Circle.

One often hears conflicting information about the borders of the municipality. The northern boundary was earlier only slightly north of Sermiligaaq, at the glacier Steenstrup Bræ, but in the 1990s it was adjusted to Kangerlussuaq/Kangersuttuaq at 68°N, and now it borders on Ittoqqortoormiit municipality. This boundary was set in connection with the regulation of the municipal boundary when gold-bearing strata

were found at Kangersuttuaq around 1990 (*cf.* Brooks 1990). The southern boundary of the district was said to be a little south of Iserteq, but in reality the southern boundary is also the boundary between East and West Greenland (Berthelsen 1997:51). Along almost all of this coastal stretch, which was formerly inhabited by a separate group, the South East Greenlanders, there are scattered short-term settlements populated from the Ammassalik core area.

Ammassalik lies close to the Subarctic area. Nevertheless the conditions of life there are probably harsher there than at Upernavik. Behind the whole landscape lies the ice sheet, and at many points it reaches down to the fjords. Both north and south of Ammassalik the ice-free area consists of a number of isolated peninsulas, either surrounded by the ice sheet on three sides and by the sea on the fourth, or by the sea on three sides and by the ice inland.

Around the Ammassalik fjord systems there is some more ice-free area, and there is contact between the settlements there more or less all year round. Much of the terrain is high, and north of Ammassalik lie Greenland's highest summits. Gunnbjørnsfjeld with its 3700 m lies a little north of Kangerlussuaq, and thus north of the municipal boundary, and closer to Ammassalik lies Mount Forel with its 3400 m.

The climate

The climate is more oceanic than it is in large parts of West Greenland. Some precipitation falls, not least as snow, and the snow can be very soft and deep. The annual rainfall is 765 mm (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:395).

In the period from 1895 until 1930, February, the coldest month of the year, had an average temperature of –9.1°C, and July as the warmest month had 7.1°C (*ibid.* p. 391).

In the next fairly short period, 1931-1938, February averaged –7.6°C, while July had an average of 7.9°C (*ibid. p.* 393).

In the years 1951-1960 Ammassalik had an average of –7.8°C for February, and 6.6°C for July (*Grønland* 1968:130).

The annual average wind force is 1.7 (on the closed Richter scale). In 1895-1925 at Ammassalik there were an average 181 calm days, and 9,4 days with storms (*ibid.* p. 398). But Ammassalik is notorious for the storm *piteraq,* which descends from the ice sheet with destructive force. In 1970 part of the town of Tasiilaq was ravaged by a *piteraq* in January. During the subsequent northeasterly storm, the *neqqajaaq*, a DC-6 at Kulusuk Airport was damaged. It was thought that the gusts of wind had actually lifted the plane.

Plant life

At Ammassalik, as at so many other east-facing coasts, the flora is more Arctic than one might assume; in the valleys with moraine soil the Arctic moorland plants grow, but also flowers that require moist soil. In some places there are many small flowers, as at Naasertaajartarpik/Blomsterdalen ('Flower Valley') near Tasiilaq.

In the fjord areas there are relatively warm places with quite good vegetation. Harebell *(Campanula)*, lousewort species *(Pedicularis sp.)*, diapensia *(Diapensia lapponica)*, trailing azalea *(Loiseleuria procumbens)*, broad-leafed willow-herb *(Chamaenerion latifolium)* and other flowers grace the south-facing mountainsides, as well as Arctic rhododendron *(Rhododendron lapponicum)*.

What is characteristic of Ammassalik compared with West Greenland is that some plants are used as diet supplements. There are for example many people who pick crowberries *(Empetrum nigrum)*, and bog whortleberries *(Vaccinium uliginosum)* are gathered by women and children; and the former in particular are saved for the winter. Rose root *(Sedum roseum)* was also one of the flowers that was eaten and preserved in blubber. Angelica *(Angelica archangelica)* is also found in the core area, as well as Alpine bistort *(Polygonum viviparum)*. They are both edible.

Some plants are used as fuel, for example crowberry 'heather' *(Empetrum nigrum)*, dwarf birch *(Betula nana)* and greyleaf willow *(Salix glauca)*.

In East Greenland rather more beach plants are gathered, for example sea colander *(Agarum cribrosum)* and winged kelp *(Alaria sp.)*.

Animal life

There are few land mammals. Hare *(Lepus)* is not found, and caribou *(Rangifer tarandus)* disappeared in prehistoric times. For both species life conditions were not good, since the lack of continuous ice-free areas meant that the animals could not come to new areas if an area was overgrazed. In the same way there are no musk-oxen *(Ovibos moschatus)* in the area.

Fox *(Alopex lagopus L.)* is found in the area, but

there are no large stocks and it is difficult to regard as a resource of any significance.

Polar bears *(Thalarctos maritimus)* can be encountered, but how many are local stock cannot be said, since they often come with the field ice. In the winter a few females bear their young in the region's snowdrifts. It is said now and then that polar bears migrate northward on the ice sheet, and at all events it would be easier for them to arrive that way than on the field ice, which drifts south. As in Upernavik, catching a polar bear brings a certain prestige, but hardly as much as in West Greenland, since in East Greenland – and the southernmost part of West Greenland – the polar bear is 'caught' by the person who first sees it, or in some cases even the one who first finds polar bear tracks. It is often caught in the winter, but has also been caught in the summer from kayaks. In that case it was often driven in the direction of the settlement, so that it would not be necessary to tow it over great distances.

There were tales of catching the Greenland or right whale *(Balaena mysticetus)* in the old days, but no specific instances were remembered; however, blubber pits might be evidence supporting these accounts.

Among fish the capelin *(Mallotus villosus)*, in Greenland called *ammassak,* is probably the most important. It is from this fish that Ammassalik has its name. It spawns off the beach in the summer near the head of the Ammassalik fjord, and more or less the whole population of the district gathers there to collect it for winter supplies. Besides being a supplement to the winter diet, the *ammassak* thus has great social importance for the whole district.

In the summer, char *(Salvelinus alpinus)* was also caught at several localities in the fjords, and was thus one of the important summer resources. Kaporniakkat, Paarnakajiit and Kuugarmiit and several other places have stocks. At Ikkatteq near Kuummiit there is also a stock (Olsen 1998).

But an equally important fish was the sculpin or sea-scorpion *(Acanthocottus scorpius)*, especially because it was caught from the beach during a period when no other animals were to be had, for example when the ice prevented the seals swimming into the fjords. In the early summer when the ice prevented other kinds of hunting, the sculpin could be a source of fresh food for several weeks.

In the 1950s fisheries of cod *(Gadus morhua)* began at some of the places; not least at Kuummiit and Kulusuk, this led to higher earnings. But at most inhabited places, especially in Sermilik and at Iserteq, sealing was still more important.

Among whales the beluga *(Delphinacterus leucas)* and the narwhal *(Monodon monoceros)* were also caught sometimes; but they are rather rare, and this was a prestige-conferring catch.

Of seals there were also the migrating seals, and the hooded seal *(Cystophora cristata)* in particular was probably the most important part of the summer catch. There are two large camp areas, one at the mouth of Ammassalik Fjord and another at the mouth of Sermilik, where many people gathered to catch hooded seal. But several other places were also used for hunting this seal.

In connection with the catching of *ammassak,* sealing can be rather important, since the harp seal *(Pagophilus groenlandicus)* was present at the *ammassak* grounds.

The common seal *(Phoca vitulina)* is also caught in the area, but on a smaller scale.

All these seal species are migrating summer guests.

The non-migratory stocks consist especially of ringed seal *(Phoca hispida)*, and are mainly associated with the ice fjords. As at Upernavik, these are a basic resource, without which community formation would be doubtful.

On a smaller scale the bearded seal *(Erignathus barbatus)* is also caught. The skin in particular is a substantial resource, since thongs and boat skins can be made from it.

The East Greenlanders eat a few more beach animals such as the common mussel *(Mytilus edulis)* and snails. This was a resource one could resort to when other animals were scarce and unlike certain West Greenlandic local communities, which could advise the children not to eat this kind of 'hunger food', East Greenlanders had fewer scruples about eating such beach fauna.

Ice and currents

Along the East Greenland coast the field ice floats all the way from the Arctic Ocean and round Cape Farewell, where it moves north along the west coast up to 62°N, and sometimes all the way up to *c.* 64°N.

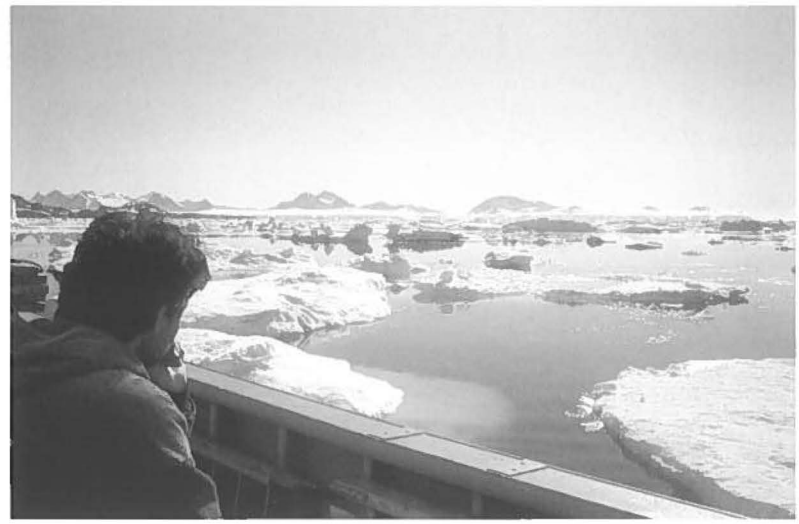

Fig. 1. Old winter ice on the Ammassalik Fiord, July 1987. Kulusuk is seen in the background. (Photo H.C. Gulløv).

Where the coast curves around Ammassalik the field ice is dispersed more, but in certain wind conditions it can still drift in to the coast and into the fjords. In the summer, at the end of July and in August, it can begin to spread around Ammassalik, and then the waters can be relatively ice-free for some months. But it can be very unpredictable, and can help or hinder navigation a great deal. A trip that has been estimated at a few hours can easily last several days.

In the winter it can close the fjord mouths, and in that case the ice-floes freeze together. The fjords themselves are covered by ice early in the year, and there is some dog-sledge traffic in the area. In June-July the fjord ice can break up and float out of the fjords. Both when the ice forms and breaks up it can be an obstacle to traffic in the fjords, and this can last a few weeks.

At many places there are ice fjords, and the glaciers calve icebergs. Many icebergs are formed and float in these fjords and in the waters outside them. At these ice fjords there is often a strong current and in a few cases it is believed that these glaciers actually lie across sounds which are open on both sides below the ice. It is often said that the current in Sermilik fjord for example does not follow the tides.

At these ice fjords the surface water is relatively non-saline down to a depth of *c.* 1 m, and this has the effect, as at Upernavik, that hunted seals can sink down to the boundary between this surface water and the saline water below.

In some sounds and fjord stretches the current maintains ice-holes all winter. There are some places at Ikaasak between Ammassalik and Sermiligaaq, and there were some at Sarpaq and other places around Sermilik. This means that it was possible to use the kayak to some extent in the winter.

The winter storms could also often break up the ice, so that open water could be formed at any time in the winter.

The ice in the fjords means a lot for the ice hunting in the winter. But in general the winter ice is more difficult to describe than at Upernavik, because it often breaks up outside the archipelago and other islands; on the other hand these waters can be filled with ice-floes in the summer too.

The material: Catch Lists

The oldest registration related to catches was the Royal Greenland Trading Company's statements of purchased sealskins. However, the earliest lists after the last colonization of Upernavik, from 1826, could not be used to assess the actual hunting conditions, because for the first ten years or so they rose steadily, clearly not because of rising catches, but because of a rising demand for European goods; but as early as before 1840 the figures began to fluctuate, obviously with the changing catches of the various years. In every case this could be demonstrated later, as it became possible to compare the skin trade figures with those of the catch lists. The annual fluctuations, according to these, could be very great, and at regular intervals there was a decline in the results, measured

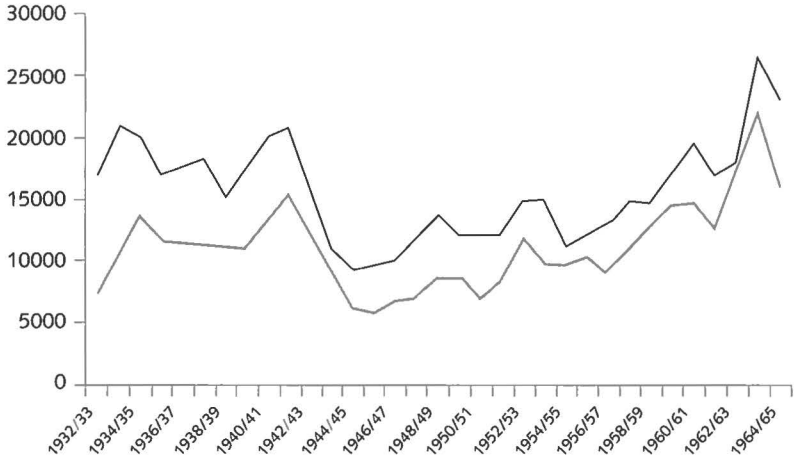

Fig. 2. Relationship between sealing (upper line) and seal skin purchases (lower line) in Upernavik from 1931 to 1967. It can be seen that the fluctuations correlate, but that rises in skin sales, after a severe drop in catches, come after a delay of one year. After the steep drop in 1967 some people migrated to Thule.

both in terms of figures from skin sales and catch list figures. These comparisons show a slightly remarkable fact – when there was a great decline in the catch and the catch began to rise again in the following year, there was at the same time a drop in skin purchases (Fig. 2). This must be seen as an indication that every hunter's household had reserve 'capital' consisting of skin stocks for the less good years, as well as for their own consumption. They must have drawn on this stock in poor hunting years, and when the catches began to rise, the stock clearly had to be replenished. The regular decreases in the catch came in the course of 5-6 years. The observed correspondences mean that the skin sales could in fact be used as a parameter for the fluctuations in the seal catches.

Since sealing was the principal occupation and was of fundamental social importance, lists of seals caught were drawn up from around 1860. The first catch lists were used by the *forstanderskab*, the first elected political-administrative leadership (*cf. Meddelelser vedkommende Forstanderskaberne i Sydgrønland* 1862) to evaluate the local hunters and their role in the distribution of food in the local community, through the general distribution of the so-called 'meat gifts' to the settlement occupants. The early lists were not published, but they are highly detailed, with seasonal statements, in some cases also with shorter time units. A distinction was also made between seals hunted with the harpoon, in nets and with rifles, since the rifle was becoming common, at any rate in ice hunting, at this juncture.

It was the contribution of the individual hunter to the sustenance of the local community that was to be registered with each hunter's catch and name, so it became possible to follow a single hunter's development as a supporter, as well as where he lived and where he moved to. One of the things that contributed to the reliability of these lists was that the various *forstandere* or superintendents who were to deal with the cases were themselves elected/appointed among the local people, and thus had knowledge of the individual hunter's status among the local hunters.

For the northern 'inspectorate', to which Upernavik belonged, these catch lists began to be published, as mentioned above, in 1903/04. They included all the inhabited places since there was a catch list keeper at each place. In addition each hunter was mentioned by name, and his catch was stated. This made it necessary for the list keeper to be very careful in stating the correct figures, and it also meant that the general interest in such catch statements was high. At first there was in fact only a distinction between large and small seals – as well as Greenland sharks; but gradually this was extended to include narwhal and beluga, walrus, polar bear, Arctic fox and blue fox as well as caribou, and the seals caught were specified as belonging to the individual species. Around 1927 the publication with the names of the individual hunters was abandoned, and only the name of the domicile was given. But in 1932 the lists with names were reintroduced, as it was thought that the lists were becoming less reliable (*Landsrådit* 1931). After 1940 they were again published without the hunters' names. When this happened, the hunters' settlements and towns were becoming rather bigger than before, and all other things being equal this would make it difficult for the

list keepers to keep up with the growth. In the same period sealing from motor boats developed, where several men could shoot at the seal at the same time. But we do not know whether they then each stated separately that they had caught the seal. This meant that doubt was cast on the reliability of the lists again. There may be some basis for this, but the problem is that it is doubtful whether one could have any checks more reliable than the catch lists. I myself have great faith in the early catch lists, in fact until 1938. Such catch lists exist for Upernavik. But catch lists were only made for Ammassalik after 1950, and they were never published with the hunters' names, and it is at all events clear that interest in them was rather less than on the west coast. For each year some catch statements are missing from several settlements. The real uncertainty that can arise with the early West Greenlandic lists is in the very few years when the counting period was changed from a kind of 'financial year' to the calendar year, as there is no account of how the transition was dated. But catches of birds and fish for the hunters' own consumption were not registered in the same way, so these lists are not so useful for calculating the hunters' production. In this work they are primarily used to register the fluctuations in the hunting conditions.

Debate on the catch lists

Some of the debate undoubtedly took place at the individual level, and in Paamiut among other places this meant that in the period from 1873 until *c.* 1920 someone had reviewed the local lists. There were a few small corrections at Paamiut itself, which did not change the final results, and this could perhaps be seen as an illustration of what people at the office of the North Greenland chief administrative officer remarked in 1922 – that one cannot always easily see in some handwritten lists whether particular figures were placed opposite one or another hunter's name (*Avangnamiok* 1922:2). But another interesting addition from Paamiut was the catch of whales, especially humpbacks, and of polar bears, which were at that time not normally listed.

The list keeper Tobias Heilmann from Tasiusaq wrote in *Avangnâmiok* that the catch lists were satisfactorily correct and that it was mainly the catches of sharks that could create some uncertainty. He suggested that the catch lists should not be reviewed at the office of the chief administrative officer, but in the individual colonial districts, which were more familiar with the local hunting conditions and hunters. Heilmann wrote his article because it was thought at the administrator's office that the figures for Upernavik had been set too low. He remarked that people who came on inspections often came in the good hunting season, but that there were often long periods with poorer hunting (Heilmann 1922:1-2). What Heilmann was hinting at here was rather errors in the assessment at the administrator's office.

In 1928 and the years that followed, there was some discussion of the basis for 'apportionments', that is a kind of bonus distributed to hunters from surplus in the municipality treasury as compensation for their social contributions in the form of meat gift distributions. The money had been earned from a kind of turnover tax on sales of blubber and skins. According to various criteria these apportionments were graduated. Some people still wanted to use catch lists as the basis, as a guarantee that the hunters who had contributed most through meat gifts could get a larger share; others wanted to use the skin purchases as a basis, so that the hunters who had contributed most through sales of skins to the municipal treasury could get reasonable refunds. This debate shows that everyone was aware that there were good reasons to register the catches and skin sales carefully. But it is interesting to see that no one questioned the reliability of the catch lists. The discussion began with an announcement proposing skin purchases as the basis for calculating apportionments (BKvG 1928, no. 5:141).

There was thus a general interest in these catch lists, and they were studied carefully, as can be seen from an article suggesting that if catches of all seal species were given in the lists, they would be even more interesting to read (Olrik 1938:47).

But one can see a certain mistrust from statistical processors. In the cases where a hunter's catch differs greatly in a year, it was stated with adjusted figures using an average of the preceding and succeeding year (*Sammendrag* 1944, III:596f). These adjusted figures regulated the catch upwards, except in 1925/26 (*Sammendrag* 1944, III:608), where the statements were lowest in the adjusted figures. Otherwise the rises and falls in the catches in the two sources correlate.

Chapter 2

Social formation and geographical mobility

Upernavik. A little about the settlement history

The community of Upernavik is the northernmost in West Greenland, and the people are probably descendants of the last immigrations of the Thule culture. In the northernmost part of the district, around Kullorsuaq, house-ruins have been found (Lynge 1955:17), but when the first written accounts came from the region, Kittorsaq was the northernmost settlement, and small places around Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven were the southernmost. That was in 1799 (Ostermann 1939:73-98). North of these, the coast was uninhabited almost all the way up to Cape York in Thule municipality, and to the south, as indicated, there was an uninhabited stretch as far as the Uummannaq district.

Although the mineralogist Giesecke only met around twenty people north of Aappilattup Ikera/ Upernavik Isfjord (Johnstrup 1878:60), the censuses indicated that around 150 people lived from Aappilattup Ikera up to Kittorsaq (Ostermann 1921: 511). A few families lived on the islands outside Kangerlussuaq/ Giesecke Isfjord, and at Tasiusaq there was a trading post, which suggests that there was a sufficient population basis.

In 1769 a colony was built down at Eqaluit within the present Søndre Upernavik, but a few years later the colony was moved to its present position. The colony was abandoned a couple of times, first in 1790, but was re-established in 1796 (Ostermann 1921:511). It was abandoned again in 1814, when the supply situation became too difficult during the Napoleonic Wars, when Denmark and Britain were on opposite sides. When the colonists left the place, reports came of a smallpox epidemic in the district (*ibid.* p. 511). During the two interruptions in colonization it was said that the population was persuaded to move down to Uummannaq, but this was probably not the whole population, and most of those who came to Uummannaq later returned to the Upernavik area.

Historical sources say no more about the smallpox epidemic. But popular tradition has quite a lot of detailed accounts, all of which are however about people in the northern end of the district; a number of localities north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord are mentioned. However, three places south of the same ice fjord are said to have been affected by the smallpox epidemic (Olsen 1964:91). Hans Lynge, who published detailed accounts from the northern district, thought that this great epidemic took place in the eighteenth century, without giving reasons, apart from a reference to a remark by his main source, Marteeraq (Lynge 1955:17); Marteeraq himself, who wrote articles about the same subjects, wrote nothing about the issue. But Lynge must have wondered why no Danes were mentioned in the oral accounts of the epidemic. Yet there is little doubt that this was the epidemic in 1814. One family avoided the epidemic by isolating itself in time before it could be infected (Lynge 1955:24, 86). Another fled north from Kittorsaq. This was Tuluaq's family. Tuluaq, who lived farthest north, was undoubtedly a great hunter; otherwise he would hardly have lived north of everyone else. The family must have reached Thule, and John Ross, who was in Thule in 1818, spoke of Tuluaq, a great hunter, '*pissarsuaq*', at Pisuffik, the present Thule Air Base. Tuluaq lived in "a large house" (Ross 1820:99,110). The longhouse was in use in Upernavik district then, and in Thule it was not. Driftwood was scarce in Thule, so there was no material for roof-bearing structures in the rather larger houses. In other words Tuluaq's family had taken wooden laths with them to Thule, and were using them during Ross's visit four years after their escape. The expedition member Hans Hendrik's wife Mequ is said to have been the grandchild or great grandchild of this Tuluaq (Lynge 1955:111f).

In the house at Aappilattoq north of the ice fjord, Qupanu and his son, called Qimmiut, who was a big boy at the time, went around once the epidemic had died out and looked for survivors (*ibid.* p. 17). There were no more than could live in a longhouse, but the house was said to be well filled. Qimmiut was baptized in 1841, and his age was then stated to be about 40 (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 1).



Fig. 3. Upernavik, 1966. (Photo Ole Hertz).

One of the survivors was Nulooq, who had just become a father. His wife died, and he was unable to keep the still-unweaned child alive. He fled to his relatives at Aappi, but found the place abandoned, and it was only south of the ice fjord that he found a few people. He died in 1858 at Aappi, "of old age" according to the registry *(Upernavik Ministerialbog 1)*, but he paddled a kayak almost until he died. If he was 20-25 years old during the epidemic, he must have reached 65-70, a high age then.

Around 1810 there were about 450 inhabitants in the Upernavik district. When census lists were started in the 1830s there were just 300, and in 1840 there were about 330. We do not know how many survived the above-mentioned epidemic; but by consulting French studies of isolates which calculate with a doubling of population within about 25 years for isolates without medical help, but with expansion potential – or so I interpret the issue of a sufficiently good household economy (Sauvy 1963) – I estimate that in 1814-15 there were about 170, or one third, left. This was a steep decline; but it accords well with the fact that the exploited area then was around a third of what there was in 1811.

The dialect

The Upernavik dialect exhibits marked differences from the other North West Greenlandic regional languages, and thus also underscores the isolation of the region.

It shares much of its vocabulary with dialect of the northern part of West Greenland, probably because the occupational basis resembles that of the people's southern neighbours. In particular, terms related to society, occupations, animal life etc. are the same. There are however a few differences, such as the words for the colours green, *sungarpaluttoq,* and yellow, *qorsorpaluttoq,* which are the opposite of the

West Greenlandic words, but correspond to the Canadian Inuttitut words. They make more sense etymologically than the West Greenlandic names. About 20 expressions have been found that one does not hear in West Greenlandic today, but in Ammassalik (*cf.* Fortescue 1984).

The syntax must also be called West Greenlandic.

Phonetically the Upernavik dialect is in fact more like East Greenlandic. The neutralization of /g/ and /ng/ [ŋ] can be followed south all the way to Kangaatsiaq municipality, but the nasalization of intervocalic /r/ is something Upernavik only shares with Ammassalik today. In Upernavik the long voiceless fricatives are not used, although the long lateral /ll/ is voiceless – while in Ammassalik it appears as the stop /tt/. But a long fricative /gg/ becomes /kk/, and in the same way /rr/ becomes /qq/, and finally /vv/ [ff] becomes /pp/. In these sounds there is again agreement between Upernavik and Ammassalik.

Like the Ammassalik dialect, the Upernavik dialect is a so-called 'i' dialect, which means that in accordance with certain rules /u/ becomes /i/, earlier probably /iw/. This kind of labialization has been recorded in both places (Thalbitzer 1934; Lynge 1955).

One feature that the Upernavik dialect had earlier was that it was a so-called '*kutattoq* dialect', incidentally the only one in Greenland. This means first and foremost that the uvular consonants were weakened and came to sound very close to the velars, that is /q/ -> /k/, and /r/ ->/g/ -> /ng/. Similar developments have only been recorded from Labrador in Canada (Dorais 1991:216); but the legends speak of the *tornit* or Dorset people as *kutattut*, and the reproduction of the *tornit*'s speech in the legends (Bugge and Lynge 1991:105-108) actually sounds a lot like the early registrations of words from Upernavik. On the basis of all these features a hypothesis was proposed in the early eighties that the Upernavik population had actually migrated from East Greenland around the north of Greenland after the Thule culture migrations had reached West Greenland, but before the present Thule population came (Petersen 1986; Rischel 1986).

Archaeologically, the possibility of the coexistence – although only briefly – in North East Greenland of the peoples of the Thule and Dorset cultures was registered on Clavering Island (Bandi and Meldgaard 1952:20).

The folklore

Like many other West Greenlanders the Upernavik people have some of the eastern Inuit's legends in their repertoire, such as the legends of Anngannguujuk, Kaassassuk etc., as well as some of the North West Greenlandic legends.

But in addition there were a few family sagas, like those of Aataarsuatsiaq, Ikersaq etc., which are regarded as stories of actual events. Such stories were not known outside the district before they appeared in a few books (Lynge 1955, 1967; Olsen 1964; Nielsen 1949, 1955).

Besides these there were accounts of people like Kiinngivit, Nulooq, Kallaq, Ineqinnavaat and others, some of whom could also be found in the first census lists (*Befolkningsliste fra Upernavik for 1833-1834*). These stories were, as mentioned before, unknown outside Upernavik. But they are known throughout the district. They had been recorded in the northern end of the municipality, but many of them were about events in the southern district. A few stories about events were also known in the southern district. Thus certain narratives of people and events were known throughout the district, but not outside it.

When we look at these kinds of stories, the oldest of them are about events that went back to 1770, that is some forty years before the smallpox epidemic which many of the stories are about. It must thus be presumed that even older stories perished with this smallpox epidemic, or to put it differently, that the oldest people who survived the epidemic were probably about fifty years old. In a way this accords rather well with the remainder of West Greenland, which was hit by smallpox epidemics.

In fact the family sagas stopped 30-40 years before the epidemic (*cf.* Gulløv 1997:361f). The old storytellers can thus be regarded as the memory of the community that fell victim to such epidemics. One must remember that the reduced population after the smallpox epidemic lived in an area that stretched from Aappilattoq in the north to Kangersuatsiaq in the south, and it may explain much that such tales were known throughout the society.

But such stories also indicate that the Upernavik population was one group that was very strongly isolated from its neighbours.

The seasonal migrations

When we speak of a traditional settlement in the Greenlandic hunting society, we mean a winter settlement that was occupied from August/September until April/ May, and in Upernavik district it was often in May that people left the settlement to move out to a hunting camp. The role of the dwelling for mobility is discussed especially in relation to the material side of the mobile culture.

There were a few different hunting camps where people went in the course of the spring and summer, and this was often what was understood in Greenland as a 'nomadic' life.

In Upernavik district it was the hunting of the spring seals that started the travelling activities of the summer. At that time the umiak (the large 'women's boat') was still in use, and people had to move out while there was ice on the water, then returned temporarily to the settlement when the ice had gone, so these journeys were made in dog sledges, with the umiak laid on the sledge, and since there were often quite a few ice-holes, the journey would take place either with the umiak on the sledge or with the sledge and the dogs on board beside the family members.

On land there were both snow and frost, but since the tents were made with a double layer of skins, one could stand the cold, and in several places where people went every year there were hunters' huts where they could live and keep warm.

Around Søndre Upernavik people would often go in the spring to the area around Qeqertaq/Skalø, and would hunt seal there until the ice disappeared. Around Qeqertaq the ice often disappeared before it did in other places. Some seal meat would be dried on the spot, and when the ice had gone and the time for other seasonal journeys approached, one could sail the new products back home to Søndre Upernavik.

Later in the summer one could go egg-gathering – collecting eider eggs was not prohibited until 1927. After that people went to Eqaluit, Umiiarfiup Sullua and similar places to catch char, and later in the summer to Aputituut or Qaarajuttorsuaq to hunt caribou.

When the summer was almost over, one was really supposed to come back to the winter settlement and move into the house; but at Søndre Upernavik, which had been established with a view to ice hunting, the sea was too turbulent before the ice cover came, so people went farther into the sound, to Ikerasak, where the sea was calmer, and only then moved to Søndre Upernavik.

This kind of year-round settlement actually still existed in the 1930s. It was quite common at that time, and is still remembered today.

The summer was spent on journeys and at camps where winter provisions were gathered. Some of the spring catch was not brought home, but deposited out in the hunting area in meat caches. But it was not intended as human food; it was used as dog food on hunting trips (Rosing 1997:29). The caches were well covered with stones.

In the time about which we know there were few meeting-places in the summer. The closest one can come to such a meeting-place is Eqalugaarsuit behind Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven. But there are traces of popular gatherings in prehistoric times at Tasersuatsiaq, which is also in the southern part of the district. Stepping or jumping stones were normally laid out where many people met, and where certain social gatherings were held.

In our own time, at any rate in the northern district, people travelled on hunting expeditions in family groups in the summer, as Marteeraq mentioned, and this agrees with Bryder's remark that people camped in small groups in the summer (Bryder 1921:489).

This sort of life was for people in small groups, but several close settlements had some contacts with one another, and people knew one another, as was the case in the Itilliarsuk-Nutaarmiut group. The children often played together, and people all knew one another and knew what happened at the small places. The total population had never become large at any single settlement, and in this group the population never grew beyond 40-50 people. Only around 1909-10 was the population up around 100, since the Inussulik people, as mentioned elsewhere, moved there. And in the period 1950-1956 the figure was down below 40 in a period when there was a political campaign against small places.

Itilliarsuk, to which the first settlement in the group moved from Ikerasaarsuk, was as mentioned before as abandoned in 1899. It was settled again in 1921. People then lived there until 1946, and since then it has not been settled again. But the changing occupancy of the place and depopulation have not changed the overall population of the settlement group. Their earlier departure took place while there was snow and

ice, when people moved out into either a hunter's hut or tent. In the days of the skin tents one could move out from the house as early as May so one could hunt *uuttut* (basking seals) from the most suitable places. Earlier, people went from Søndre Upernavik to Kangaarsuk, where they either lived in tents or in hunters' huts (Bryder 1921:489). They went there in dog sledges and umiaks (Appendix 1:213). In the northern district too the spring *uuttoq* hunting was done from hunting camps (Nielsen 1957:166).

Since the winter settlement was normally sited with a view to ice hunting in the winter, it did not need to be well situated for kayak hunting. The winter settlement might therefore also be poorly situated for the autumn kayak hunting that had to be done before the ice froze solid. For that reason there are houses at several places that were mainly used for the autumn hunting, as mentioned in connection with Ikerasak and Uluaa.

Finally, special huts were used earlier for hunting sojourns in the winter (Nielsen 1955b:199).

Technical innovations and changes in hunting life

The introduction of guns and sealing nets meant that some of the old hunting methods fell into disuse, and at the same time helped to make the actual hunting from the winter settlement easier. The use of collective hunting huts as an advanced base reduced the need for moving out. In particular the autumn hunting still played a role.

The hunting-related seasonal migrations therefore play a smaller role now than before. Nor are they required so much from the dwelling point of view, which undoubtedly played an important role earlier, since turf houses had to be aired out in the summer. Wooden houses are on the one hand easier to clean, on the other cannot be so easily uncovered, and this reason for moving out is therefore not as pressing as before. There does however seem to be a rather special need in houses occupied by an extended family.

Some changes in the seasonal migrations could perhaps be related to certain changes in the animal life. The seasonal migrations of the beluga and narwhal changed, and the caribou stocks were greatly reduced. In addition, in the years up to 1950 there were winters with very poor ice cover.

But the most striking changes can undoubtedly be related to the social effects of innovations in the material hunting culture, where the technical changes brought new methods and new patterns. The introduction of the rifle and sealing net in the previous century meant that certain ice-hunting methods disappeared – especially 'stalking' and 'peep-hunting' – and these were replaced by *uuttoq* hunting and net hunting. In particular the introduction of net hunting meant that the dark period, earlier used for contacts between the settlements (*cf.* Olsen 1964:79) was annexed for economic activities. With the disappearance of the umiak the combined umiak and sledge journeys in the spring could no longer be kept up. The spring journeys, which required returning by boat, had to wait until the ice had gone. The use of the motor boat in the summer made it possible for several men to exploit a larger hunting area. Thus it became easier to combine the exploitation of the hunting area with more permanent settlement.

These seasonal migrations became subject to an adaptation where the economic time unit was one year. The reason why people moved around in the summer, and especially why they moved around more in the summer in earlier times, was that the ecological adaptation to the summer hunting was different from the winter adaptation. The good catch of the summer was used to build up provisions which could be used as a supplement to the winter's poorer catch in the harsher, more settled period. No matter whether a hunter had gathered many or few provisions from the winter, the next summer he still had to start from scratch. This was the way it was when the economy was based on primary consumption.

In such a hunting economy one can see the difference between the summer and winter economy (Fig. 4 and 5).

$$F - c - d = a + b$$

Fig. 4. The summer hunting economy. F = total catch; a = meat consumed; b = convertible hunting products; c = unutilized residue; d = meat prepared for winter provisions.

$$K = a + b - c + d$$

Fig. 5. The winter hunting economy. K = consumption; a = fresh meat from the winter catch; b = convertible hunting products; c = unutilized residue; d = supplement from winter provisions. Conditions: $a + b + d > K$; but $a < K$; $b < K$ and $d < K$.

The famines that used to affect the local communities at times showed clearly that a, b, and d were each smaller than the necessary winter consumption; if people were to survive, a+b+d had to be equal to or greater than K.

The value of the catch is on the whole equal to its consumption value, and the added value of the hunting products will thus depend on whether the unutilized residue can be utilized to any great extent. When most parts of the catch had already been utilized – and one could not add substantially to the value of the catch by trade – then the response to a growth in population was either more efficient use of the hunting area or geographical expansion.

Summer camps far from one's winter settlement were probably relatively rare. Ecological adaptation took place around the winter settlement. When this adaptation was no longer felt to be sufficient, the winter settlement had to be moved to a new place and this would mean new hunting camps in the summer.

Thus if we wish to look at adaptation in the longer perspective, we must also look at the moving of the winter settlement.

The non-seasonal migrations

In connection with the changes in the actual settlements, too, dwelling conditions played a role. As early as around 1880 – when regular statistics began to be gathered every year – the number of occupants per house was so relatively small that the communal house must have disappeared in the area, and experience shows that this leads to less turnover in housemates. But truly rigid settlement formation arose in this century, in connection with both the end of expansion and more and more use of wood in the houses. When there was less moving around, it would often be the small places that disappeared first. Such settlements may be too small to meet various social needs in the longer term. They can however exist for a number of years as part of a larger social formation. The individual counts as part of the group in small local communities, but as a result there may also arise an imbalance of gender and age groups in terms of the continued existence of the group. But if the population move together among fewer places, the risk of uneven grouping is reduced. On the other hand the utilization of the resource area may become overconcentrated. But the exploitation of the area was facilitated by the fact that wooden boats could still be used as forward bases and thus expanded the hunting area of a settlement to some extent (Fig. 6).

$$Rp = D + E + X + O$$

Fig. 6. Utilization of the hunting area. Rp = area used for hunting with a population of a certain size; D = the everyday hunting grounds; E = extensively utilized areas; X = unutilized resources in the area; O = unutilized areas.

The everyday hunting area lies close to the settlement, up to a few kilometres from it. Around the settlement there will often be a field with a 5 km radius (*Nalunaerutit* 1965:36) where sealing from a motor boat is prohibited out of consideration for the kayak hunters. This is the area regarded here as the intensively utilized area. The criterion is that one can get home to the settlement in the evening. At the earlier central West Greenlandic camps for hunting the migrating hooded seal, the most remote lookout points were about ten kilometres from the camp, but this distance is known from settlements with several hundred residents. The everyday hunting areas of the district are counted here from a radius of five kilometres, that is a total of 31.7 km²; the area of all islands and coastal stretches must however be deducted.

By the extensively utilized area I mean the hunting grounds where exploitation requires one or more nights spent outside the settlement. These may be the slightly more remote sealing grounds or areas with other more seasonal resources – bird cliffs, trout-fishing grounds, etc. In the event of population growth without expansion potential, one can establish settlements in the extensively utilized area, but it is likely that the exploitation will grow without extra resources appearing. At some point this may adversely affect the resources.

While the everyday hunting area is normally associated with and exploited by one settlement or a small settlement group – for example Kuuk and Mernoq around 1900 – the extensive hunting ground is exploited by several settlements. It may consist of uninhabited stretches between the settlements, nearby fjord complexes, or localities with resources for seasonal use – large bird cliffs, char stocks etc. The extensive areas of two settlements may overlap. Here I take the midway mark between two settlements as the limit – for the same reason a settlement's total hunting area is given rather roughly.

Around each township there are a number of hunters' huts which can be used to spend the night in when one is on a hunting trip, and these are not associated with any particular season. They can be used by hunters during expeditions – not necessarily local hunters; but of course the distance from the settlement does mean something, so they are normally used by hunters from the closest settlement.

But the most important migrations outside the seasonal ones are migrations to other – sometimes new – places. Some of these are in the surroundings of the old settlement. Around Søndre Upernavik, for example, a number of small core settlements had arisen and disappeared – Ikerasak, Ingiullisoq, and Piitaatsoq according to the local tradition. In such places a single family or just a few families lived for several years.

Around Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven, Sioraq, Illunnguaq, Uluaa, etc. were occupied for a few years, and around the Aappilattoq archipelago Saveerneq, Tunoqqu and Assorseriitsoq were occupied for some years, while farther out in the archipelago around Qeqertaq and Kingittoq, Taartoq, Qaamaneq and Inussuk were also inhabited in the 19th century, and in particular Inussuk (Inugsuk) was occupied for many years (Mathiassen 1930).

But the most important non-seasonal migration took place north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord in the period from *c.* 1850 to *c.* 1925. If this expansion started when the total hunting area had not reached the critical size, it was undoubtedly because Aappilattoq, Kingittoq and other places in the vicinity were closed in between what were then new places, so that their total hunting area became too small compared with the population.

The first settlements north of this ice fjord, Aappi and Paangutsit, also gradually became more or less closed in by new places. Around Qassersuaq and Tasiusaq new places like Tussaaq, Saffiorfik, Eqqorleq and Sarfaq at first had enough room around them, and such new places also drained people from places like Aappilattoq and Kingittoq, which meant in turn that their total area again became big enough for the remainder of the population of the place.

It was really economic considerations that were behind this expansion, and there was also often good hunting at such places in the peripheral area. But it is not so easy to calculate with other factors that probably had an attraction for the individual. For example, we must probably assume that the possibility of catching prestige-conferring animals such as walrus, beluga and narwhal, and not least polar bear, attracted some great hunters. These factors undoubtedly played a role for the expansion tendencies.

Another factor, safety, limited or deferred expansion – as was the case with the first move to the then uninhabited area north of Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord, but once the first step had been taken, it was followed up rather quickly, and the very next move already increased the degree of safety considerably.

This expansion continued around 1875 to the north of Tasiusaq, where the area a little south of Apparsuit/Cape Shackleton had some settlements until around 1900. The areas north of Tasiusaq were known by people on hunting trips to the north, but only broadly. For example the old name of Kiatassuaq – *Nuussuaq Ungalleq*, 'the farther large point' – for Holm Island, could indicate that the sound behind the island was unknown until some time around 1890 (Appendix 1). After 1900 places like Appaalissiorfik and Kittorsaq gained new populations, and despite some house ruins with finds of European goods farther to the north, this was really the limit of the district until 1814. But people did continue farther north, to Illulik and Ikermiut, and in the 1920s to Nuussuaq, Qaarusulik and Kullorsuaq. Thus the limit of expansion had in fact almost been reached, since the hunting area of the latter two places in fact bordered on Melville Bay itself.

The safety factor mentioned in fact often worked against expansion. People who lost a supporter often moved to their closest kin – that is, the mother's kin – and thus usually moved to already occupied settlements, and on the whole they often moved from small places to the slightly larger ones, which not only increased their security but often made it possible for the widow to improve her situation a little by helping others against some sort of compensation, often in kind.

Not only were the new places often occupied by very few families; there was also a tendency for the housemates to be close kin. This often made it difficult to find marriage partners on a local basis. But now Upernavik district was a far-reaching expanse of territory where many settled places lay close to the boat

and sledge routes among other settled places. The small places were therefore not as isolated as one might immediately suppose. If Rink's women and children had hardly seen a white man, it was not because they were so tied to their locality, but because they did not come so much to Upernavik, for the summer journeys did not go to Upernavik, but to hunting camps scattered around the region.

Ammassalik. The East Greenland population in the past

The period dealt with here for Ammassalik municipality is shorter than the one for Upernavik. It begins with the colonization of the region in 1894, and the account goes on until around 1970.

The settlement around Ammassalik was part of the East Greenlandic settlement, which for the sake of the overall view must also include North East Greenland and South East Greenland around Timmiarmiit. Today the North East Greenlanders have disappeared, and the South East Greenlanders have migrated to West Greenland – the latter left the region around the year 1900.

Earlier in East Greenland, besides the Ammassalik population, people lived in North East Greenland, north of 70°N, and South East Greenlanders lived around Timmiarmiit. In this work we must keep in mind that the vanished Kangersuttuaq population around 68°N was not part of the Ammassalik group; today the region can be regarded as part of the Ammassalik resource area. Although the population there is considered archaeologically to be a separate group, it disappeared at some time in prehistory (Larsen 1938). It would perhaps have been more correct to infer that they merged with one or both neighbouring groups.

Some North East Greenlanders were encountered in 1823 by the Scottish Captain Clavering on Clavering Island (Mikkelsen 1934:10ff; Clavering 1830:21-24). The whole group is regarded here as one entity; but in fact it was not. It could perhaps be viewed as several separate groups around Dove Bay, Clavering Island, and perhaps another group around Scoresbysund Fjord, and there may have been more groups. But knowledge of the prehistory of this group or these groups is still rather limited.

Clavering's meeting with twelve people on Clavering Island in fact provides us with little information beyond the fact that some people lived on this part of the coast around 1820. There were kayaks, there were children and women, and a man; they presumably spoke an Eskimo dialect, but there is no list of words to reveal whether it was East Greenlandic, or whether it was a *kutattoq* dialect (as it probably was), so there is no suggestion either of whether there may have been wider contacts with their southern neighbours, by which I mean the Ammassalik group. If the hypothesis about the origins of the Upernavik people in East Greenland has any truth in it, then North East Greenland was the natural starting point, and it must be presumed that they spoke a *kutattoq* dialect. But that must also mean that the known East Greenlandic phonetic development was until then common to the North East Greenlanders, the Ammassalik and the Timmiarmiit group (South East Greenlanders). And these views must affect our ideas about Ammassalik's isolation from its neighbours, an idea that must be derived from the isolation of the twentieth century. One must also note that the South East Greenlanders whom the missionary Brodbeck met in southern East Greenland in 1881, had not themselves been in the Ammassalik area, but still knew something of the North East Greenland animal life, such as musk-ox, caribou and hare (Brodbeck 1882:78).

The South East Greenlanders and Ammassalik

Hans Egede (Egede 1926) and Walløe (Walløe 1927) both came to the areas about Cape Farewell, and there they met South East Greenlanders, and obtained what is actually very accurate information about the Ammassalik group. The South East Greenlanders for example knew about the Ammassalik group, but if we are to evaluate contacts on the basis of the information from the nineteenth century, the South East Greenlanders' knowledge was based on the Ammassalik people who travelled south, not on the accounts of South East Greenlanders who had gone to the area around Ammassalik (Graah 1932). In this section it should be emphasized that the South East Greenlanders often spoke of the Ammassalik people as *Sermilimmiit*, 'Sermilik people', after the biggest and southernmost of the large fjords, so it was presumably mainly people from Sermilik Fjord who travelled south.

Hans Egede met South East Greenlanders and asked them about the population of the coast. They told him about their northern neighbours who lived at "Kolusub" and "caught the little herrings", i.e. *ammassat* or capelin; they said too that they were cannibals, or perhaps more correctly that they had eaten human flesh. Egede wanted to be guided up to them; but they advised him against it, with an argument that Egede regarded as prevarication – that is, that they would not take him to Ammassalik, "because they had wretched houses" (Egede 1738:110). Egede got rather annoyed with them.

For Hans Egede did not know where Ammassalik was; he did not know that he would have to go farther north than Nuuk on the west coast, and along the east coast he would have to travel against the ice-filled polar current. It was far enough up to Ittuluartivit, 'the place with the wretched houses'; in fact he would have to travel just as far again beyond Ittuluartivit. It was undoubtedly this that these East Greenlanders tried in vain to make him understand. He did not understand, in fact he was insulted. Up there at Ammassalik there was a place called Kulusuk, and at Ammassalik one could catch "the small herrings", as Hans Egede called them. Then he was told that they could eat people, and this remark was later interpreted to mean that the informants actually did not know these people, because such a negative description would mainly be used of people one did not know very well. But famine had in fact occasionally led to cannibalism in Ammassalik, so this argument will not do. In fact in Ammassalik they knew magical formulas which, in times of need, could turn human flesh into "edible flesh" (Andreassen 1961:156; Rosing 1963:142).

Graah's remark, that no one lived north of the South East Greenlanders (Graah 1932:112), is a strange comment made without any reference to a source, given that he had in fact described with such a source reference how many days' distance they were from their northern neighbours (*ibid.* p. 112). But he further remarked that the South East Greenlanders did not travel north, and that it was the Ammassalik/Sermilik group that travelled south instead.

As early as the end of the eighteenth century ethnographic material came from Ammassalik over Julianehåb to Denmark (Mikkelsen 1934:41), and already then people were aware of at least fifty settlements in southern East Greenland (Petersen 1991:172).

I have difficulty following what Thalbitzer meant by saying that there were several South East Greenlandic dialects besides the Ammassalik dialect (Thalbitzer 1934:69), for he had no examples. I can imagine that someone had told him that some of the South East Greenlanders spoke differently from others. This might at any rate explain why Thalbitzer lacked examples. I was myself presented with the idea that people in Sermilik and in Sermiligaaq spoke very differently. When I began to elicit more details from people, I was in the end presented with six words that were spoken with slightly different suffixes from the other place. I can at any rate find nothing beyond this, which can hardly even be described as subdialectal differences.

But the most interesting thing in that connection is that the missionary Vibæk presented a South East Greenlandic glossary which he guaranteed did not come from Ammassalik. In this glossary there are some words that deviate from the phoneme system in Ammassalik, inasmuch as not all voiceless fricatives were replaced by stops. Much of the vocabulary was different from West Greenlandic terms, and precisely in this part of the vocabulary, 95% is identical to the distinctive Ammassalik words (*cf.* Vibæk 1905:14-38).

There is in fact a lot of material that makes it impossible to accept the idea of Ammassalik's great isolation in the nineteenth century. The usual explanations of the factors leading to changes in the vocabulary of the Ammassalik people are therefore probably correct but insufficient, because they do not make allowances for the rather high degree of conformity between them and the South East Greenlanders. One comes to the same conclusion from the Ammassalik people's widespread knowledge of the South East Greenlandic place-names when they took over the almost depopulated area. This knowledge would have been quite unlikely if the two groups had been strictly isolated from each other.

On the other hand, after colonization Ammassalik *was* in fact totally isolated from West Greenland. The links between West and East Greenland went through Copenhagen, in fact until Kulusuk Airport was opened for civil aviation in 1961.

The settlement of the Ammassalik group

The Ammassalik colony was founded, as mentioned above, in 1894 at 65°N on the east coast of Greenland. The population may have come to the region either



Fig. 7. Ammassalik, 1908. (Photo Th. Krabbe/Arktisk Institut).

from the north or south, or perhaps from both directions. According to the old theories, Ammassalik was populated from West Greenland around Cape Farewell (Mathiassen 1933, 1935:31; Mathiassen and Holtved 1936:121f). At that time only the Neo-Eskimo migrations were known. In fact there was a theory that the population came from the north (Thalbitzer 1914:346), but it gained no credence. More recent archaeological investigations, however, make it seem likely that people came from the north, although a contingent from the south cannot be precluded (Gulløv 1997:148f).

But now and then other theories are proposed; for example Gessain thought, on the basis of anthropometric measurements, that some Ammassalik people came from the north, and Jens Rosing aired the same idea on the basis of differences between the *tupilak* traditions in Sermiligaaq and Sermilik (Rosing 1963:12). In my view these differences first and foremost tell us that contacts between the fjord systems had been considerably fewer than contacts within the same fjord system. They tell us little about differences in genetic origin, and even less about migration routes.

From ancient times there had thus undoubtedly been contacts in the core area every year, since the shared resources, the *ammassat*, were gathered so to speak by the whole population.

The areas both north and south of the core area were known, and must presumably be regarded as a part of the resource area where people would spend the winter then return to the core area the following summer. This is a pattern of utilization with which we are familiar from the twentieth century.

In the north people were aware of Kangersuttuatsiaq, Kialeeq, Nuuaalik, all the way up to the other side of Kangersuttuaq, which is also part of the resource area. A little north of Kangersuttuaq there is a place called *Nunap Isiva*, 'land's end', said to be the limit of the visible coastline viewed from (North) Aputiteeq (Holm and Garde 1887:252; Sandgreen 1968). Although Kangersuttuaq lies a little farther north, Nunap Isiva would indeed block the view farther up towards Blosseville Coast. It would also appear that

Kangersuttuaq was the limit of the Ammassalik resource area, although we have no direct comments on this. But if people had reached as far as Aputiteeq – in fact to the mouth of Kangersuttuaq – it would be impossible to describe the place as the outermost area of Ammassalik, and Kangersuttuaq as outside this. It was known after all that people lived there (Larsen 1938).

In the twentieth century this northern peripheral district was occasionally used for expeditions during which the hunters wintered there. They went north for one summer, wintered in isolation, and then came back the following summer. Neither the wintering hunters nor their families in the core area heard from each other throughout that time. There was almost always good hunting, and generally good health conditions. But sometimes people did not come back, and were only found dead many years later. They were then identified and the investigations appear to have shown that in no cases did people die of hunger – they probably died of food poisoning. There were some accounts of starvation, though, not least because of storms which for example took some of the winter provisions (Rosing 1963:82).

In the same way the uninhabited area to the south was used for wintering in the twentieth century. There too people heard nothing from one another until they came back the following summer. But in one period, from 1938 until 1963, a local community was formed around Skjoldungen. And at Pikiitti too some families lived for a longer period than one winter.

After 1960 there were several localities that were used concurrently each winter. All the way from Pikiitti, about 80 km south of Iserteq, down to Uummannaq, 450 km to the south, people wintered – especially at Pikiitti and Umiivik. They often had radio receivers with them, though, and could thus hear from the families they had left behind, but they could not themselves send messages.

In reality Iserteq and Sermiligaaq lay outside the core area in some periods, if we regard 'the core area' as the permanently settled part. But for a short while at the beginning of the twentieth century no one lived in Sermiligaaq, and similarly the Iserteq area was partly uninhabited from 1915 until 1924, although this too had been inhabited earlier.

The southern peripheral district too had been used from Ammassalik in prehistoric times. We know from various sources that the South East Greenlanders' knowledge of the Ammassalik group came from the Ammassalik people who stayed with their neighbours. But we do not know to what extent they only went to this area and then returned, or whether they continued to Aluk or to West Greenland to trade.

But the South West Greenlandic dialect situation tells us of East Greenlandic migrants, whom both West Greenlandic legends and early historical sources speak of as *qavaat*, 'southerners'. In addition a few West Greenlandic legends are known in the Ammassalik area (Rosing 1970:143f), and there is no doubt of the West Greenlandic origin of the legends. The 'southerners' appear in West Greenland from around 1650. Thus there are already signs of South Greenlandic dialect in the Nuuk area in the list of words taken from the three women who were stolen in 1654 (Petersen and Rischel 1985:167), but since most of the vocabulary has a Central West Greenlandic appearance, probably only one of the women could have been a 'southerner'.

Chapter 3

The influence of material culture on mobility

Upernavik and Ammassalik districts

It is not my intention here to describe the elements of the material culture. Neither forms nor types are the primary object here. Although the form and the external appearance of the objects used could often differ, the use of the objects mentioned here is on the whole the same in the two areas. In the cases where the use is the same, a common account is given for the two areas.

The focus will be on the things that can lead to both settlement formation and mobility, that is various dwelling types, hunting tools and vehicles, as well as forms of ownership. They are described in terms of their 'adaptation' to the travelling life – whether they support it, or whether they permit it by not hindering the people's wandering existence. Changes in certain cultural elements or the use of new materials may affect mobility, and thus the degree of dispersal.

Transportable items

Most utility objects are no bigger or heavier than a single person can carry. For example clothes, drying-frames, lamps, cooking vessels, splintwork tubs, skin objects and cutting implements etc. are of transportable size. Certain things are heavier, for example the skin tent with its double skin covering and several pieces of wood for the frame. But people in the two areas have vehicles, sledges and boats that permit them to take things with them which are difficult to carry. Diamond Jenness has an illustrative example of the disadvantages of having a lot of things to move around (Jenness 1961:80).

From Upernavik district we know that in earlier times, on the summer caribou hunts, the hunters had to carry the hunting implements and utility objects on their backs. But they were used to not taking things that they could dispense with. Before they got canvas tents, they would not always take a tent on relatively short caribou hunts lasting several days, although they took the tent to the main camp. In addition they took ordinary cooking equipment, extra clothing etc. On hunting trips – also when they lasted several days – they took hunting tools, sewing equipment, skin patches, carrying-slings, the clothes they wore and in the known period also matches, coffee and tobacco, and not much else. They gathered heather – which can be kept in a dry place – for a fire when they had to cook, and they could fry meat and fat on flat stones.

The vehicles themselves could be transported. The kayak could be carried on the hip down to the beach, and on land it could be carried on the shoulders or could go with the umiak, or be out on a sledge. Quite often it was taken on the sledge so it could be used from the ice edge.

On caribou hunts on land behind the fjords the kayak was often carried on the shoulders, so it could be used to cross rivers and on the large lakes, not least in the old days when swimming caribou were also hunted. In the same way it could be carried over tongues of land between two fjords. This meant that one could often move faster from fjord to fjord, or use successions of lakes, get across rivers more easily, etc.

The sledge is most frequently transported in the spring and in the autumn, the umiak especially in the spring. When hunters were setting out on the first spring expedition, there was often still ice on the water, but large ice-holes extended here and there. The journey was often made by carrying the umiak tied across the sledge, which was pulled by the dogs; the sledge, then the dogs, would on the other hand be put on board the umiak when they got to the open ice-holes or cracks. This made it possible to get back to the settlement when the ice had gone. A trip to a new settlement could be made in the same way.

Non-transportable items

The dwelling

There are certain things – for example the house – that cannot be transported, because the materials are heavy and impractical to move, and because one can

find material everywhere such as stones and turf with which one can build a house within a few days.

On various kinds of trips, too, fuel, drinking water etc. were not necessary either. Since they were easily available at the camping places there was no benefit in transporting them. Often, too, it was unnecessary to bring food on the journeys to any great extent since the men often went hunting during the trip.

Nor were certain fixtures transported, such as provision caches, tent rings, umiak frames etc. It was often easier to build new ones at the new place.

The houses that were to be used again were aired, however. One left the house and took off its covering. In the 1960s in several places in the Upernavik and Ammassalik districts one could still see people come out of the house and live in a tent at the actual settlement. It was probably only in exceptional cases that people spent the whole summer at the same spot. It is possible that such a tent life was the remnant of the turf house's need for summer ventilation (*cf.* Bryder 1921:496).

The winter dwelling

The winter dwelling was originally a turf house, or in general built up with turf and stone. The roof was held up by a bearing beam that ran the length of the house. This was itself supported by a row of posts. From the bearing beam some laths projected outward at right angles, over to the upper edges of both the front and back walls. These laths in turn bore smaller pieces of wood and the whole formed a network on which large sods of turf were laid. On these turf sods an extra covering of crumbled turf was laid, and the whole was covered with tent material.

Of these materials, the tent covering and the bearing wooden pieces could be transported by boat. In the late summer when a house was to be built somewhere else, they could be fetched and used in the new house. The remaining necessities were procured at the new place.

In many cases the already-standing house walls could be used, especially in East Greenland (Thalbitzer 1914:348). If necessary they had to be repaired, and often the size of the house had to be changed when the number of occupants grew larger or fewer than in the last building – that is, a gable wall had to be knocked down and moved. Space was not wasted in the house. The 'price' of the house was the wood and skins one already had, and three or four days of shared work.

To build or rebuild the house, turf had to be gathered. If there was not enough turf in the immediate vicinity of the house, one could fetch it in an umiak from somewhere nearby. The turf was cut with a mattock, which one could make oneself. Cutting turf for the house was a job shared by the occupants.

The building of the house too was a communal task (Holm and Petersen 1921:612). In many cases all the occupants joined in the work, but in other cases the building work was done by women, the young and children, while the men went hunting. The men arrived back on the scene when the house was to be closed at the top (Graah 1932:62).

The house could be built in the course of a few days, and could be built more or less anywhere. It was easy to make 'windowpanes' from translucent gut. Casings and train-oil for heating, cooking and lighting were obtained by hunting. The manpower for building the house was provided by the occupants themselves.

The other necessary things could also be organized within a few days. Storage rooms and caches were quickly built from local material. Supporters for the umiak, the kayak etc. were also built, but in addition the necessary woodwork, skins etc. for the house were often taken along from the last settlement. It was concentrated work, and this might well have tempted people to live in the same place as before. But such considerations seem to have played a minor role. They did not prevent people moving around (*cf.* Thalbitzer 1914:347).

Looking at the role of the turf house for mobility, we must distinguish between two types:

a) the turf house without the use of wood in the interiors beyond the roof construction, and
b) the turf house with interior wood lining.

The first type corresponds to the house described above. We find it with walls of stone and turf in both Ammassalik and Upernavik district (Hjarnø 1969). It is often lined within with sealskin hung up on pegs. Skin items and wooden items in such a house could easily be transported to a new place – the wooden things in particular have a certain value in this treeless country, so they go with the occupants to their new settlement.

The houses with wood-lined interiors in Upernavik district were built with turf alone outside the

woodwork, while in Ammassalik people still used turf and stone. The process of building the house was on the whole the same in both districts. The first place where wood was used was the sleeping platform. Some time later people also began to replace the stone flags of the floor with floorboards, especially on the part of the floor that was in front of the bed platform. These boards were bought in the shop, both in 'the colony' and in the trading stations. Thus this house type belongs to the colonial period. But the process continued, and people began to replace the skin cladding of the interior with plank walls, and finally came the floor below the bed as well as the ceiling. House-building now began with the carpentering of a 'box', with a door and one or two windows. The wall was then built outside this box. The result was a house that was wholly lined with wood inside. The model and the arrangement of the house matched those of the original turf houses. But the house passage became shorter and higher, with one door leading to the outside and one in to the house interior. In the end, glass windows were used, and heating and cooking were done with a stove. The lamp was now mainly used for lighting. The use of wood in the construction of the house came to play a role for settlement formation because the necessary wood was bought individually by nuclear families. This undoubtedly contributed to the breaking-up of the households from three-generation units into nuclear-family households. The goods that could be sold were also owned by nuclear families.

Even before developments had gone that far, it became more difficult to move the settlement. The woodwork in the house was privately owned, and it became too big a job to move it all to a new place. In addition, one first had to take the woodwork apart before one could transport it away. This change in the house type meant that people moved far less from one winter settlement to another. They became more sedentary in the winter. But it also became impractical to air out the house in the summer. This was compensated for by the fact that such houses could be washed and cleaned inside. Wood had to be bought by the individual heads of the individual nuclear family households. This had no appeal for the community beyond the nuclear family.

Such a house type made it more difficult to move the winter settlement from one place to another. But it did not immediately have any major effect on the travelling life of the summer.

Inuit without igloos

In evaluating the placing of the winter settlements it may be significant that the igloo was not used in either the Upernavik or the Ammassalik district. Since no one wanted to spend the night at an uninhabited place during the winter journey, it was preferred that the distances between settlements were no greater than one could cover in a day's travelling. What is difficult to assess is whether people were trying to avoid spending the night in igloos, or whether they were simply trying to avoid too much isolation. If it was the isolation they were trying to avoid, then the possibility of a night in an igloo would in fact not play any important role. It could be used on hunting trips.

But if it was primarily the possibility of spending the night in the open that people tried to allow for during the winter journeys, the igloo would have made it possible to disperse even more, without therefore having to give up the winter expeditions, visiting or trading. If one had initially ensured that the family had enough provisions, then one could permit oneself to spend several days on a journey. In Upernavik during the expansion period people would move north in stages of no more than one day's journey from the northernmost settlement. In Ammassalik no one needed to be prevented by the possibility of spending the night outdoors, when one had to contact others during the wintering outside the core area, and with such igloos one could maintain contact with the neighbouring settlements. But since it would primarily be the men who paid visits, it is not certain that the families would be able to avoid a journey to the core area in the summer.

But the igloo issue is in reality not so complicated, since it may be less a matter of individual nights spent during a journey than of living in an igloo. In both West Greenland and East Greenland the igloo was probably an impractical dwelling in winters when a thaw could suddenly bring temperatures that would mean that the igloo could melt; and even before that it would be soaked with water inside so that it could no longer bear its own weight. If that had been the crucial factor, then the igloo would quite certainly have disappeared from both areas and from the whole of West Greenland.

Table 1. Number of tents in Upernavik and Ammassalik 1885-1959. (*Sammendrag* 1944, III:567, *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister*:1951,1960).

	Upernavik		Ammassalik	
	Skin tents	Canvas tents	Skin tents	Canvas tents
1885	41	–		–
1895	34	–	19	–
1905	54	–	40	–
1915	66	–	55	–
1925	72	10	51	2
1935	24	25	43	35
1944	18	–	37	118
1950	5	40	1	48
1958	–	–	–	100
1959	–	56	–	–

The summer travelling life: the tent

The summer was spent at a number of summer camps. In most places people lived in tents. The tent covering was of seal skin at the beginning of the 20th century and consisted of two layers, an inner covering of depilated skin and an outer covering of hairy skin. These tent skins were laid over a frame construction of wooden laths. These and the tent skins were too heavy to carry on one's back, but could be transported on an umiak or sledge.

The two layers of tent skin meant that the tent was cosy and warm. So in the spring one could move into a tent while there was still snow on the ground and ice on the sea (Holm and Petersen 1921:623; Bryder 1921:461; Appendix 1).

The tent, consisting of about thirty ringed seal skins – for both coverings – was a family tent that could house an extended family. It thus permitted whole extended families to move together in the summer as economic and organizational units, and thus to maintain their division of labour. But often too a nuclear family had its own tent.

The wood necessary for the tent and the two coverings were probably a little too heavy for kayak transport. Skin tents were therefore not used on kayak trips made by individuals.

The skin tent indirectly encouraged a wandering life, since the thirty or so skins could be most easily obtained during journeys to various places with good seasonal hunting. It was a very demanding task to have a skin tent. The outer covering for example had to be replaced every year (Rosing 1930:35).

When it became possible to buy canvas, people did in fact obtain more and more canvas tents. A canvas tent required less woodwork; the tent canvas itself, rolled up, took up considerably less space, and it was significantly lighter. It could also be obtained in fairly small sizes, and could therefore be taken on kayak trips. In addition, the canvas tents had the advantage that the canvas could be kept for several years longer than the two coverings of the skin tent. The canvas tent could also be carried by travellers on foot, and could thus be fairly easily taken on caribou hunts around Upernavik. The hunters thus became less dependent on whether there were caves nearby. The tent type that first replaced the skin tent was the beam-pole tent. One could buy sailcloth or canvas and sew the tent cloth oneself. One could also make poles and the beam pole etc. from driftwood or purchased laths.

The use of the canvas tent was almost like that of the skin tent, since instead of using pegs one could weigh down the lower edge with some stones. In addition one could build a low turf foundation for the tent, the tent ring. The tent ring makes the tent less dependent on good weather.

How the canvas tent replaced the skin tent can be seen from Table 1.

The canvas tent was apparently used at first as a supplement to the skin tent. But suddenly the number of skin tents began to decline, while the canvas tent was used more and more. The figures come from the years in which they were stated, and are thus not average figures. The great increase in the number of canvas tents in Ammassalik from 1935 to 1944 is worth noting, since it was greater than the decline in the number of skin tents. This might indicate that there was at the same time a change in the size and number of the 'tenthold' (*i.e.* the tent 'household'). The rise in their numbers in 1958 may suggest that there was some truth in the large number in 1944. On the other hand the drop in the number of canvas tents in 1950 is more difficult to explain. In this case too the development is steadier in Upernavik. It may thus be true that the dissolution of the extended family had run its course earlier in the district. The figures may also indicate a decline in the summer travelling activities. The transition to the canvas tent could in itself decrease the need for hunting trips, since skin for the two tent coverings no longer had to be obtained.

The canvas tent is not as warm as the skin tent, and since people did not, as on Baffin Island, use two layers of coverings with heather insulation between them (Boas 1964:143f), but were content with one layer, the canvas tents were less convenient to use than the skin tents. This meant that people postponed the spring hunting trips until there was a decided mildness in the air. In other cases they built a hunter's hut that could be used earlier; but on the other hand this meant that people became more tied to particular places. This happened for example in the spring and autumn hunting grounds in the Upernavik district.

But perhaps the traditions were tenacious. In 1966 I saw that a young family was living in a tent at the actual settlement, while the oldest couple still lived in the house beside it.

The hunter's hut

In this work a 'hunter's hut' means a building with walls of turf and stone or of wood, used at a hunting camp. The name does not refer to the form or construction material of the dwelling.

At a place where one often went on hunting trips, people sometimes built a hunter's hut with walls of turf and stones. How old the hunter's hut is in Greenland we do not know, but around 1800 people in the Upernavik district had huts where they could go in the winter so that they could go hunting from them (Ostermann 1939:78f; Nielsen 1955b:146).

Around 1900 Samson Karlsen from Søndre Upernavik had a hunter's hut at Illulik near Søndre Upernavik (Appendix 1). As late as 1966 Mathias Karlsen from Søndre Upernavik had his hunter's house at Ikerasak within Søndre Upernavik. It was mainly used in the autumn, when the sea around Søndre Upernavik became too rough, and it had become too cold to live in a tent (*cf.* Bryder 1921:489).

Otherwise Upernavik municipality has had hunter's huts to which people went to hunt for a long period in the twentieth century. It is normally the task of the hunters' associations to manage the use of these huts (Appendix 1:203, 213). Now one often finds several hunter's huts around each settlement: Kullorsuaq, Nuussuaq, Tasiusaq, Tussaaq, Aappilattoq, Kangersuatsiaq and Søndre Upernavik. Several of them are owned by the municipality but are managed by the hunters' associations, which charge small fees for spending the night; in return the association ensures that there is fuel etc. Some of these hunter's houses are wholly owned by the local hunters' associations.



Fig. 8. Hunter's hut, "Bjørneborg", on Qaarusulik, Melville Bay, 1966. (Photo R. Petersen).

From Ammassalik district we have no information about hunters' huts in earlier times. But at some time after 1950 more hunters' huts were built, and these are also managed by the hunters' associations.

Although the camps for the *ammassat* fishing and hooded seal hunting were in fairly fixed locations in Ammassalik district, people lived in tents too at these places.

South of Ammassalik in recent decades, more hunters' houses have been built, for example at Ikertivaq near Pikiitti, but there the house was poorly maintained, and was knocked down by a *piteraq*, the East Greenlandic offshore storm wind (Appendix 2:308). But in Ammassalik district in the period investigated here, there were no privately owned hunters' huts in the West Greenlandic sense – that is, houses located where a family comes for a season every year to use the house as a point of departure for hunting trips. On the other hand, as suggested above, municipal hunters' huts have been built so they can be used by various hunters.

Hunters' huts can be used as advance bases from which seasonal hunting can be practiced. They help to ensure that the hunting area exploited can be extended outside the immediate proximity of the settlement. But they are permanent fixtures and are not transportable like the tent. To a certain extent the hunter's hut is probably best suited to an area with a fixed settlement pattern, since it permits a permanent location for the winter hut and makes it possible to exploit the hunting potential somewhere else.

Transportation

The kayak

The kayak has mainly been described as a hunting craft (Nansen 1891; Scavenius Jensen 1978; Petersen 1986), and this is indeed an important use of the kayak, since it is used to secure reserves for the winter economy, so the kayak has remained an important factor in Greenland settlement over the ages. Even in the areas where the kayak had disappeared in prehistoric times, it must have been difficult to do without it without suffering hardship. Yet in the Thule area, where the kayak was not used for a period in prehistoric times, people still survived. There the kayak season only lasted a couple of months in the year, and the kayak was still an extra safeguard, since from the kayak one hunted the large animals – narwhal and walrus – that made it easier to survive through the winter.

That the economic role of the kayak was important can be seen from the fact that most books about the kayak first describe its construction and then the hunting implements before coming to the paddle and the kayak suit.

In this work the kayak paddle and the suit will be dealt with first, because I want to discuss the kayak as a travelling craft, and only then will I describe it as a hunting and carrying craft. As a carrier the kayak had a limited capacity, and was of particular importance to settlement density and the size of the population in the individual settlements. Unlike the kayak of Belcher Islands, where several people could share one kayak (Freeman 1964), the Greenlandic kayak was owned and used by one person.

The kayak consists of the wooden skeleton covered with seal skin. Often three harp seal skins were used, which meant that it was not too difficult to collect skins for the craft. A young kayaker's first craft was presumably often covered with skins of seals that his father or elder brother had caught. But if he did not have such relatives, he obtained skins by working, selling fish etc. The wooden frame could be more difficult to obtain, but he could often find driftwood on the beach. The most difficult part was presumably the training, if he had no relative as a teacher. If one was well trained the kayak was a safer travelling craft than the umiak or a wooden boat – at all events a well trained kayaker could get home from a hunt in a storm which the umiak would have difficulty surviving. The kayak has a very low draught and can get through very shallow water.

The kayak was the men's travelling craft, and made them highly mobile. It was not too big to be carried by one man, for example on hunting trips, when it was carried from its storage place down to the beach, and then back up to its usual place on returning. For this kind of carrying the kayak is well balanced, so that one man can stick his arm through the kayak opening, and can then carry it supported on his hip. This kind of transport was used for very short distances.

Over longer stretches of land the kayak was carried on the shoulders, with the man's head in the kayak cockpit; but it was balanced so that the stern, which is turned forward and upward, allowed one to see below it, and when one carried it this way one had one's arms free. This procedure was used for example if one had to cross a tongue of land, *itissaaq*, between two fjords, so one was saved a lot of paddling out of the fjord and into the next fjord. One could also take it caribou hunting in the hinterland of the fjords. It did not prevent the man carrying something else at the same time, and he could carry it for several days if necessary. He could cross rivers more easily and often he could also ferry people to the other side of the river by tying two kayaks together. On such inland trips there were often oblong lakes that could be crossed with a kayak, and in this way some of the items taken on the hunt could be more easily transported.

In both of the areas discussed here, the kayak could be taken on board an umiak or on a sledge. But one can also pull it behind one on smooth ice, since the bone strip under the stern protects the skin. In Upernavik people have special 'wings' on the motor boat, two pairs of pine poles that project on each side of the motor boat, and there the kayaks they take with them can be lashed and can thus be brought along without taking up space in the actual motor boat. Similarly, on a sledge there was a lashing arrangement on the second cross-plank from the front right out at the side – an *akit*. A kayak that is taken on a sledge is lashed in front to the *akit,* and to one of the uprights, and can thus be taken without wasting space on the sledge.

The kayak has to be re-covered after one or two years. The unscraped seal skins are thoroughly soaked in water. They can then be made to hug the shape of

the kayak more easily, and are more elastic. They must be sewn on, stretched very tightly around the frame, and must be finished before they are dry. Kayak-covering is therefore a job shared by several women. The men tighten the skins so they can be sewn without great effort. If the skins were not tight, they might produce a squelching sound that would warn the hunted animals too early.

The double-headed paddle is the means of propulsion. It is made of wood, formerly of driftwood, often edged with bone facings. For hunting purposes the wood must be smooth, and it is therefore regularly ground to get rid of raggedness and irregularities – drips from the paddle make a noise too. The paddle for the Greenlandic kayak has both blades in the same plane. Sometimes this leads to wind resistance to the blade held uppermost in the air in a strong head wind; but it was thought that it was safer not to have to turn the paddle too much during rowing, among other reasons because the balance too depends on the paddle. I have not heard any statements about whether it is also done that way for the sake of ease in 'rolling' the kayak.

The kayak is a fast craft when one is not towing anything. There is a story about a man who paddled kayak mail from Kangaamiut to Sisimiut. He paddled out at ten o'clock in the morning and paddled outside the archipelago. When he paddled into the harbour at Sisimiut, the colony bell rang for six o'clock in the evening (Rosing 1926-27:88). The distance is 65 km.

But the kayak, which has very little freeboard, cannot really be used in all kinds of weather as a travelling craft without a kayak suit or cape. There are two kinds: the so-called *kapitak* or *tuilik*, 'kayak suit', an anorak type with a hood that can be laced up so it is waterproof around both wrists and around the face. The lower edge is furnished with a belt that closes tightly around the cockpit coaming, and keeps the kayak dry even if it capsizes or the waves wash over it. Without such a suit the kayak could only be used in calm seas with no wind and waves. The suit is thus a more necessary part of the kayak than the hunting implements.

The other kind, the *akuilisaq* or *tuiitsoq*, is called a 'kayak cape'. Its lower edge also has a belt and closes tightly around the cockpit coaming. But above it only reaches to under the arms, and is held up by a pair of braces over the shoulders. Its two Greenlandic names



Fig. 9. Kayak at Eqaluit char fishing camp, Upernavik, 1966. (Photo R. Petersen).

suggest a development. *Akuilisaq*, 'garment without points' suggests that it was the first garment without these points, and the name *tuiitsoq*, 'the shoulderless', suggests that another kind of cape of the full 'anorak' type arose later. It can be used even in slightly rough seas, and perhaps earlier also in the eddies of the rivers, but it cannot be used in a storm, nor can it be used in kayak-rolling.

In Greenland the kayak is a one-man craft. It can be used for hunting trips, and was presumably the favoured boat of the men. The umiak must be regarded as a vessel for those without a kayak – thus the non-Greenlandic name, which means 'women's boat'. But the kayak is also often used as an escort boat on journeys. It was used for one-man visits to other settlements, especially in the winter, and in Ammassalik it was used frequently to visit the neighbouring settlement. In addition it was used as a mail carrier. In places without a shop it was also used a lot for shopping trips. The goods that cannot stand water are stowed below the back cover. Thus it was used for spreading news and new goods.

It always requires practice if one is to use the kayak for trips in all kinds of weather, not least considering that a storm can blow up while one is out in the kayak. People were often worried if it became blowy while young men were out in their kayaks. Many practice exercises were carried out in waves that broke over undersea reefs. Breakers that cover the kayak completely also required constant practice.

There have presumably always been kayakers who never learned kayak-rolling, or only learned to right themselves after capsizing on one side. No one

was trained in kayak-rolling without their consent. Young people who appeared panic-stricken on their first capsizing normally did not continue with the practice; but they usually learned to sit well in the kayak, and had often learned to avoid capsizing much better than those who could right themselves again from a capsizing.

For the kayak as a *hunting craft* the hunting implements are important, but here I will devote particular attention to their placing and the so-called 'kayak rudder'. There are various implements on the deck. At the back one has a lance and a harpoon bladder connected by a line with the harpoon, especially the harpoon head. The line goes around the man on the same side as his throwing arm, and the rest of the line lies rolled together in a rack, the 'line rack'. There will also be a hunting knife and perhaps an ice-scraper in front. The harpoon, which is ready to throw, lies in front on the deck, prevented from rolling off by two high buttons in front and a knob, the *assagiikkut*. At the moment I will disregard the gun. Since the length of the line is about 9-12 fathoms (in the old sense of 'the length of the outstretched arms'), one has to get fairly close to the seal to throw the harpoon. If it is difficult, one can throw the harpoon from a slightly longer distance and in the same movement pull the harpoon bladder out of its mooring on the aft deck and throw this forward while the harpoon is still in the air.

There are two names for the 'direction of throwing': *ilorraq*, 'the convenient' carries the line away from the kayak; and *innarluk*, 'the inconvenient', carries the line across the kayak. It should not catch in anything in its course, because that could be fatal. This means that all tools have their fixed place, and all throwing movements are executed without variation. Usually one grasps the *norsaq*, 'the throwing board' between one's teeth before one loosens the harpoon bladder. Others insert it under a cross-strap, but everyone sticks to one of these possibilities. These things must be done automatically in case it all has to be done very quickly.

One often sees descriptions of the use of the throwing board. Some say that it lengthens the throw, others say that it lifts the harpoon higher, and this gives it a stronger descending impact; but I have not seen one important function described. The harpoon was made, especially in earlier times, with a knife, and there was thus a chance of certain irregularities in the shape that might give it a tendency to curve a little in the air. By using the throwing board one ensured that the harpoon was always taken from the same side, so that if it turned it would always go to the same side, and one could regulate this with the throwing board or the knob in which it sat, so that the harpoon in the end followed the throw, which was the result of a number of segments of a circle, right down at the loins, on the back, the upper arm, the lower arm and the wrist; to this one could add the turning of the upper body and the shoulders; and the sum of these movements is regulated by the way the throwing board releases the harpoon. Some hunters use a so-called hand grip on the harpoon shaft – for the thumb on one side and the other three fingers on the other side. In this way too the harpoon was always grasped from the same side. The regulation here was carried out by making the rest on one side sharper or blunter. It is said that hunters with a hand grip often threw farther than those who used the throwing board. The hand grip and throwing board have one thing in common. They both mean that the harpoon is always grasped from the same side.

For sealing from a kayak with a gun, one needs a gun bag on deck, and a so-called 'kayak rudder', which is however not a rudder but a directional stabilizer meant to ensure that the kayak as far as possible faces the seal when the hunter is to shoot, so he can avoid the recoil from the side. The gun bag on the deck suggests that the use of the gun from a kayak originates in the age of breech-loading guns.

In connection with the use of a gun the hunters have also introduced the *taalutaq*, a so-called 'shooting screen', which is put around the point of the prow. It is a screen of white canvas meant to look like an ice floe. These innovations make the kayak dangerous in harpoon hunting, because the line can get tangled in them and the result can be that the kayak is pulled after the harpooned animal. With the large animals such as beluga and walrus in particular, it can be disastrous to be pulled after the animal. This is probably why gun hunting in the end replaced harpooning.

The kayak was used afterwards to transport the catch home. The smaller seals could be taken on to the deck, usually the afterdeck, but sometimes one was placed aft and one on the foredeck, which meant that transport home could be faster.

But usually the catch was towed. In prehistoric

times transport home was probably rather slower. If the back of body of the seal being towed was deep in the water, it would act like a brake. But at some point towing equipment was introduced (Mathiassen 1934: 91) and a so-called *avataasaq* was used, a small 'towing bladder' that ensures that the back of the body does not lie deep in the water when the front of the body is attached by a towing rein to the cross-strap of the kayak. Later a method was also developed for blowing air into the lower body of the seal so that it floated more easily.

Nevertheless it was hard work to tow one or two seals home, especially if one had the wind and current against one. In the hooded seal season in the spring a hunter often left early in the morning while the children were still asleep. And often he came home after they had fallen asleep in the evening. A distance of *c.* 10 km from the settlement was therefore probably the limit to how far one could travel in daily hunting. If the hunter was to get farther away he would normally spend the night somewhere. We must therefore assume that the kayak's limited transport capacity was the crucial factor in the scattered settlement pattern with small settlements. Although the role of the kayak in hunting was restricted to the ice-free season, it was still the factor that was necessary if the people were to survive the winter with its poorer hunting.

Kayak technology was therefore probably quite crucial to the two very important settlement factors: how much distance there should be between two settlements if each was to have an adequate hunting area; and how many people could live at each settlement in order to survive within the given hunting area. Kayak technology therefore requires that there are small settlements at distances no shorter than twice the length of a daily hunting ground, while the social considerations have the result that the distance between the settlements should preferably not be much more.

The umiak and other boats

The umiak was originally both a hunting and travelling craft. It was brought by the Inuit cultures that came from Alaska and Canada. In West Greenland it probably disappeared around 1960 (*cf.* Udbye 1995: 175-178), and from Ammassalik district around 1970 (Table 2).

In hunting it was used for whaling (Cranz 1770: I,159; Glahn 1921:127-138; Egede 1926:76). This was often in the winter or early in the spring. Since the hunting of the Greenland or right whale *(Balaena mysticetus)* took place around Sisimiut and even farther north, one must assume that farther south people had mainly caught humpback whales *(Megaptera navangliaea)*, which were especially caught around Paamiut, and to a certain extent from Nuuk. Neither of the two species was caught for a long time after 1922. The Greenland whale was on the whole not caught in Greenland from the beginning of the twentieth century. The humpback whale was not caught by Greenlanders for many years after 1920, apart from the fact that quotas of a few animals were granted in recent decades, and a few were caught. But neither Upernavik nor Ammassalik had any share of these quotas; the people do have memories of catching Greenland whale earlier, but not in historical times. It is possible, however, that whaling played a role in the actual settlement in the two areas.

For travelling the umiak was used by family members, and was normally rowed by the older children and especially the women, thus the name 'women's boat'. The umiak was a travelling vessel for people without a kayak. The umiak could be paddled for-

Table 2. Travelling boats in Upernavik and Ammassalik. Until *c.* 1940 the number of umiaks and wooden boats remained fairly constant. The great increase in wooden boats in the course of the 1940s must be attributed to the fact that the wooden boats, which until then had been crew boats, were at that time supplemented greatly by one-man boats. The figures after 1950 suggest that the motor boats were at first about to oust the wooden boats, but the one-man boats re-emerged as dinghies. At Ammassalik the same process seems to have been repeated in the course of the 1960s. (*Sammendrag* 1946, VII; *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1961, 1960; *Grønland* 1969-70). *The figure was from 1958.

	Upernavik			Ammassalik		
	Umiak	Wooden boat	Motor boat	Umiak	Wooden boat	Motor boat
1900	34	6	–	24	–	–
1910	42	7	–	35	–	–
1920	46	6	–	37	2	–
1930	28	39	1	40	1	–
1940	7	69	7	28	1	–
1950	1	120	12	28	8	–
1959	–	82	23	14	97	*4
1968	–	102	37	1	48	16



Fig. 10. Umiaq departing from Aappilattoq, Upernavik, 1935. (Photo W. Thalbitzer/Arktisk Institut).

ward, but could also be propelled in a favourable wind by a square sail. Since the umiak lacked an outside keel, one could not tack with it. It was steered with a steering oar.

The umiak and the kayak were the family's boats for travelling on the seasonal hunting trips. The umiak was used in the summer season on various trips. But it was also used when people moved to a new winter dwelling-place.

Since the umiak could easily be drawn up on land, it was not so important whether there were good harbour conditions at the place where one camped, or where one was going to build a house. It was enough that one could land and pull the boat up.

The umiak is neither as fast nor as seaworthy as the kayak. Since the preparations for an umiak journey were normally more extensive than for a kayak trip, the people who had to use the umiak were thus also less mobile than those who could use the kayak. The advantage of the umiak was that it could move whole families and that it had a much larger cargo capacity than the kayak, which helped to ensure that the hunting area could be extended to new regions, and the catch of the season could be brought home in one or just a few trips.

The seaworthiness of the umiak was limited by the fact that the skin covering became soggy when the umiak was constantly in the water, and then it had to be drawn up on land so the skin could be dried out. On journeys lasting several days it was drawn up on land every evening and provided shelter for the night with its bottom in the air.

The umiak, like the kayak, can be carried over land, and often it was carried over tongues of land between two fjords so that the travellers could save some time and energy that they would otherwise have to spend getting out of one fjord and into the next.

On journeys when the sea was covered in ice, it could be laid across the dog sledge and pulled along (Holm and Petersen 1921:623). When the travellers encountered ice-holes, sledge and dogs were put on board and ferried over. On such journeys one took the umiak because the journey back would normally be made after the ice had broken up.

Maintenance of the umiak – like the kayak – requires that the skin is replaced every year or every other year. This is a rather demanding task, since one needs about 24 harp seal skins or 7-12 hooded or bearded seal skins. These skins must not be scraped thin, and they must be soaking wet when they are to be used for boat coverings. For that reason the umiak can only be covered in the summer; otherwise the wet skin would immediately freeze stiff. The fact that the skin is most elastic when it is wet through means that the sewing must be completed while the skins are still wet, and for the same reason the covering of the skin boats was an urgent matter, a communal task for the settlement. The host of the proceedings was the owner of the umiak, who ensured that there was enough material and food, and often also entertainment. The general mutual help system played a role here; one could assume that a household with its own umiak would take part, but with a certain expectation of receiving similar help when it was their turn.

The used, removed umiak skin would then be used as an underlay or a kind of tarpaulin for various purposes.

The umiak frame that is not covered quickly rots,

which is another reason why the umiaks had to be recovered regularly.

This may be one of the reasons why in the course of the twentieth century many places went over to rowing-boats of wood. Collecting skins for the umiak was in a way a heavy burden, as the skins could otherwise be sold for money.

The first rowing-boats were family vessels that were used in the same way as the umiak. They were built of wood, and for the same reason they could be used for several years without skins having to be replaced; but they had to be caulked and painted. They became travelling boats, which the family used for hunting trips in the summer.

But they were rather heavier than the umiak. In the autumn they had to be pulled up on land, and in the spring they had to be launched in the water. The normal communal work changed from covering to hauling ashore and launching. But they could no longer be transported on a dog sledge, and for that reason the spring hunting trips were postponed until the ice had gone. Since the transition to the canvas tent meant that these were not as warm as skin tents, there was at least consistency in this sense.

But wooden boats could no longer be carried over tongues of land, and thus in many places the journeys became longer than with the umiak.

Wooden boats did not have to be hauled up on land in the evening. And one could no longer sleep underneath a hauled-up boat. There was a greater need to use the tent. The boats were too heavy. For that reason there was also a need for safe natural havens, that is small calm fjords or inlets that were deep enough so that the boats were not left high and dry at low tide (there was a difference of over four metres between the highest and lowest water level in the spring tide). On the other hand they should not be too deep for an anchor to reach the bottom and keep the boat free of the beach. A wooden boat draws more water than an umiak, and one has to remember this when one is sailing. At these natural havens there also had to be suitable mooring possibilities. Because of these considerations in the transition to wooden boats, the availability of suitable natural havens was probably the most important factor for the choice of camping places and settlements.

After the transition to fisheries in southern West Greenland, people began making flat-bottomed one-man boats of the dory type. This type of boat spread to the rest of Greenland, and was normally used for everyday fishing. But on hunting expeditions it was often towed behind the family boat, and was taken as a kind of dinghy when people began to use motor boats. With the change from umiak to wooden boat one can see a quite striking rise in the number of boats compared with umiaks. This one-man boat might explain the difference. From the end of the 1940s, in central Greenland, a light one-man boat was made with a wooden frame and covered with canvas, a so-called canvas boat. It was practical, fast and had more transport capacity than the kayak (Kapel 1973). It spread fairly quickly to most of Greenland, and also reached both Upernavik and Ammassalik. It was pointed at both ends, but later it was given a kind of stern so one could attach an outboard motor.

The motor boat mainly appeared after 1950, and grew quickly in importance. They were often quite small motor boats, 20' to 24', that could be hauled up on shore before the ice cover came. As with the rowing-boats there was a need for harbour conditions with good inlets or fjords that were not too deep and with the possibility of safe mooring. During the early years the men had to help one another hauling the boat up on land in the autumn, and launching it after the ice had broken up. But in the course of the 1960s one could obtain leverage devices that made it possible for a single individual to haul a boat ashore as long as someone else controlled the movements of the motor boat.

For some years the motor boat was regarded as a noisy, oily, evil-smelling vessel that could easily scare the seals away. A type of hunting that was developed at Sisimiut with motor boats chasing the seals was banned within a radius of 5 km from the settlement in Upernavik Municipality. The area inside this limit was then regarded as a kayak hunting area. It seems more likely however, that the reason for this was that there was a lot of shooting during a chase. In addition it was forbidden to use a motor boat in the seals' foraging areas up the ice fjords. But in this case the reason was that seals like many other animals are frightened by unknown smells. In these fjords the hunters' associations and the municipality jointly established limits for motor boat traffic, and in these harbours the motor boat is left in a safe place and the actual sealing is done from a kayak. These stipulations were only rescinded



Fig. 11. Motor boat used for hunting trips, 1967. Up to four kayaks can be carried on the wooden cross bars. (Photo Keld Hansen).

around 1990, when these seal grounds were zoned for Greenland halibut fishing and the district began to develop from what was primarily a hunting municipality into a fishing municipality.

The motor boat could be owned by an individual, but also by a pair of owners who were often close kin. It was quite common for the owners and users to belong to different households. Frequently, too, a man sailed with his father or son, with a brother, a brother-in-law or a cousin, but very frequently too with someone who was more distantly related. The motor boat thus formed a framework for economic cooperation.

It could happen, not least in the autumn, that several hunters at Upernavik wanted to go sealing in calmer waters than those near the settlement. It was especially in such situations that the 'wings' were an advantage, since the kayak did not take up as much space from the motor boat. On such trips there were also distribution rules that ensured the owner of the motor boat a certain percentage. In Upernavik's hunting culture the motor boat was well integrated in this sense.

The sledge and the dogs

The dog sledge is used in both areas, and is an important means of transport in the winter. It is mainly used for transport in connection with hunting, and in that case it is often used by a single individual. But it was also used for journeys, often involving the family. It has a wider radius of action than the kayak, and has rather more capacity. It could bear a load of several hundred kilos, and it further had the advantage that it was not dependent on roads, although it was often limited by difficult terrain or the unreliability of the ice. As indicated before, it was used a good deal on the ice, but in both areas there are many overland routes – in some cases meant to shorten the sledge journey, but also to avoid bad ice. The land routes are fixed, depending on the terrain.

The sledge could be made of driftwood, which is available in both areas. The runners were strengthened with bone, and later with iron, and they were tied together with straps, and were thus strong and elastic enough to cope with many of the rigours of the journey.

In both areas the sledge was used for a mixture of driving on ice and land. It is not so long, and is thus very manoeuvrable, but it is rather wide, and thus has both a large carrying capacity and a certain stability in the uneven terrain.



Fig. 12. Dog sledges near Ammassalik, 1906. (Photo W. Thalbitzer/Arktisk Institut).

It was not normally used for the actual hunting, although it was used earlier to chase animals in the winter caribou hunts. But after the prohibition of caribou hunting in the winter, this type of hunting was abandoned.

When *maanneq*, breathing-hole hunting, was abandoned, so was the use of the sledge to drive around the hunting area to get the seals to head for the manned breathing-holes. The dog sledge is thus used today for transport to and from the hunting area; the actual hunting is done on foot or from a transported kayak.

The catch is carried by lashing the animal to the sledge platform, and for this purpose the crossbars project outside the runners, and on this piece there are notches around which the lashing rope is wound and tightened and pulled on to a corresponding notch on the other side of the sledge. This makes it possible to keep the load fixed even in rough terrain.

The original East Greenlandic sledge was very small, and is said to have been very suitable for driving on rough ice. But this would probably be more difficult to use in the Ammassalik snow, which is often soft and deep. Possibly for that reason, the construction of the sledge was changed in the 1930s, under the influence of certain expedition sledges (Gessain 1960). It has become longer, and instead of two runners it runs on a pair of skis which with the aid of some supports carry the platform, composed of some planks laid across. Like other sledges it has uprights and behind it there is a braking arrangement of serrated steel, attached to a hinge and held up by a strong rubber cable. When the driver needs to brake, it is trodden down into the snow, and it is so effective that one no longer always needs to put the dogs behind the sledge, even on a fairly steep descent. Even at Qimmeersaajalik, a very steep slope down from a pass on the way from the Ammassalik fjord towards the actual town, one no longer always needs to put the dog team behind the sledge. In fact Qimmeersaajalik means 'the place where you can unhitch the dog team'.

The sledge was also used a good deal for winter journeys, and in these cases families could travel together and have some equipment with them. Not least in Upernavik district, family journeys in the winter were very common until after 1950; but in Ammassalik the women did not travel much in the winter, as could also be seen from the fact that they did not always have travelling clothes for winter use. In Upernavik there are indications that the dark season was formerly used not so much for hunting as for social contacts.

For the number of sledges with dog teams in 1920-59, see Table 12.

The dog sledge was also used in the spring for the first hunting trips with the umiak on the sledge. When the hunters wanted to go back to the settlement after the ice had broken up, they put the sledge and dogs on board the umiak.

The draught animals are sledge dogs. They must have food, the same kind of food as the humans, and finding the food in fact requires good hunting. But



Fig. 13. Winter journeys in Upernavik, 1967. (Photo Keld Hansen).

since it increases the hunters' radius of action, sledging is worth the trouble. In the twentieth century people began to use some dried fish as dog food, both dried shark meat and dried Greenland halibut. But it was still their own catches that were used as dog food. It was often claimed that sledging was based on the country's own resources. In proper sealing settlements 33% of the seal meat was used as dog food (Hovelsrud-Broda 1999:41).

It would therefore appear that the size of the dog team depended on the size of the catch. Unlike in the kayak hunting area, where a man without his own kayak was not regarded as a hunter, in the dog sledging area there could be hunters without dogs. There were several examples of this. In Upernavik south I met a man who always went hunting on foot, and even went on journeys to the neighbouring settlement on foot. One of Paangu's sons had no dogs either, and a man from nineteenth-century Aappilattoq had no dogs, but had a sledge, which the family also used for winter visiting. Once the family had sat down, the man pushed the sledge all the way to the neighbouring settlement (Lynge 1967:125). But in Ammassalik too there were some hunters without dogs, at any rate for some of the time. Kukkujooq and old Justus from Ikkatteq often hiked on foot to the other settlements.

In addition there are accounts claiming that earlier in Ammassalik one only had 3-4 dogs hitched to the sledge (*cf.* Sandgreen 1987:293), while Niels Egede reported in the eighteenth century on teams of 5-8 dogs (Egede 1939:199, 256). There are some indications that sledging may earlier have been a supplement to walking.

It takes some work to have a good dog team. When the puppies are 5-6 months old, their training as ordinary sledge dogs begins, and they must pull the sledge alongside experienced dogs. A rope was tied between other traces so that the inexperienced puppies could be caught if they slackened off too much.[1] The dogs are hitched in a fan pattern. In West Greenland a couple of dogs could be given longer traces than the rest. In East Greenland the fan form is used with different lengths of traces so that if necessary the dogs can be pulled together and in fact run in pairs beside one another. The fan shape has the advantage that the dogs can be spread if the ice is unsafe, but the tandem form, where the dogs pull in pairs, has advantages in deep, soft snow.



Fig. 14. Abel Danielsen's hobbled dogs and umiaq, Itussaalik, Upernavik, 1929. (Photo Frederica de Laguna).

But it is important that there is a lead dog which can keep the other dogs in their place, and a bitch for which the other dogs have respect. If she is in heat she can be hitched with a longer trace than the others, and the male dogs will then pull better.

It takes time to give the dogs the proper training, even as ordinary pulling dogs. This means that a hunter who loses his dogs one winter is unlikely to have a proper dog team before the next season (Jensen 1943).

Besides the ordinary kind of training, one can also later give the dogs special training which – for example in times of danger – could make the dogs do their best. In particular this involved signals to increase speed (Jensen 1961:125). Some dogs were trained to pull out a man who had fallen through the ice, and some were trained for polar bear hunting (Rasmussen 1909:52), etc. Such training was kept secret from others to reduce the possibility of misuse, and of course the signals had to be very subtle, so that no one else could give them by accident.

There are some stories of fast driving when a midwife had to be fetched for a childbirth or to get help for someone who was ill or injured (*cf.* Alaufesen 1983:12).

But all these things mean that it takes some time to train good dogs.

One could however lose one's dogs. Rabies and other kinds of illnesses could spread like wildfire and many dogs could die of them (Jensen 1961:48). This was often a disaster situation that made people work together. At Itilliarsuk there was once an outbreak of distemper that only left two bitches alive, and at the neighbouring settlement there was only one male dog left. They were mated and the puppies were shared out among the various hunters to build up new dog stocks.

If a team of dogs is involved in an attack on a human being, the whole team is killed, and then the owner has to build up a new team from the next season.

Imported tools

The gun

In a way the role of the gun for geographical mobility is difficult to gauge, apart from the fact that one had to live close to a place with a shop so one could buy ammunition. The role of the gun was probably most important in other fields.

People began at a fairly early stage to use guns – first for caribou hunting (Dalager 1915:19, 80), and probably not much later for sealing from the ice; but the first muzzle-loading guns were more or less unsuitable for use in a kayak, since the powder had to be kept dry, and there was in fact no room on the deck.

In the caribou areas the introduction of the gun meant the end of the group hunting. In group hunting with 'cairn' (*i.e.* barrage) systems the hunters were stationed with their bows and arrows behind shooting shelters, and from there they shot the caribou that ran past between two rows of cairn systems. In this type of communal hunting each man hunted for himself, as we know from the tradition, especially from Meqqisaalik's caribou hunt, since he was so placed by his fellow hunters that he did not catch any animals (Rink 1866-71:I,134-137). This was possible because each hunter could recognize his arrows – the number and placing of the barbs functioned as an owner's mark (Rosing 1926-27:15). We can call this type of hunting individual group hunting. This possibility was lost when the hunters started using guns, and this is probably one of the reasons why the shared caribou grounds like Aasivissuit were abandoned as caribou hunting camps and were only used again around 150 years later (Grønnow *et al.* 1983:87). In the intervening period the hunters changed to a system of pooling the killed caribou. Normally, traditional pooling requires a leader with an almost chieftain-like authority.

We do not know what the situation was in the Upernavik caribou area, but in this area too old caribou cairns have been found, so it must be possible to infer the role of the gun there from its role in other places.

Seals could be caught from the ice, partly in the form of group hunting, as with the breathing-hole hunting, *maanneq*, where the hunters spread out over a system of breathing-holes (Hansen 1971:48f), and the hunter at whose breathing-hole the seal tried to come up to breathe had a chance to be the seal-catcher; in this case too there was no doubt about who caught the seal.

Other kinds of breathing-hole hunting were stalking and 'peep-hunting' (*ibid.* p. 151ff). Stalking, where a man crept towards the seal while imitating the seal's movements, was an individual hunting form (*ibid.* p. 151ff), while peep-hunting took two people. One held the harpoon without being able to see the seal, and stabbed at it when the 'peeper' gave the sign. In peep-hunting it is the peeper who 'catches the seal' and the two men would take turns to peep and stab (*ibid.* p. 152).

With the introduction of the gun in these kinds of ice-hunting, both hunting methods disappeared and were replaced by *uuttoq* hunting, where a hunter hidden behind a canvas screen would approach a basking seal and could then shoot it from a suitable distance (Rosendahl 1967:122-131).

While at first the gun made the caribou hunting more individual, and in that way could probably change the form of mobility, in the sealing from ice it meant that old methods disappeared and were replaced by new ones. In this case we lack proper descriptions of what happened, but if we assume that it was mainly the young men who first learned to use the gun, and that they afterwards had to teach older hunters this kind of sealing, we can easily imagine that this affected the relationship of authority. In other words, we do not know much about the direct role of the gun for geographical mobility; but indirectly it probably meant that the caribou hunting became more individualized. In connection with sealing on the ice we know in general that some old methods disappeared and were replaced by new ones. But none of these changes seems to have affected the hunting seasons or hunting grounds.

The adoption of the gun in kayak hunting happened rather later, as indicated above. There were two problems that had to be solved:

A. One was keeping the powder dry in muzzle-loaders. At first the gun was placed below the deck. When it was to be used, the edge of the cape or suit that closed off the kayak cockpit was opened, and this could not be done without some risk in rough seas. The gun was therefore mainly used in calm weather with no waves, and in a sense this accorded well with the fact that it was more difficult to get close to the

seal in calm weather. The harpoon line, which was 9-12 'fathoms' (spread arms) long, made it necessary in harpoon hunting to get very close to the seal, which might thus be able to hear the kayak. But this did not mean that all the problems had been overcome. Some hunters perished when the gun went off by accident as they were pulling it up on deck.

B. The second problem was the recoil. The kayak was after all hand-made and perhaps not always quite symmetrical. The hunter could maintain a direction with the double-bladed paddle, and when he stopped paddling to take aim, there was a risk that the kayak could begin to turn to one of the sides. If the hunter had to fire the gun to one of the sides, he risked capsizing, in the worst case with the cockpit still open.

The solution to the two problems probably came when the hunters began to use breech-loaders. This meant that they could put a gun bag on the kayak deck. The solution to the second problem was the so-called 'kayak rudder', which was not a rudder, but a directional stabilizer which ensured that the kayak could still be turned towards the seal even when the hunter had stopped paddling.

Both the use of the gun from a kayak and these innovations happened first in northern West Greenland, from where they spread to the south. The use of the gun from a kayak began around Nuuk in the autumn of 1864 (Hammeken 1864-65), but the gun bag and 'kayak rudder' were known in southern West Greenland twenty years later, when the editor Lars Møller saw them during a journey north and described them as useful innovations (Møller 1884/85:177-182; Steensby 1912:147ff).

The consolidation of the use of the gun in all kinds of hunting must have had an influence on settlement, since it became necessary to buy both guns and ammunition.

The sealing net

A few prehistoric sealing nets have been found in Greenland (Mathiassen 1934:96; Birket-Smith 1961: 117; Gad 1974:113f), but there is no indication that they were widespread. They were knotted from strips of baleen. So it was probably not easy to make them, and they were quite small.

The form of net hunting we know today was introduced by the Danish colonists in the eighteenth century (Gad 1974:110ff; Ostermann 1935a:7). It took some years before Greenlandic hunters developed an interest in it.

On the face of it, one might think that the reason was that a method of hunting where the hunter did not need to be present was perhaps not so attractive; but this argument cannot be used, given that people were familiar with the use of fox traps, which in that respect worked in the same way.

One factor may be that during this trial period people did not know the places that produced good catches, and perhaps with the unsafe ice around Upernavik itself nets would be lost sometimes, as they were at Uummannaq (Gad 1974:112). There were also reports that sharks often took seals caught in nets, and this required frequent monitoring of the nets.

In Upernavik it was the merchant Andreas Bruun who really started the net hunting (Ostermann 1921: 512), but there too there was little interest among Greenlandic hunters in the method (Ostermann 1939: 73-93).

Another reason, especially at Upernavik, may have been that because of the Danish dominance at the beginning of the net hunting, the hunters would take a negative view of the poor catch shares from animals caught in nets. We know at all events from a much later period in connection with the introduction of the motor boat that the owner could become unpopular if he was prevented by economic reasons from granting good catch shares.

Another important factor in the slow spread of net hunting might also be the hunters' pride, since at the beginning they had to get help with net hunting from Greenlanders "who would otherwise not be able to catch anything" (Gad 1974:122f, 128).

But the factor which may have been most important of all is that net hunting was done in the dark period – which was actually excellent for using the net. But we know from other sources that the dark season was used to strengthen social contacts. Now the season for social contacts was to be incorporated into the economic activities, and this was something people would hesitate to do before net hunting had really proven to be attractive.

It is not wholly inconceivable that the usufructuary rights to the net hunting grounds first arose because it was the Danish colonists who were pioneers in net hunting. As early as the first introduction of net hunting the first rights to the netting ground were

Table 3. Ice-hunting nets at Upernavik and Ammassalik from 1880 until 1959. This shows that ice-nets had become more or less consolidated at Upernavik in 1880, and had some importance for sealing there. At Ammassalik their use did not begin until after 1910, and they have not had the same importance as at Upernavik. In the 1960s their number seems to have at least doubled at Upernavik. (*Statistisk protokol*:1938; *Sammendrag* 1946, VII; *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1951, 1960).

	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1880	987	–
1890	796	–
1900	1222	–
1910	1563	–
1920	1819	67
1930	1962	51
1940	2231	117
1950	1923	77
1959	3097	146

introduced (*ibid.* p. 126). In reality the netting rights at a place were supposed to be respected for the first fortnight after the ice cover formed (BKvG 1919:125), but when the same man cast his nets there year after year his prior rights may have been viewed as permanent. Today people respect those netting places on land that were typical of net hunting in the many early years. No one is allowed to set up a net at a place on land where a man has reserved it for himself. One can also say that the places are inherited when the first user stops using them. The next user is either one of his sons or another close relative who takes the place over. If anyone else has placed his nets at the same place, the normal user has the right to take up the net and replace it with his own. But this was a pure usufructuary right. One could not sell one's netting place.

When people began placing their nets out at icebergs – this had the advantage that there were normally no sand-hoppers there – then the reservation stayed in force for the remainder of the winter; for the iceberg would be gone before the next winter.

At some point the hunters did begin using nets, and in time it became a very important economic factor (Table 3).

In Upernavik open-water nets were also used after 1920. Their number did not exceed 53 in 1931 and 1932, when there were most of them; but they remained fairly constant between 20 and 40. At Ammassalik open-water nets were not used.

In the 1960s hunters began making nets from wound nylon thread and this extended the netting season by a couple of weeks. It was easier to catch seals with them, and in the period when the twine nets became frayed and easier to see when the light returned, the hunters could still use the nylon nets for about a further two weeks.

The net was set by making three holes in the ice out from the suspension point, and using a specially adapted ice pick to thread the net line under the ice from hole to hole.

When the hunter inspected the net, the newly-formed ice on the middle hole was opened, and by tightening and slackening the line he could tell whether there was a seal in the net. If there was a catch, he opened another hole, either the outermost or the innermost hole, and the net could be pulled up and the seal taken out. In connection with the nylon nets of the 1960s, people began to use smooth nylon thread as a foreline. The advantage of this was that it did not freeze on to the ice, but could be drawn through the hole it was in, and that saved a considerable amount of time, which meant that each hunter could inspect more nets and thus use more nets.

In a way the net hunting had the effect that the hunting ground could be extended, which meant that it could be associated with fewer settlements. But the net hunting is done from the actual settlement. How great a role the net hunting played for the winter contacts among settlements we do not know. The winter visits continued, but we have no information on any changes in the extent of such visits.

The saarlisaartoq/slider

The slider was an innovation in the use of long lines for fishing from the ice. Its use began in the 1920s at Ilulissat. Two men, Marius Siverthsen and Ludvig Siegstad, are sometimes mentioned as its inventors (*cf.* Steenholdt 1930). The slider consists of a tin plate that is bent lengthwise. It can be weighed down in front with a stone, and it can draw a line behind it. Before that time people could only use a jig for fishing from the ice, although some tried to put out a long line in the same way as they set sealing nets – that is by making a series of holes in the ice, so they could stretch the line under the ice; but this was such a lengthy business

that the 'long line' could not be very long. The ice can be a couple of metres thick, so one would have to work late to put a line out.

The use of the slider spread very quickly in the part of Greenland that was covered by solid ice. It is especially Greenland halibut that are caught with the slider.

Later experiments with guideways made it easier to control the movement of the slider, and thus the hunter could put out several long lines at the same time from the same hole.

Once he had set the long line he could make a loop at the back end through which the anchor line could be passed down, so that the long line could go down and be kept tight. But clearly such a long line had to be pulled up from the same hole, and its length would therefore also depend on the depth of the sea and thus the angle one wanted when one hauled it up. It was hauled up by sheer unaided muscle power.

The slider increased the winter resources with fish, and thus stabilized settlement formation.

Property ownership

It will presumably also be useful to look at property ownership in terms of the nomadic life, for it must of course be adapted to its conditions. Some things must be regarded as communally owned; as long as these were untouched they could be acquired by anyone. But other things belonged to families or individuals, and we can see this by looking at who could make decisions about the object or objects. In particular we must also look at exchanges of property, to see whether they can influence the nomadic life. In other words we will look at forms of acquisition and transfers of the right to decide.

Resources and first acquisition rights

The resources could actually be regarded as ownerless, but here they are regarded as the property of the community. There is a problem with this part of the study, since there is often no formulation of the rules, and in some cases one must see what people did and interpret these actions. This requires, however, that we assess whether some actions were expressions of norms, or of breaches of norms. Such an interpretation can be problematical because one cannot always tell whether a failure to sanction the actions of others meant acceptance or censure (*cf.* Gould and Kolb 1964). But many times one can see whether a particular action was regarded as acceptable or not, and then one must try to see how things interrelate.

Animal stocks can be considered a shared resource for the local communities, although we know of no formulation saying that others cannot exploit them, as for example in Canada and Alaska, where a man could in former times risk his life by going hunting in others' resource areas without permission (Speck 1915:11-22; Burch 1981). But there are a few things that might suggest that the notion of exclusive utilization rights was not an alien one in Greenland. There are a few stories about hunters who were known for killing others in their hunting areas, as it is said of Seeqquilisaq (Tape 56VG1-2). But besides this there are many more stories of the killing of 'strangers' in one's hunting ground (Rink 1866-71:I,215,227,272; II,2; Rasmussen 1921-25:II,316ff). These were hunters who were encountered alone in others' hunting areas. But there are many indications that killing strangers in one's hunting area was not accepted as necessary killing, but considered to be murder. It often prompted revenge measures.

Sometimes several hunters together might venture into others' hunting grounds, and this was probably a safety measure. But another procedure seems to have been more common, that is to come to visit a settlement, spend the night there and the next morning leave with the local hunters. This must be regarded as tacit acceptance; but as mentioned above, there are no explicit formulations of these matters.

Another thing might point in the same direction. People at Uummannaq, a little south of Maniitsoq, were notorious for killing lone kayakers in their hunting grounds (Rasmussen 1921-25:II,316ff). Peder Olsen Walløe visited them during his journey along the west coast of Greenland around 1750. He was not quite comfortable visiting them at their settlement. But it was clear that he was not there hunting, and he praised them for their hospitality (Walløe 1927:42).

These things bear out the view that the animal resources are regarded by some people as the property of the local community. But once the animal has been caught, it belongs to the hunter and the family to which he belongs. As we shall see a little later, we can point to the owner – or the representative of the owner

– by seeing who makes decisions about the use of the animal. The food that comes from the caught animal belongs to the household, and it is the female head of the household – and she alone – who makes the decision about its use: whether to make food immediately or preserve it, and whether anything should be given to the housemates of the settlement, and in that case who should have what.

Other hunting products, such as skins, sinews, blubber, tusks etc., belong to the individual nuclear families, and it is just such things that were sold, which is why the things that were bought for these goods also belonged to the nuclear families.

Driftwood from the sea is also a shared resource that belongs to the finder, and this ownership is respected by others if he arranges it such that one can see that a human being has had it in his hands. Only he and his family may use it without asking for permission.

Material for the walls of the house, stones and turf, is also a shared resource as long as it has not been gathered. One builds the house oneself with the turf and stones one has gathered. Then one lives there for at least one winter. But the unused house walls also seem to have been regarded as a shared resource. Other families could move in, and in that connection they had the right to break down the end wall and then make the house longer or shorter as required. But here too we have no information about whether someone could simply move into a house that had been occupied by a particular household the previous winter, without the consent of these families.

Transfers of the right to decide

Whoever has first acquired an object from the resources acquires the right to decide over it, to use it, and to benefit from its use. He can use it as material for a worked object, and he may alter this object if he considers it appropriate to do so. This is an exclusive right, so it is clear that it is a matter of private ownership.

When the object is owned by a group one must have the right to represent the group in order to dispose of the object, as we have seen in connection with the household food stores and the nuclear families' stores of other hunting products.

No one else can dispose of the object without the owner's acceptance. This can take the form of barter, sale or purchase, a gift or a loan. Apart from loans, the ownership is transferred to another person, and the first owner thus loses his ownership, for example the right to use the object without asking, to give the object away, to exchange it, to alter it, etc.

In exchanges, especially through sale and purchase, the ownership is transferred against suitable compensation, and sale/purchase is a balanced exchange (*cf.* Sahlins 1965:147f). One sells what one has some of, and one buys what one lacks, and thus both parties benefit. It is very frequently raw materials that are sold at the various market places. The purchase price can perhaps be measured in terms of the distance from the resource area, measured as travelling time from one's native region, against the potential use represented by the new acquisition, as well as the goods one gets in return.

To the market place at Taseralik at 67°N people came from Disko Bay to Taseralik, but also from as far as Nuuk and South Greenland. The Nuuk people for example traded soapstone lamps and soapstone pots (Dalager 1915:15). 'Southerners' too came from South Greenland to Taseralik, and among other things bought these finished soapstone objects there. On their way they sailed past the Godthåb (Nuuk) Fjord, where the soapstone mines are. But they sailed to Taseralik, where they bought the products. What they saved with this procedure was an extra journey of some 300 km in and out of the Godthåb Fjord.

In 1733/34 Godthåb was struck by a smallpox epidemic, and people stopped travelling to Taseralik. Now the southerners began sailing into the fjord on their way north, and sold these soapstone items (Dalager 1915:82). On their way south they went up the fjord and made these things, which they sold in the south – an extra travelling distance of about 600 km. But with the intermediate stage that was eliminated people could pay this extra 'cost' of 600 km. For soapstone lamps and soapstone vessels were things people wanted. It should be emphasized here that there were no sole rights to the quarries, as understood by Gulløv (Gulløv 1997:404); but a difficult detour protected them. In this case it was clear that quarrying the mineral and converting it into a utility object conferred ownership of what in this case had clearly been made as an object of exchange. Once it had been bartered its first owner no longer enjoyed the ownership of it any longer, and the new owner could now dispose of what he had bought as he wanted.

At such places there were also exchanges of gifts. The real difference between sale/purchase and exchanges of gifts was that when giving gifts one did not ask for anything in return, and it was a gesture of friendship meant to underscore the friendship. But I would hesitate to call friendship a commodity. One is often given another gift, but similarly without any demand for compensation. In a way this underlines the fact that in exchanges of gifts non-material goods are also involved: good social relations. In gift-giving the first owner annuls his ownership, and transfers it to the new owner. Strictly speaking the new owner must have the right to do with it as he wishes, even perhaps to give it away or sell it. But if he does so shortly afterwards he risks losing the non-material part of the exchange. He would be regarded as tactless.

Lending-hiring is also well known. This is a fixed-term transfer of the right to use something and the right to enjoy the benefit of this use; but without any transfer of other aspects of the ownership. It is very often implements that are lent out.

After use the object is returned to the owner. In cases of one-off use the owner often makes no demand for a share of any benefits the borrower may receive. But in lending there is often an agreement that the owner will get a share of the benefits. In that case, though, we must call it a rental, although in Greenlandic there is no linguistic distinction between *lending* and *renting*, or even *use*. During use an object can be destroyed or lost. In earlier times this appears to have accompanied the object as a right when so agreed. If the borrower who had an agreement with the owner were to lose or spoil the object, he was not liable to pay compensation (Dalager 1915:20); but today a borrower who has destroyed or lost a borrowed object must replace it. But even in the old days it could happen that a man borrowed someone else's equipment without asking for permission. If he then harmed the object during use he had to replace it (*ibid.* p. 21). It must be said that some tools, such as a hammer, blubber pounder etc., were often not common property. Such objects, which were not used all the time, could often be borrowed from someone at the settlement.

Meat gift is often regarded as a distribution system. But this is partly incorrect. Distribution systems include the *catch share system*, which ensures that several of the settlement's hunters get an economic share of a catch of a large animal, for example a small whale. Often it takes several people to kill such an animal, and normally also to tow it home. The percentage and sizes of the catch shares depend on the order in which one participates in the hunt. The person who gets the credit for the catch is the one who first harpooned or shot the animal. The others do not get the same honour, but they get an economic benefit. Their share might well be larger than that of the catcher. The first one to place a lance – the lance is first used when the animal has been harpooned or shot – gets the first part of the catch, which may be the whole hind part, which can be split in two. Then comes the upper body and both shoulders. The catcher always gets the head, offal and other remains that seem to have something to do with the animal's 'identity'. This may be related to the notion that animals would allow themselves to be caught again by a hunter who treated them with respect. Catch shares are assigned at the actual catch site. When the hunters come back to the settlement area, catch shares are no longer given. But before that even just touching the animal can confer the right to a catch share. But if the animal has been flensed at the catch site the possibility of catch shares also ceases. In addition it can cease when the catch has been put on the dog sledge. Catch shares are economic shares to which the participants in the hunt have a right. One can see this for example if one of the participants wants the skin of the whole animal. He would then have to give the other catch sharers compensation for it. At Ammassalik this catch share right is emphasized by the fact that those entitled to a catch share have the right to cut their share from the animal. Here too it is a matter of general mutual help. This was underscored by excluding fishermen from the catch shares. Normally they can make no contribution (Kleivan 1964:69).

Meat gift, on the other hand, was in principle not a distribution system. That it is a gift in form can be seen from the fact that it is taken from one household to other families without any demand for anything in return. But it is the female head of the household who decides who will have this gift: whether everyone in the settlement is to get it, or only relatives and people without supporters. In this sense the giving of meat gifts is precisely a sign of the private ownership of the catch. When several households give away meat from

their catches, the givers also receive meat gifts. The principle was that everyone who could should make their contribution. But there were normally differences in the amount one gave and the amount one received. But for some reason one never hears of those who gave most complaining about it. The most important part of the system was probably not so much to give to those who could give something in return, as to ensure that those without a family supporter got their food. Everyone was presumably aware that even the best hunter could die or lose his ability to go hunting, and in that case the family had to secure the possibility of receiving meat from others. Although in form the transfer was a gift, the function was clearly a kind of voluntary mutual insurance. There were no other kinds of insurance.

Robbery and theft are presumably concepts that could hardly be used without private ownership. Robbery was the seizure by force of someone else's property, while theft was done secretly. From the severe famine winter at Ammassalik around 1880 we have some mentions of cases of theft, both from other settlements and from housemates of the same house (Rosing 1963:109,115,118,125,127,136), which underscores how there was private ownership even in communal houses.

One could in fact imagine that the first owner could abandon his claim to a stolen object as hopeless, but we do not know whether it thus became an ownerless object, which the robber could then acquire. But theft and robbery are normally regarded as the illegal acquisition of an object. They are always spoken of as such.

Ownership and territoriality

Given the uncertainty of certain relations of ownership in terms of the lack of any formulated understanding of their nature, it is difficult to pin down the relationship between ownership and territoriality. But the question will still be discussed in terms of certain observed principles.

If we have seen a formulated understanding of everyone's right to hunt and gather resources everywhere, and yet at the same time a non-formulated but practiced first claim to certain hunting camps, this may be because people did not view the discrepancy as a conflict, and this may well be because there had been no vital conflicts over the issue.

These rights around hunting camps were not really associated with territories but with particular, identifiable points: net sites, mooring facilities, hunters' houses, tent rings, smoking chambers etc. The rights were undoubtedly associated more with the actual use than with the creation of the benefit.

There have been attempts to legalize this first claim in municipal regulations, as happened at Karra near Maniitsoq and Oqummiat (*Nalunaerutit* 1965: 36). But in this case it was an area around a river, and certain boundaries had been stated, and there was no time limit. These things seem to suggest that 'first claim' had no general legal status, but that there was a special legalization of the two hunting grounds. And this view is supported by the fact that several applications were sent to the municipality for similar 'privatizations'. These applications were rejected, and enquirers were given the answer that the municipality did not feel comfortable about the applicant's form of use. There are thus some unclarified issues related to this practice. It should probably be mentioned that all these places lay close to populated places, and this was why the permanently resident family of users wanted some kind of protection. Other more remote hunting places are simply used by the resident family without such protection. These are the places with the above-mentioned 'points', which were regarded as covered by the family's first claim.

Certain migrating resources are nevertheless very strongly associated with particular localities. In many places the *ammassat* normally spawn at particular beaches year after year, and char are also associated with particular rivers. Finally the bird cliffs and the islands of the archipelago that are used by breeding birds are highly localized resource sites.

Such localities with seasonal resources are normally shared by several settlement areas. But at the closest settlements their importance is probably that they supplement any scarcities of other resources, or can compensate for other limitations on use.

That it is the total volume of resources that one can exploit with the existing technology which evens out the local differences is evident for example from the fact that one can compare the total hunting area of a settlement with the number of inhabitants. We can see that the kayak technology with its limited transport capacity makes the distance between settlements smaller, and makes the individual settlements smaller

than the motor boat technology, which ensures that the same area can be utilized by the same number of people spread over fewer settlements. In this sense territoriality can be associated with the distribution of a group of people and the related potential for survival.

But since actual use is the condition for true ownership, one can look at two factors. 1) The first acquisition has an exclusive character. Others have no claim to an object or animal that has been taken home. 2) An acquired possession cannot be taken over by someone else without the permission of the owner. In this formulation it is difficult to posit territorial boundaries beyond the practical distances from place to place, and this issue can hardly be crucial as long as the utilization of resources does not have to be tied to fixed points in the territory. It is true that there is a legal problem here which the law is not yet equipped to deal with.

Part of the problem may be that the lack of traditional settlement leaders makes it impossible to transfer the authority. The elected leaders do not draw their powers from such leaders, and without such a local counterpart they must represent 'the population'. It is presumably they who approve the regulation by the central authorities of such areas, and this seems to be totally accepted by the population.

There was some confusion about this issue before 1970. Many people said that 'the state' – viewed as the Danish State – owned the land (the territories) in Greenland, because the state had colonized Greenland; but this mixture of acquired/appropriated sovereignty and ownership was on its way towards being abandoned when the Greenland Committee's report (G-60 1964:177) established that the land in Greenland belonged to the society, and thus paved the way for a view that distinguished between no *private* ownership and no ownership.

I would like to confine my remarks to ownership and territoriality. For there are of course certain problems associated with the land as such: the relationship of the sheep-farmers to the area and the homefield; the development value (location) of the land, which will vary whether one tries to regulate it or not; and any issues of ground rent – not least in a period when there is talk of the creation of fixed, permanent workplaces, the value of the subsoil and other interesting matters.

Viewed in terms of mobility, there have therefore been mechanisms that factually distributed people in relation to the sustaining capacity of the resources and in relation to the technology that existed. With these free movements one could of course exceed the sustaining power of the resources, as could be seen at Qulleq, with Upernavik's smallest total hunting area. It was abandoned again after four years, and in other cases people tried to alter the technology so they could supplement certain natural resources with other natural resources, or find other types of occupation. Some of these are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

Greenland has now acquired leaders at the household level, at the settlement level, at the municipal level, and at the national level. That they are regarded as distributors of the right of first use can be seen from the use of the local council to protect certain hunting grounds, and can be seen from Upernavik Municipality's reservation of the eider islands for exploitation by households; and finally from area protection and the zoning of reserved areas. But there is still no private ownership of areas.

Notes

1. In information translated into Danish it sometimes happens that an important item of information is omitted in the translation. This information (Lindow 1923:57) is not in Bistrup's text in Hansen 1971, which only says that the puppies were caught with the traces.

Chapter 4

Local communities as organizations

Upernavik

I will not devote much attention to the organization of society into households. But it should be emphasized that households have a leadership, the male and female head of the household, with a division of labour in terms of gender and age. To put it briefly, it is the job of the men to bring material to the house, and to make working implements, and of the women to make what the man has brought to the house useful right from the first preliminary work to the finished product, not least as food and clothing, and in general to take care of the children, especially while they are small.

The organization of the household was the highest form of organization in the society – that is, no one exercised any fixed leadership over the elements of society above the level of the household. This also meant that the households had equal status – none was above, none below the others, as long as we are speaking of households. There was no leadership of a settlement or of a settlement group. This might sound like an ideal society, but in fact it was not, for the ideal was non-interference in the affairs of others, and this normally meant that there was no one to smooth things over when two households disagreed.

The households had certain tasks which, on the face of it, were functionally rational: they had to reproduce themselves. The basis was a marriage, where a man and a woman became husband and wife. This was done without any ceremony: the couple moved together, lived on the same sleeping platform, divided their tasks according to gender, and acquired shared ownership of the property of the family. That they were married to each other meant that the husband became the father of the wife's children – her position as mother was after all easy to define. One can speculate over whether marriage is an interrelationship between a woman and a man or one between woman-and-man and their children, who must have a father and mother to support them, bring them up and in general prepare them to cope as adults. In communities where wife-swapping and 'lamp-extinguishing games' occurred – in the latter case married men and married women participated and had sexual relations with others than their spouses – it is quite clear that it was an attempt to make all married couples parents. One can see a certain rationality in this in the following, where the various tasks of the household are discussed.

'Lamp-extinguishing games' and wife-swapping meant, after all, that the biological father might well be another husband than the woman's, but in the bilateral kinship system lineage is not judged on the basis of the biological fatherhood, but on the basis of the mother's husband when the child is born. The incest tabu and revenge requirements apply to the mother and the mother's husband as father.

They must manage their economy, and this means all year round. They must give the children the necessary skills. They must support them so they can later be supported by them, and if necessary they must obtain justice for the family. Finally, they must participate in the distribution of meat gift as a kind of insurance so they can themselves receive it if that should become necessary.

The nuclear family and the household

In the actual description of society I prefer to speak more about the household than the nuclear family. But since the nuclear family involves elements that can be called duties and rights, it should still be discussed separately.

As mentioned above, a man and a woman are married when they begin to sleep together, establish a division of labour and obtain shared ownership of the property of the nuclear family. All three of these criteria must be met if we are to speak of marriage. Since there were also mistresses, we can say that a man and his mistress did not participate in a gender-determined division of labour, did not share ownership, and the man went home from his mistress to his wife. We have specific examples of men with mistresses, such as Aataarsuatsiaq (Nielsen 1955a:113). There are no examples of children of a mistress and her lover, so in

fact we cannot say anything about this. A mistress seems to be an unmarried woman, whenever the relationship is mentioned as anything other than a wife-swapping partnership.

Monogamy was the normal form of marriage. The missionary Østergaard spoke of 'polygamy' in the Upernavik mission area a little before 1835 (Ostermann 1936:43). But this does not appear to have been very common, so the issue of polygamy is mainly discussed in connection with Ammassalik.

Kinship extends to both the father's and mother's side, and this, as far as we have examples, is where the 'consanguineous' family can be seen – on the one hand the mother's family and on the other her husband's family. Within Ego's kindred group – which should however consist of families which are not themselves related as such – any sexual connection and marriage between individuals is inappropriate, and on the men's side an individual from the same group can count on allies against his enemies. This is what we call a revenge group. That the incest tabu exists within a kindred group whose male members form a revenge group is no coincidence. The revenge group was such an important factor in the security of the kindred group against attacks from others that it must not be subjected to any split, as might happen if sexual contacts, including marriage, were allowed. Jealousy was in fact known despite everything, including fatal jealousy, as could be seen from Iisimmartik's second wife (Rosing 1960:67), and from the story of Katiaja, who in a fit of jealousy threw a glowing wick from the lamp into a stock of gunpowder (Rasmussen 1906:121-123). Another thing that was meant to reduce disputes within this defensive group was 'cousin-teasing', *illormissaanneq,* which could involve a male and a female cousin or cousins of the same gender. This works through both verbal and practical jokes, and not always very subtle ones. But it means that such teasing can be answered with the same coin. Those involved go on teasing one another instead of getting insulted. In this way one can tolerate teasing that one might not accept if it was done by others outside the group. It is also conceivable that cousin-teasing may keep the more restless elements of the family on a good footing with the others.

But the incest tabu meant that one had to marry someone who was not close kin, so one had to find a spouse among families who were one's potential enemies. All the same one can be surprised to find that marriage was not considered as a peace treaty between two family groups. This may be related to the fact that marriages are contracted without ceremonies, and by contrast the rise of the marriage ceremonies in other societies should perhaps be regarded as based on the need for peace pacts.

Through marriage each party enters into an affinal relationship with the family of the spouse. Although we only have examples from the groom's side, we can see that the alliance of a son-in-law with his in-laws only affects everyday cooperation, which can of course pave the way for very good relations, but does not mean alliance in a situation where one is threatened by enemies. In the very few cases where one hears that two male in-laws cooperate to take revenge, this happens after an explicit offer from the brother-in-law, and it may be against a common enemy. Revenge killing and pre-emptive 'revenge' killing were accepted by the community and were quite distinct from murder in people's minds. Revenge killing is very often described as a duty.

We can get a clear idea of how affinal kinship did not create peace from the fact that hostilities and even killings could take place between in-laws. From Upernavik the story of Ikersaq and Aataarsuatsiaq, which is regarded as a true story, is a good example. It was the general opinion that Aataarsuatsiaq was a kind of serial murderer, who had also stated that he was considering killing his brother-in-law Ikersaq. Ikersaq had built up his strength, and as the threatened party he took the initiative to carry out a revenge killing. To spare his sister having to see the killing of her husband he settled the score while Aataarsuatsiaq was visiting his mistress, and Ikersaq succeeded in stabbing his brother-in-law with a knife, and the people came who were close kin to others allegedly killed by Aataarsuatsiaq, and joined in the revenge killing (Nielsen 1955a,b). This was presumably meant to reduce the risk of revenge against any individual. If Ikersaq and Aataarsuatsiaq, contrary to the general opinion, were not real people, we must presumably still – or even more – regard the story as conforming to people's sense of justice.

If a married couple should preferably not be related to each other, they still form a unity in relation to their children. This is a close relationship. The children would be unable to fend for themselves for many

years, and would need protection, and instruction in the ordinary skills they would need as adults – and hopefully also as parents to their own children. Given the fixed, gender-determined division of labour in society, they would need both a male and a female instructor. And they needed a supporter and someone who could prepare what had to be prepared.

From the parents' point of view, they were getting older as the children grew up, and in their children they had a chance of being supported in their old age. As a mother the woman would have a good chance of support in her old age, while the man's chance came with his role as father, as determined by his marriage to the children's mother. In that connection we must define provision for the aged, beyond some certainty of receiving food, also as the right to skins for clothing, material for working tools etc., which are not included in the ordinary food distribution. The difference would become clearly visible if, as single old people, they were unable to renew their clothing and meet other needs.

From the children's point of view, they have a father and mother, but often they also have siblings with whom they share their lives and many experiences, and this makes them a group. The oldest children in a family often had to assume responsibility for their younger siblings. They learned what they had to through play and small tasks performed under the guidance of their parents. Through play they often acquired strength, but they also learned to control their movements, and to form a team, and for this purpose patience is a very important virtue to learn. In particular, the boys' games with dog whips and small throwing implements enabled them to use them with precision.

These shared experiences bind the children together, and give them a feeling of belonging to a collectivity that lasts into later life, when as adults they have formed their own families, and when they grow older with their own households the daily collectivity is oriented towards the families they have founded. But when they meet again the feeling of togetherness arises again.

Within the family they used kinship terms that indicate the generational relationships – father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, father's brother, father's sister, mother's brother and mother's sister, and common terms for affinal uncles and affinal aunts. Between siblings one can hear from the terms whether the siblings are younger or older, and whether they are of the same or opposite sexes. If there are several siblings of the same sex, one can also use suffixes to place them in relation to one another in terms of age. Although the terms for the relationship between brother and sister are different, they are as a rule unambiguous.

Similar sibling designations are also used between step-siblings – often, but not always with the addition *affarmik*, that is 'half-siblings' and *tamaginnik*, 'on both sides' for those with the same father and mother. It is clear that even half-siblings must observe the incest tabu. But unfortunately there are no examples that can tell us how step-siblings/half-siblings relate in terms of being in one or two different revenge groups.

The same uncertainty can exist in the bigamous marriages where all the children are affected by the incest tabu, but where their place in a revenge group has not been clarified. The difficulty also arises if a man takes a second wife at a mature age; then the children of the first wife will be in a different age group from the children of the second wife. This may mean that they have different experiences; they are all affected by the incest tabu, but their placing in a revenge group may be different on the mother's side. But as pointed out before, I could not find concrete examples.

When the children grow up the boys will often carry on living with their parents, while the girls will often join the household of their husband. But a bridegroom who has been orphaned at an early age will live with his bride's family.

If one of the parents dies, the remaining parent will in many cases marry again. The man will justify this by saying that the children need a new mother, and given the strict division of labour it will often be considered a necessity, also because the man, as a hunter, will often have to be away from home for long periods. When the spring seal migration is at its peak, the father will go on a hunting trip in the morning before the children are awake, and will often only come home when they have fallen asleep. At Upernavik the same is true of the father during the *uuttoq* hunting towards the spring.

When a wife is widowed and her children are able to support her, she remains as the female head of the family. But if her children are still too small, she will

normally travel to her own family with the children. Here too it is demonstrated quite clearly that the children are mainly regarded as the mother's children; it also happens when the parents are divorced that the children stay with the mother. I know of only one example where a child of divorced parents lived with the father, but this was not from Upernavik (*cf.* Rosing 1946:38).

Many nuclear families arose as part of three-generation households, and some nuclear families presumably did not become independent households; but when a couple of parents became grandparents they became distinct from the others as part of a new three-generation household. If a household was to consist of four generations, the oldest couple – the great grandparents – logically enough remained with whichever of their children had last become a grandparent.

Other relatives

In a house occupied by one three-generation household, the individual lived in childhood with his or her siblings, parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts as well as male and female cousins. Some of the kinship terms have been mentioned above. But male and female cousins in Greenland had a common name, *illoq*, which applied equally to male and female cousins on the father's and mother's side, ortho-cousins or cross-cousins.

In connection with describing lineage there were names for parents, grandparents, great grandparents, with the possibility of expressing further generational distances with suffixes, and in the descending line there were names for children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, and here too one could use the same affixes to indicate further generational distances.

These kinship terms indicate that this group is something different from other co-residents at a settlement etc. A person was related to the people when the nature of the kinship could be described, and in general it was within this group that the incest tabu was found – except that there seems to have been some disagreement about cousins. Some people claim that one cannot marry a cousin, others seem to accept that it happens. Within the nuclear family there is agreement on the incest tabu. We call this the primary incest tabu. In addition it was among the males in the same group that one could count on allies when a killing had to be avenged.

Outside these groups descendants of the grandparents' siblings had a position between kindred and non-kindred. This is indicated by the fact that a form of kinship term is used, *illuusaq* or *serparneq*, 'second cousins'. This group, as far as can be ascertained, is not subject to the incest tabu, although one can glimpse differences in views; at the same time it appears that one cannot expect help from them in a revenge situation.

But in certain other connections second cousins are part of kinship solidarity. There were no lodging-houses in the traditional Greenlandic society. When one was travelling among strangers and there was a relative at the place, one could count on being able to lodge with this relative, and if there was no closer relative, one could count on staying with the family of a second cousin. But one normally stayed with the closest family member at the place. One must be prepared to lodge relatives up to and including second cousins, but not necessarily the people one had stayed with. It is conceivable that the same people, visiting one's own settlement, had other, even closer relatives.

It also appears that opinions were divided about incest prohibitions between foster-siblings. In some ways this seems to recall attitudes to incest between cousins, or in extreme cases also between second cousins. The view of the incest tabu between cousins and second cousins and between foster-children in the same family is what we call the secondary incest tabu. In general it has been said that foster-children in the same house could not marry each other or members of the foster-family, although it is often clear that foster-children within the same family were not blood relatives. But often one took in close relatives as foster-children, and in that case the incest tabu would also apply to them. There are however examples of a girl and a boy who were foster-children within the same family marrying, and this seems to have been fully accepted, when it was a fact. Nothing is said of whether foster-siblings had to be part of a revenge group. From South Greenland we hear of a foster-son who avenged the killing of his foster-father by hunting the murderers – there were many of them – one by one; but in another source it is said that this foster-son was the grandchild of the murdered man (Sandgreen 1992:37).

In a society without public care of the elderly, one aspect of the collectivity emerges here, since the chil-

dren took care of their parents in their old age. When the old couple – or the one who survived – lived as the eldest in a household, it was of course their right as heads of their household to manage the family's food provisions, and they made communal decisions on behalf of the household. But they could count on other things than food – new clothes, materials for tools, and other useful things.

In the situation where an old couple's sons and other descendants lived outside the house, the family also took care of them with gifts. But as is evident from the term, it was not so clear that this was a right to which they were entitled.

Regardless of how things turned out, the situation of old people without kin was quite different and much more miserable.

In connection with incest and the revenge group, several things have been suggested which must be clarified a little. As far as I can see the revenge group was a precondition of the idea of incest. The household had to take care of itself economically, but in a society without any external authority, it was also the household that was responsible for securing justice. While the everyday collectivity of the family changed over time, from the daily relations of childhood to the adult's collectivity with spouse and children, it would happen that the new nuclear family would take the place of the original one. Not all siblings live in the same house, nor do they all even live in the same settlement, if some of them join new households, and as grandparents they would always be members of other households than their siblings. But when they then met, the degrees of family closeness seem to have remained unchanged.

The kind of justice for which the family was responsible was that an injustice, often violence, had to be paid in kind. The responsibility for taking revenge decreased with the family distance from the victim, but between two related people it appears to have remained unchanged throughout life. The duty to exact revenge in the event of the killing of a family member is strongest within the nuclear family. A man is regarded as an avenger of a killed brother or sister, or of a father or mother. The duty to take revenge is the duty to take the initiative for the revenge action. Other relatives, not least brothers or male cousins, are expected to provide help. If other people were to provide help, they would probably do so in the case of a common enemy. On the face of it one must probably expect that a killing would not be avenged if there was no one who could take the initiative, and this may be the reason that blood feuds, which in theory could continue endlessly, in fact did not. In the event that a father had had a son killed, he would probably feel called upon to avenge him, and it was probably in such cases that revenge through witchcraft could become an option.

Blood vengeance was an account between two kinship groups, and the deaths of some people in accidents or through illness was interpreted as vengeance through witchcraft. The blood feud could therefore continue in people's minds, even though no one, or very few people, were killed with weapons.

Kindred groups and fellow settlers.

The families at Itilliarsuk. This section is based on Martin Nielsen's (Marteeraq's) memoirs. Much of them has been published by Hans Lynge (1955), a smaller part by Hendrik Olsen (1964), and an important part was published by Marteeraq himself in the periodical *Avangnâmioq* (Nielsen 1949, 1955a,b, 1957a,b,c,d,) and yet another part was translated by Søby and published in extracts in 1973. These memoirs were anecdotal in character, and they were mainly about family members who lived at Itilliarsuk. Paangu's and Quneqitooq's daughters were in fact only mentioned when they lived as widows for a short period with their brothers at Itilliarsuk. It was therefore also necessary to supplement the memoirs with information from the parish registers, the superintendent's minutes and other written information.

Marteeraq himself was born in 1883, and in the same year the family moved to Ikerasaarsuk, which was the northernmost settlement of the district, since Marteeraq's father, Niels Martin, became the catechist there. Most of the others living at the settlement were members of Paangu's, or Gabriel Aviu's family, where the oldest members, Paangu and Ane Quneqitooq, lived there with four sons, who were all adults and prominent hunters. At that time the daughters were married, and mainly lived with their affinal families outside the settlement.

It has been stated several times that Paangu was born in the Uummannaq district (Lynge 1955:19; Søby 1973:319). This information remains unconfirmed, and is based on the fact that Paangu said that as a child he



Fig. 15. Martin Nielsen, Marteeraq (center), and his family, Ikermiut, Upernavik, 1929. (Photo Frederica de Laguna).

had seen a murder in the Uummannaq district (Nielsen 1949). But since many Upernavik people lived in the Uummannaq district between 1814 and 1826 (Gad 1946:116,132), and later moved back to the Upernavik district, it is more likely that Paangu, who was born in about 1816, came from one of these families. The alleged murder could not be confirmed, since the Uummannaq parish register from then only included baptized Greenlanders.

At first Paangu and Quneqitooq lived at Kangersuatsiaq. There were two foster-children in the same house: Aviu and a girl called Sukale. She was baptized first, in 1836, and was given the name Ane, and Aviu was baptized one year later, and they married in 1838. Their first children were born in Kangersuatsiaq. A few sentences from Marteeraq himself about their Baptism, saying that "then they already had grandchildren" (Søby 1973:311) might be misunderstood, because the statement comes immediately after the mention of their Baptism. Marteeraq presumably meant by "then" the time of his own childhood, when Gabriel Aviu 'Paangu' and Quneqitooq had become grandparents; but they had been baptized back in the 1830s.

A little after 1850 they settled at Paangutsit north of Upernavik Isfjord. Only one family besides them lived in this formerly uninhabited part of the district. We do not know with certainty when they moved there. They had a daughter in Kangersuatsiaq at the beginning of 1851, and for the next daughter, who was born in 1854, Paangutsit was stated as the birthplace. The move may have been in the summer of 1853. Their new hunting area was very close to Tasiusaq, and Tasiusaq was according to the local archives rebuilt with a trade manager in 1853. Paangu's family moved there in 1860. In 1876 they moved to Ikerasaarsuk, which they left however for Itilliarsuk on the same island, where they lived together until around 1890, apart from a three-year period that is mentioned below, from 1878 until 1881.

Marteeraq's childhood memoirs are mainly about this family. The memoirs begin a little before 1890.

At that time each of Paangu's sons lived in his own

house. The reason Marteeraq gives for this – "because they were all hunters" – should however be treated with caution. This was not why each had his own house; but this was why they lived in the same settlement as their parents.

It was a slightly unusual situation for families to be using four households. The sons were married and had their own sons and daughters who were becoming adults, but none of them had become a grandparent at that time. That was not why they separated out as new households. How they live at Tasiusaq, we do not know, as mentioned before, but we cannot exclude the possibility that the eldest sons had their own houses. We know that the second-oldest son, Enok, was the *opsynsmand* or caretaker at the place, an elected member of the superintendencies (*cf. Meddelelser* 1982: p. 5, ?§5).

In 1878 Paangu and Quneqitooq moved to Uiorleq with the second-youngest son, Poul Hans, and the latter's family, as well as a daughter and son-in-law. This may be one of the reasons why the rest of the sons got their house. When the family moved back, this time to Itilliarsuk, Paangu and Quneqitooq continued to live in a house with *Poul Hans* and his family.

The eldest son, *Aron*, was mentioned a few times. On the other hand I am not sure whether the youngest son, *Severin Villads Jens*, was mentioned by Marteeraq except for once, when he mentioned a son of Paangu he called *Vitta* (Søby 1973:310). In a way this is a rather strange situation, because the other brothers were mentioned very positively. Marteeraq said that Paangu and Quneqitooq had four sons, and this was true, but he spoke of a *Tuuaaq* as their youngest son – that is Severin Villads Jens. In his later memoirs he spoke of Ludvig Eliassen,[1] one of the founders of Kullorsuaq, as a son of *Tuuaaq*, who was himself said to be a son of Paangu and Quneqitooq. It was true that Ludvig Eliassen's father was *Tuuaaq*, but he was not a son of Paangu and Quneqitooq. He did live at Itilliarsuk for a short while during Marteeraq's childhood. He was married to a sister of Enok's wife. It is a little difficult to explain this, since Marteeraq was otherwise very clear in his memoirs.

Hans Lynge clearly spoke of *Ludvig Eliassen* as a grandchild of Paangu and Quneqitooq. But in this case two people with the same name were confused.

In the fifth house lived the catechist *Niels Martin*'s family. He came from Upernavik. He was a son of Jens Tuutsingaaq and Amaartunnguaq. The grandfather in particular was mentioned anecdotally, and there are large gaps in the record. He was spoken of as a young man who lived at Qaamaneq in the Upernavik archipelago around 1830. Hans Lynge mentioned him in his account of settlements and their residents at Itilliarsuk (Lynge 1955:19). But in his Greenlandic edition in 1967 he said more directly that his mother, Ane Bolatta, had lived there (Lynge 1967:32). It has not been confirmed, and appears to be impossible, that Tuutsingaaq himself lived at the place. The next time one sees him mentioned is in the census list from Qeqertaq in 1834, and he bears the name *Jens*, married to *Amaartunnguaq* (*Befolkningsliste fra Upernavik for 1833-1834*). The Upernavik mission was started up again in 1833. What is surprising is that Lynge spoke of him as "a former heathen" (Lynge 1967:15), an expression that was normally used of people baptized as adults. In that case he could have been baptized at Uummannaq; otherwise he would have to have been one of the very first baptized when the mission was re-started. He also lived for a time at Qattarmiut on Upernavik Island. This is probably where his son Niels Martin was born in 1845. As an adult the latter became a catechist and worked at Kingittoq in the Upernavik archipelago.

Niels Martin was widowed early, and got married again, to a widow, Marie, who already had a son. Marteeraq was their fourth child, and he was a baby when the father became a catechist at Itilliarsuk. The family was not related to Paangu's family, and although the idea of having a catechist at such places was that he should teach and hold religious services, an important part of the role of the catechists in the small places was to make the population a little larger and perhaps also to bring in other people than the close relatives.

Niels Martin and his wife had seven children together, and these shared many experiences with the youngest of Paangu's grandchildren. They played a lot together, but they also shared certain tasks. One of the things that Marteeraq could remember was catching eider ducks in a pass in the middle of the island. The eiders flew through this pass on their daily migrations. The families put old seal nets in the pass, and many eider ducks were caught in them. The nets were hung such that they fell down on the ground when something was caught, and the children shared out the birds according to whose net they were caught in.

When Marteeraq described the settlement life, Paangu had become an old man whom Marteeraq remembered as an easygoing man who would tease the children now and then; on the other hand his wife comforted them.

When Paangu died just around 1890, and his wife died a few years later, two of his sons moved to two other places on the same island. This was Aron's family and Severin Villads Jens' family. They moved together with their sons, who had founded families. The other places were Ikerasaarsuk and Nutaarmiut. The hunting area was in fact the same, but the hunters were distributed better. Now the settlement had become a settlement group, but people saw a good deal of one another and the children from the three groups often played together. The population of the settlement group as a whole had in fact hardly changed compared with Itilliarsuk before the separation. Elias Enok's and Hans Poul's families carried on living at Itilliarsuk.

But there were some deaths while Marteeraq lived there. Paangu's eldest son, Aron, fell through the ice and drowned. Enok's first wife died, and he married again. His eldest son, who had become a good hunter, died too, of illness. But in the catechist's family the eldest boy shot himself by accident, and bled to death (Nielsen 1957:269), and the three youngest children died in the mid-1890s. Around 1898 Enok and his second wife died within a short interval, and the catechist Niels Martin died too in 1898 (*ibid.* p. 269).

The next summer his widow moved with her children to Tussaaq, where her brother Jan Sørensen lived with his wife, but had no children. He had an umiak, with which he fetched his sister and her children. Now the family entered into a symbiotic relationship with the maternal uncle. He could help them with various things, and in return Marteeraq and his siblings could participate as paddlers on the uncle's summer expeditions (*ibid.* p. 183). A short while after their move, the eldest boy, Kraul, was killed by an ice foot that fell down on him (*ibid.* p. 284).

Other families. When Paangu's family moved out to Itilliarsuk, an elderly widow and her daughter went with them, and lived for some years at the place. We have no information, either oral or written, suggesting that she was related to Paangu's family, or to Enok's wife, who also came from Tasiusaq. Her role may therefore have been to help with childbirths and other situations requiring assistance. I often mention the need for midwifery in connection with the fact that an elderly couple or elderly women were almost always involved in the establishment of a new settlement. There is a sense that they went along because of special abilities, for there was probably also a need for women with ordinary skills. Paangu and his sons were described as great hunters, and they all caught a good deal more seals than the average. At an isolated place like Itilliarsuk, and presumably at all good pioneering settlements, it was important that what the hunters brought in was rendered useful: the meat had to be flensed and dried, the skin had to be prepared; all these tasks were so time-consuming that the family's own female members would not always be able to deal with them within a reasonable time. A woman who was not too busy with her husband's own catch would precisely be able to make her contribution in such busy periods.

It has already been mentioned that *Elias Isak Paulus*, whom we know as *Tuuaaq*, lived at Itilliarsuk for a brief period of years. His wife, as we have seen, was the sister of Elias Enok's first wife. His own parents, Cornelius and Regine, did not live with them at that time.

But other families also appeared in Marteeraq's memoirs. A family called Kristensen also lived on the island during Marteeraq's childhood. It is not stated whether he himself or his wife were related to the others at the place. Marteeraq also mentioned a family whose male head, Taka, was said to have stopped hunting. He was married for the second time and had a son of Marteeraq's age, and since the mother often had to leave the house and help others, other children came and kept the son company. It is a little surprising to hear of a non-self-sufficient family at the outermost settlement, because Marteeraq actually spoke of them as an 'outsider' family at the place.

The more different families there were at the place, the easier it would be to find a prospective spouse there. But the possibilities were fairly limited. Paangu's grandchildren were all cousins, and in some people's opinion they should not marry one another. We do not know any more about the composition of the Kristensen family or about their relationship with the others at the settlement. The catechist's family was not related to Paangu's family; but there were no chil-

dren of marriageable age in this family while they lived at Itilliarsuk.

It was in fact necessary to find spouses from other places, so this was probably quite common. Aron married a girl who had moved to Tasiusaq, and both Enok and his first wife had moved to Tasiusaq – he himself from Paangutsit, and she from Upernavik. The catechist too was married both times to a girl from another place. It was at any rate clear that Paangu's daughters moved away from her parent's household and settlement when they married.

The situation of the widows. When Quneqitooq became a widow, she lived with one of her sons, who was the head of the household, and she went on living with the family. She appears to have 'retired' and we do not know her role within her household, whether she managed the food stores or simply enjoyed her retirement. At that time she would certainly have had no one left from her original family.

But we read in Marteeraq's memoirs that one of Paangu's daughters, Jonassine, lived at one time in her brother Enok's household, when she was a widow with small children. She had to travel to Itilliarsuk with the children; but as far as one can read, it was not very long before she left, undoubtedly because she married again and moved into her husband's household.

The same happened when the catechist's wife Marie was widowed, and the eldest son, who had begun to catch seals, had died a few years before. Since the catechist suffered from kayak-sickness, he could not give his then eldest son, Kraul, instruction in the use of the kayak, and he asked the young men among their co-settlers to give the son kayak training, but they said no (Nielsen 1957-58d:269). Marteeraq spoke of this with clear indignation. There is some indication that this was a matter of some disagreement on the nature of the exchange, and that the young hunters would only do it against payment. But Marteeraq wrote nothing about this. And in general this situation did not prevent him speaking positively of their co-settlers. At any rate Kraul was unable to support his family when his father died, and the solution was the traditional one that Marie settled near her brother at Tussaaq.

Later, when Marteeraq was able to support his mother, she again moved in with her son, and when he married a girl from Saattoq, the mother became the female head of the son's family (Lynge 1967:16).

Another of her daughters, Anina, moved north with her, but later married and settled in Kangersuatsiaq (Emanuelsen 1981).

Ammassalik

While in Upernavik district after 1880 one could assume that the people one lived in a house with were also members of one's household, it was not directly possible in Ammassalik to use the residence unit as an expression of the household unit. In the Ammassalik district the communal house was used, as we have seen, as a common dwelling unit until around 1930. In fact we could use the designation 'Greenlandic longhouse' about this type of dwelling; but as a social unit we should probably rather call it a 'communal house', that is a longhouse that is occupied by at least two households. A casual look into a communal house would not immediately tell us anything about the household structure. A collectivity that consisted of several households was a loose arrangement with no overall organization. The households that shared a communal house thus acquired channels for the exchange of food in ways that were customary between housemates. They also shared some entertainments, and other forms of sociability. The individual households in a communal house still retained their independence. As a rule, too, the house collectivity was dissolved the next spring, and in the following summer the individual households could enter into dwelling collectivities with other households, probably at a new place.

If one were to try to use co-occupancy to identify households, one could search for several years to see who remained together through different co-occupancies. Households would then consist of those who moved as a unit from house to house.

If one uses East Greenlandic name lists – from Gustav Holm's list until the appearance of regular registries – one has the problem that the names of individuals were apparently changed so that one cannot always trace a person's name from one list to the next, although the person whose name one finds later may have been alive during Holm's visit. This could of course be because the various lists of names were incomplete, but since changes in what people were normally called were by no means unusual in the Inuit

area, this is more likely to be the explanation. Quppersimaan had five different names (K'úpersimân 1982:17), Kaakaaq gave two different names, and her son Kukkujooq three different ones (Sandgreen 1987:229, 270f). Given that the same person could have different names in succession, it was difficult to identify the person in question without supplementary information. After all, information about the lineage of adults is usually missing in the oldest lists, so that one cannot identify a person by means of his or her siblings or parents. But when children and young people still lived with their parents, the parents names were cited. In some cases one could identify a youngish person from notes on age and family relationships. But Gustav Holm's list, like the first official lists of names, did not contain as much information about the names of the parents when it came to adults (*cf.* Holm 1888:185-200). One of the names that is missing from Gustav Holm's list is *Aqipi* as the name of a man from Sermilik. Since Aqipi was alive when Gustav Holm was in the area, it is likely that he had another name then, but we do not know what it was. The lists were based on the names in everyday use, and it is difficult to distinguish between original names given at birth and nicknames, since new nicknames could be used at any time.

Aqipi was a son of Nalakkaaq, who lived at Akerninnaq in the middle of the nineteenth century. Nalakkaaq died around 1875. His daughter, Kaakaaq, whom Holm estimated to be about twenty in 1884-85, must have been a big girl when her father died (*cf.* Sandgreen 1987:222f). We have no information about the name of Nalakkaaq's widow, but she was probably identical to "the widow Suitseq",[2] who died in 1884 (*cf.* Hansêraq 1933:152; Holm 1888:193).

Nalakkaaq's children were the daughters Umeerinneq and Kaakaaq, and the sons Sinngertaat, Aaviakkuluk and Aqipi (Sandgreen 1987:220).

The earlier marital situation

At that time bigamy was practiced to a certain extent. According to general information, though, there were not many men who had two wives at the same time. Although some adults had several marriages behind them, they still lived in periodical monogamy, that is they only had one spouse at a time. There are no examples of recognized polyandry.

It was said that Kunnak lived in the same platform partition with his two wives. With his first wife, Natseq, he originally had ten children. Of these only two were left around 1900. With his second wife, Qivi, Kunnak had six children. Although this in itself need not mean anything, today we hear nothing of any strife between Kunnak's two wives.

The murderer Iisimmartik had two wives in the same plank-bed partition (Rosing 1960:62). But in this case of bigamy there was often strife. This was due not only to Iisimmartik's difficult temper, but also to the second wife's patent jealousy of the first wife (*ibid.* p. 63). She persuaded Iisimmartik to be cruel to his first wife. After the latter contemplated suicide and ran away Iisimmartik had to persuade her to return, and for a while devoted more attention to her than before. The second wife had to swallow her jealousy. But later things went wrong again. It became clear that Iisimmartik was thinking of killing his first wife with the obvious approval of his second wife (*ibid.* p. 71). But he was himself killed by a conspiracy before he got that far (*ibid.* p. 81). Although bigamy was often mentioned in terms of the man's abilities as a hunter – which should probably be understood to mean that most men could not afford two wives – Iisimmartik's family life, which was generally known, might perhaps discourage anyone who might actually think about having two wives.

Violent jealousy was not unknown according to other stories too. Oqartaqanngitseq in South East Greenland had three wives. There was jealousy between them. The third wife in particular, Katiaja, was insanely jealous, and in her anger she threw a burning wick into a store of gunpowder, which exploded inside the house. The first wife died of burns, as did the husband himself a few days later (Rasmussen 1906:121).

From the Greenlandic tales we have many examples of a wife urging her husband to take another wife. We must probably assume that a wife who encouraged her husband to do this would have several children, especially sons, with him – otherwise the risk of losing him would be too great. In such cases one gets the impression that both the wives lived amicably together. But not all women cared to share a man with a co-wife. When Naaja, Tersa Kaajammat Aqipi's great great grandfather, once considered getting another wife, officially to relieve the burden of his wife Aviitsuk, she demonstrated in various ways that she did not

want such relief, and Naaja had to abandon his thoughts of marriage again (Sandgreen 1987:145). But the danger of jealousy was not unknown either.

Unfortunately my material says nothing about how the children of bigamous marriages regarded one another. We do know, however, that they called one another by ordinary sibling terms and regarded one another as brothers and sisters. The relationship might well have been just as it was between 'half-siblings', that is between children with one parent in common from two different chronological marriages. Although the children might use the ordinary sibling terms among one another, there could still be a difference between half-siblings and full siblings. There are some statements saying that a stepmother often marginalized the motherless stepchildren in favour of her own children. While the motherless children were thus 'defenceless', it was probably more difficult to neglect a co-wife's children who were also the husband's children. But as mentioned above, we lack specific information about this.

But it is certain that any mutual help through which they could keep up their interrelations would not alter the fact that children of such marriages – as much as children with both parents in common – would be subject to the incest prohibition. Furthermore, the children of their half-siblings would address them as uncle and aunt. But in connection with the 'revenge obligation' in particular, we do not know whether a father's co-wife is an 'affinal relative'.

The Aqipi family

This description is primarily based on a list that Massanti Aqipi drew up in 1969, about both the development of the household and the various settlements and fellow settlers the family had. This list is used here with his kind permission. It often had to be supplemented from the parish registers and census lists.

Around 1890 Aqipi (the father) married a woman whose name we only know as Bibeane, the baptismal name she was given in 1919. Bibeane's year of birth was estimated in the church registry as 1867, and she had a sister who was known as Beate Maqi, and whose year of birth was estimated as 1869. These estimated birth years were due to an identification in Gustav Holm's list. They may have been identical to two young girls from Ikkatteq, daughters of Kaakajik: Saaruat, who was eighteen years old in the list, and her younger sister Nakiika, who was fifteen (Holm 1888:191). These two were the closest possibilities. The stated three-year difference may be due to information on the seasons in which they were born. It was easier to get this information than the actual year.

Aqipi and Bibeane had three children, the sons Uittaraaq and Josva Paakannak and the daughter Mathilda. Around 1910 Uittaraaq married Milatteeq, and in 1914, when we could trace the development of the household, there were two sons in the marriage. They were baptized Massanti and Moses. But Bibeane was a widow in 1914 and the son Uittaraaq was now the supporter of the family. His younger brother was still too young, and their sister was then unmarried (Fig. 16).

Bibeane's household thus consisted of an extended family where the original nuclear family had been reduced after Aqipi's death. But a new nuclear family had arisen when Uittaraaq married and founded a new family. In this household there was thus one supporter for seven people. The heads of the household were Uittaraaq and Bibeane.

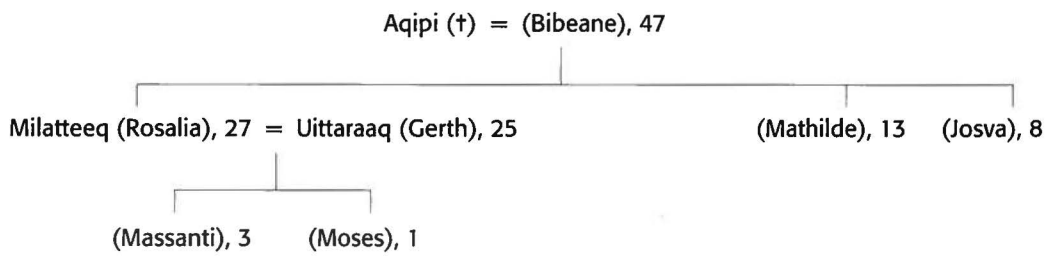

Fig. 16. Composition of Bibeane's household in 1914-15. The figures indicate their age in 1914, the names in brackets are the baptismal names given to them in 1919. A horizontal line above a row indicates siblings. A vertical line indicates lineage. (†) deceased at this time; = married to.

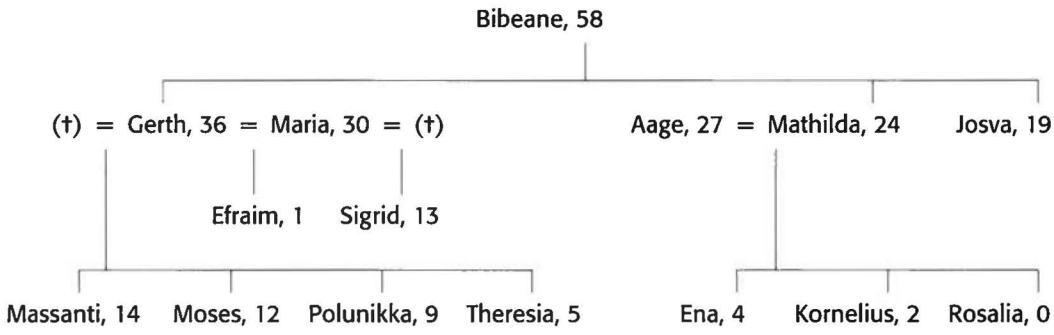

Fig. 17. Bibeane's household in 1925. The figures indicate the age of the individual.

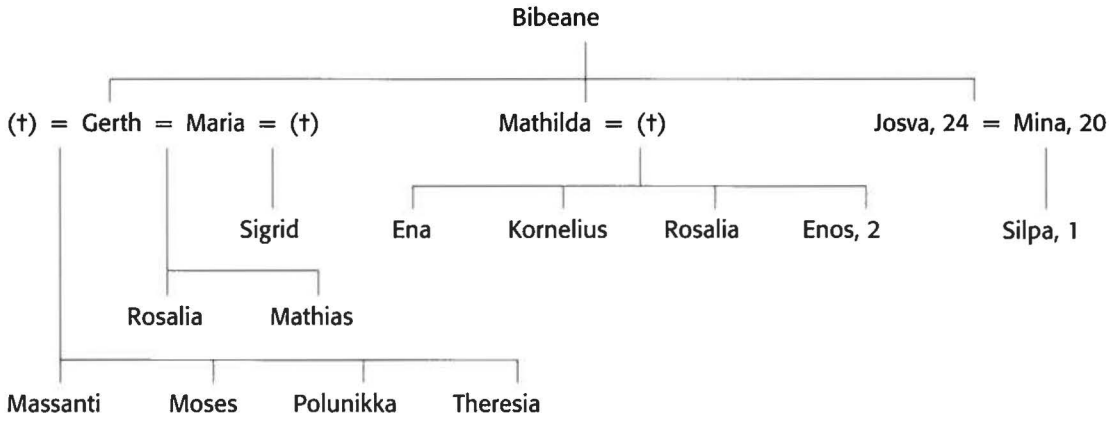

Fig. 18. Bibeane's household in 1930; Josva's and the new members' ages are indicated.

Since Bibeane's eldest son was 25, and the youngest son was eight, we must assume that Uittaraaq had been able to support the rest of the family when his father died.

This household was the beginning of what Massanti Aqipi described as 'we' and 'us'. I will point out some main features of the development of the household.

In 1922 we can register the following changes:

1) Uittaraaq and Milatteeq had two more children, Polunikka in 1916, and Theresia in 1920.
2) In 1920 Bibeane's daughter Mathilda married a young hunter, Aage, whose family had been split up on the death of his parents. He therefore settled with her family. They had a daughter in 1921. The household then had two supporters for ten members. The heads of the household were still Uittaraaq, now called Gerth, and Bibeane.
3) Milatteeq/Rosalie died in 1922, which is why there were now only ten members.

In 1923 Gerth got married again, to a widow called Marie. Her late husband had been a brother of Gerth's late wife. She had a daughter, Sigrid (b. 1912) from her first marriage. There were thus now twelve members in the household, and still two supporters. There were seven children in the household, since Aage and Mathilda has a son (Fig. 17).

The composition of the household had now become more complex. True, we still have the household we started with in 1914. But now it had become larger, and included two nuclear families. Of the two, Gerth had four children from his late wife, and one from his second wife; Marie had a daughter from her first marriage. They were now building up a new family together.

On the other hand Mathilda's nuclear family was quite simple.

Bibeane's youngest son had begun to catch seals, so soon there would be three regular supporters for fifteen people.

In 1928 Aage and Mathilda had a son, Enos. In 1929 Gerth and Marie had a daughter, Rosalia, and the same year Josva married Mina.

In 1930 Gerth and Marie had a son, Mathias. The same year Aage died. Bibeane and her three children are still the unifying element (Fig. 18).

In the meantime Gerth and Marie have lost a son, Efraim, but have now had a daughter and two sons.

On the death of Aage, Mathilda's nuclear family became incomplete. Her family could still be supported within the household, but the boys' possibilities for training as hunters were reduced.

As mentioned before, Josva married, and they had a daughter.

Gerth's eldest son, Massanti, was then 19 years old, and had in fact begun to hunt seals, so there were still three supporters for eighteen people, and soon Moses could also joint the supporter group. Thus the situation of the household was not worse than in 1914, since there was one supporter for seven people.



Fig. 19. Massanti Aqipi with bow drill, Tiileqilaaq, 1968. (Photo G.W. Nooter).

In 1932 Gerth and Marie had another son, Janus, and Josva and Mina too had a son, Aage.

The same year Gerth's eldest son, Massanti, married Tersa Kaajammat. He got married in the winter and moved in with his bride's family. The reasoning behind this uxorilocal residence was that there was most room in the house of the Kaajammat family. After the following summer they then lived with Massanti's family.

Massanti Aqipi's comment on his moving into the father's household was that he felt it was his duty to help him, now that his father, who had trained him as a hunter, was growing old, and was not catching as much as before.

The argument we could most often find in West Greenland, the young hunter's need to go hunting where he knew the conditions, would in itself be sufficient in this case, because both the Aqipi family and the Kaajammat family moved around among several settlements in Sermilik, and the young hunter's knowledge of the hunting fields would on the whole be the same, whether he lived with his own or his wife's family.

We can probably find an unexpressed reason for Massanti Aqipi's moving into the father's household in the fact that the Aqipi family's household consisted of eighteen people besides Massanti and Tersa, and without Massanti the supporters would consist of Gerth and Josva, and presumably also Moses, who could soon contribute with his catch. In Apollo Kaajammat's house there were nine people – again besides Massanti and Tersa – and there were also two supporters, Apollo and his brother Levi Imaakka.

It was thus clear that it was especially in the Aqipi family that there was a need for an extra supporter, all the more so as Gerth's catch was said to be starting to decrease.

Of the next few years it can be noted that Marie's daughter, Sigrid, married Billeam Jonathansen from Tiileqilaaq. She moved in with his family. In 1935 Gerth's second son, Moses, married Margrethe. They had some children. Massanti and Tersa had no children.

A few years later Mathilda married again.

A few more details can be given as supplementary information.

Milatteeq, Gerth's first wife, was the daughter of Kunnak and one of his wives. Her year of birth is said to have been 1887. When baptized she was given the name Rosalia. The first Rosalia died, as we have seen, in 1922, and then they had four children.

Gerth's second wife, Marie, was born in 1894, the same year as the Ammassalik colony was founded. She was a descendant of Sanimuinnaq, but not of the Sanimuinnaq who was mentioned by Holm, and who died in 1892 (Rosing 1960:89). Marie was at first married to a son of Kunnak, and with him she had the daughter Sigrid. She was, as indicated, a widow when Gerth became a widower. Marie's first husband was thus a brother of Rosalia, and Sigrid a cousin of her step-siblings. Marie herself was a sister of Efraim Sanimuinnaq, who died in 1922, and who now has several descendants in Sermilik-Ikertuaq. The first son Marie and Gerth had together was baptized Efraim. But he died at the age of two in 1925.

Tersa Kaajammat was the daughter of Apollo Kaajammat, whose father Kaajammat was a son of Kukkujooq, the son of one of the so-called great shamans, Naaja, and his wife Aviitsu (Sandgreen 1987:217).

Naaja's grandchild, Kaajammat, married Kaakaaq (*ibid.* p. 257), a daughter of Nalakkaaq, who was counted among Naaja's enemies (*ibid.* p. 220). Kaajammat was killed while young, but by then had a son (*ibid.* pp. 258, 261). This son we know under various names, including Piisui and Kukkujooq (*ibid.* p. 270f). When he was baptized in 1917, he was given the name Apollo.

After Kaajammat's death Kaakaaq got married again, to Imaakka (*ibid.* p. 265). Kaakaaq and Imaakka had a son, whom we know under the name Levi.

Kukkujooq Piisui married Ukoorajivat, who was given the baptismal name Erna. They had several children, including Tersa, who married Massanti Aqipi.

Thus Massanti and Tersa were second cousins, which meant that they were not subject to the incest prohibition.

Massanti Aqipi and his two youngest brothers gave one another some mutual help. They saw one another a good deal, and they often sailed together, and they could help one another for example fetching provisions from the food cache. But Massanti also spoke of some mutual help between himself and the brother who was closest to him in age, Moses. In fact he spoke most of mutual relations with Moses, which may be because Moses was only two years younger, while the two youngest were some twenty years younger than he was. This meant that he shared many more childhood experiences with Moses. But Moses lived for some years in a different place from his brothers, since he was a catechist in several places in Sermilik.

Of this brother he said: *"What he has is also mine. What is mine is also his"*. This meant that when they were with each other they could eat food in the house without asking for permission. According to my analysis in Chapter 2 this is a form of co-ownership which does not however confer the right of disposition. It does not give either of them the possibility of changing, giving away or selling what his brother has, only the right to use what has been brought out in the house. It is however a right that members of a household have.

Marriage and hostility among the families

Once people had become Christians, all marriages were solemnized by a church wedding, and this was the only form of marriage ceremony until a new marriage act in 1954 made civil marriages possible. Until then divorce was not permitted either.

Although the composition of the Christian families of our time in many ways corresponds to that of many families before the advent of Christianity to the area, part of the picture was different in the past. In the East Greenlandic communal society, marriage was different from casual relations in terms of several criteria: 1) a shared economy, that is shared ownership of the part of the man's catch which is not included in the shared stores of the household; 2) a division of labour; 3) shared obligations towards the children; and 4) shared plank-bed sections. This definition with its four elements is important, given that there were no special ceremonies involved in the marriage. That no particular ceremonies were held to mark entry into marriage thus plays no role for the definition of marriage. It was the rights that bound the spouses together: that is, shared property, the division of labour and the shared dwelling made their relationship a marriage, and gave the man paternal rights to the children they had in common. Moving to a sleeping-place shared by man

and wife could be regarded as a more or less tacit agreement, but it could also be accompanied by an agreement made by the man's and the woman's family. In this sense it was different from periodical wife-swapping, which is usually explained as an agreement between the two men involved. This wife-swapping agreement requires that each couple accepts the other couple's marriage. Sometimes, though, the wives involved seem to have been able to have some involvement, in some cases by initiating the idea. But there were several examples of the agreement being made by the men affected.

With such ease of marriage, it was not difficult either to be divorced. Johan Petersen for example told the story of a young man who, in the period between 1895 and 1899, got married and divorced nine times, and then married for the tenth time (Petersen 1957:57f). In most cases there were no children in the young man's marriages; however one of the divorces took place after the couple's child died (*ibid.* p. 58). The children were first and foremost the mother's children, and the father's right to the children would often depend on his continued marriage to the mother.

Nor is the role of marriage as an alliance institution simple, either for the married couple itself or for their families. In this case I use 'alliance' in a rather narrow sense, that is of solidarity in the face of a threat from an enemy.

We must however concede that marriage in a bilateral kinship system of the type we know from East Greenland gives the children relatives on both sides, and thus ensures them greater potential support, that is the above-mentioned type of 'alliance' in situations of tension.

There were examples where a man avenged the killing of a brother-in-law. For example Kuuitsi and his brothers avenged the killing of their brother-in-law Simmujooq by killing one of the murderers – that is, the one who took the initiative for the killing. The accomplice, who had only reluctantly agreed to help the killer, later made peace with Kuuitsi and his brothers (Rosing 1963:155). This revenge action, however, exhibited the special feature that there were rumours that the killer of the brother-in-law had said he would kill the eldest of these brothers, so the prospective victim, helped by his brothers, took the initiative to pre-empt this.

On the other hand there are also some examples where hostility led to a killing despite an affinal relation.

Once when Iisimmartik killed one of those present at a singing-feast, the participants fled in panic, and as they did so a boy, a son of Alitsaakkaat, who was a brother-in-law of Iisimmartik, capsized and almost drowned. By mistake Alitsaakkaat was told that his son had drowned, and the father was just about to prepare to kill Iisimmartik when he was told that nothing had happened to the son. He then refrained from doing anything more about the matter (Rosing 1960: 57).

Iisimmartik, who was not quite normal, and who had killed several men, also tried to kill his father-in-law (*ibid.* p. 62), and his brother-in-law Kilimii (*ibid.* p. 58). In the end when he said something about wanting to kill more men, including Issiavik, his brother-in-law through his second wife, these men formed a conspiracy, and Issiavik fired the fatal shot (*ibid.* pp. 72, 81). When Iisimmartik had been killed, his two brothers lived elsewhere, and both died the same year (Rosing 1960:89). Nor was it certain that they would have tried to avenge their brother, as they were both known to be opposed to Iisimmartik's murderous inclinations (*ibid.* p. 59).

Once, when a man called Angittanngitseq had killed a man, his brother-in-law Umeerinneq reproached him with this. Angittanngitseq was very insulted by this, and when he tried to stab him with a knife, Umeerinneq tore it from him and stabbed him to death instead (Petersen 1957:35).

In other words affinal relationships did not prevent fatal hostilities. In a situation where one's life was at risk one could not simply count on help from a brother-in-law. On the other hand a brother-in-law could offer his help.

Iisimmartik once tried to kill Uitsalikitseq, who had to flee to save his life. Uitsalikitseq's brother-in-law offered him help in killing Iisimmartik (Rosing 1960:41f).

Apparently there was no difference in principle between the help that a brother-in-law gave in a situation of strife, and what friends provided. We must therefore probably assume that the help a brother-in-law could provide against one's enemies was voluntary help. When this is viewed together with the stories of hostilities and killings between brothers-in-law, we can see that the affinal relationship was not in

itself 'alliance-forming' in the sense of requiring solidarity in hostilities. But the two might well have a common enemy.

Unfortunately we lack information about the situation of the children in such conflicts across affinal relations, since the affinal relation at the parents' level becomes a bilateral blood relation at the children's level. Thus we know of no examples where killings between brothers-in-laws were avenged in the next generation. Marriage was an agreement between people who were not close relatives, and they were thus potential enemies. If hostility were to continue into the next generation, it was presumably only the children of this marriage who would stand outside the hostile situation. But we lack any formulations or specific examples of this situation.

Close kinship – especially in the ascending and descending lines – was a precondition of the formulated duty to support one another in the event of hostilities. It was clear that the desire of parents to have a son was based not only on the wish to be supported in old age, but also on a wish to feel more secure. It was a popular theory that it was more tempting to kill people who had no avengers than those with sons who, as adults, could avenge the killing of their parents (*cf.* Rasmussen 1921-25:II,103). But although the sons were considered as potential avengers, a father could also avenge the killing of his children (Sandgreen 1964: 11f).

But brothers too could be avengers. Thus Naaja was urged from his childhood to avenge the alleged murder of his brothers (Sandgreen 1987:105f). They both died of stomach pains that were said to be due to witchcraft. This form or revenge obligation meant that one could take the initiative for an act of revenge when it concerned a person within the nuclear family who had been killed. When it concerned a slightly more remote relative one would be unlikely to take the initiative oneself for a revenge action; one would more likely be willing to take part in a supporting role (*cf.* K'úpersimân 1982:111f). In a case where the revenge obligation, especially the duty to take the initiative for an act of revenge, was reduced by the kinship distance, one reads of an impossible situation in the stories about Innartuaq. There was a man who had enemies, and he had considered killing his son-in-law, then bringing up his daughter's sons so they would avenge the killing of his own father (Sandgreen 1987:38). But these grandchildren would hardly feel particularly attracted by the idea of avenging the killing of their great grandfather; they would more likely feel motivated to avenge the killing of their own father. All the same, one would probably still think twice about taking revenge on one's own grandfather.

But in everyday life, especially in the communal household, brothers-in-law and sons-in-law represented economic and organizational support. Still, this did not bind them directly, as we can see, to certain courses of action in situations of strife.

The time of the communal house

We are reviewing the Aqipi family's settlement pattern in the period from 1914 to *c.* 1940. At the beginning the family lived in a longhouse which until around 1930 was a 'communal house'. In this section we will look at who they lived with, partly as co-occupants of the house ('housemates') and partly as co-settlers in the settlement. There was a high turnover of housemates, which until about 1930 was the same thing as a turnover in co-settlers, and here we will review the composition of the housemates and see whether they shared a house with some of them more than once – and in that case with whom.

The Aqipi family's dwellings and housemates

1914-15 in Innartalik. At Innartalik in Sermilik this winter there was only one house. In the house there were three households: two three-generation households, where there was a nuclear family in each, and a third household consisting of a nuclear family.

The household of Uittaraaq and Bibeane was one and the other two households were at that time Christian. The second household was that of Poul and Cecilie. Their eldest daughter, Dina, was married to Peter Pikki, and the couple had two daughters.

The third household was that of Verner Pappi and Batseba. They had three children.

No one in the other households appears to have been related to Uittaraaq, Milatteeq or Bibeane.

1915-16 in Pupik[3]. In this case the information was incomplete, and it was only possible to register 25 people, while Pupik, according to the population statistics for the area around Ammassalik in this winter, was inhabited by 35 people (*Schematiske Indberetninger fra Grønland 1917*). This was one of the very few cases

where the informant's information, written down from memory more than fifty years later, was not fully correct. But since the housemates mentioned were relatives, or closely related to the relatives mentioned, it would be reasonable to presume that the others were not close relatives. In one respect they further fit the informant's information, which states that there were "seven plank-bed partitions", that is seven nuclear families or remains of former nuclear families. In fact the informant only provided information on the people in six 'partitions', so information is lacking about one 'partition' and ten people. It would thus appear that there was one extra nuclear family in the house. In the others there were three households, comprising a total of six nuclear families. The Aqipi family here took up two 'partitions'.

In the next three partitions lived the Maqi family. This consisted of the widow Beate Maqi and her five children, then Rasmus Aavaartik, who was described as "unmarried", but was in fact a widower and a son-in-law of Beate Maqi. Also living in the house was his brother Karl Kaattuattak and his nuclear family.[4]

The next household was that of Uittaraaq's cousin, Hans Ignatiussen, who had a wife and two children as well as two unmarried brothers living with him.

The two brothers lived in Pupik, still with Rasmus Aavaartik's affinal family. He had no children, and had not married again at this time, while the brother, who had a little son, had married again. This was one of the reasons why Rasmus Aavaartik was listed as "unmarried" and the brother as "married".

In addition the two oldest women, Bibeane and Beate Maqi, were sisters. Massanti Aqipi stated that Hans Ignatiussen was his father's cousin. Since they were not cousins through Aqipi, either Hans Ignatiussen's father, Kittaaqarteq, or his mother, Kakatsakajeqaaq, must have been a sibling of Bibeane and Beate.

1916-17, Akerninnaq. The Aqipi family now lived again with Uittaraaq's cousin Hans Ignatiussen and his family. They moved together to a new place. Beate Maqi's household, and the brothers Rasmus Aavaartik and Kaattuattak, now lived elsewhere.

1917-19, Ammassalik. For the next two winters the Aqipi family lived in Ammassalik township, where they were preparing for Baptism. In Ammassalik two longhouses had been built for the families who were preparing for Baptism. They were to live there for two years. After a year one group was baptized and was replaced with a new group which was to be there for two years. The Aqipi family was one of the last families to accept Christianity.

In Ammassalik they lived in a house with families from the Ammassalik Fjord. Besides the Aqipi family only Quninngi's new family from Sermilik came. They spent the summer of 1918 at hunting grounds near the town of Ammassalik.

The family was baptized on 2nd March 1919. Uittaraaq was given the baptismal name Gerth, and Milatteeq was called Rosalia.

1919-20, Qernertivartivit. The winter after Baptism was again spent at the Ammassalik fjord, at Qernertivartivit. The family that lived there still consisted of two units, that is Bibeane and her two youngest children as well as the eldest son's nuclear family, together with two other households, which at one point consisted of two nuclear families, and a newly married couple.

Their co-occupants were Verner Pappi's family, with whom they had also shared a house in 1914-15. Pappi's family too came from Sermilik.

Besides these the house was also occupied by a widow, Julie, with her children and foster-children, who were the orphaned children of her sister. Her eldest daughter, Zenia, had recently married a young hunter called Abel, who became the supporter of the household. But he perished in his kayak as early as October.

1920-22, Kakalik. The Aqipi family returned to Sermilik, and lived in Kakalik for two winters running, more or less with the same housemates – some of whom were relatives, some of whom were not. In the house there lived three households, the first of which was again Aqipi's household, which now consisted of Bibeane and her youngest son and Gerth's nuclear family, but now his sister was also married to a young hunter called Aage, who moved in with the bride's family. In the next three partitions lived the widow Kathrine Sinngertaat with her family. Her late husband had been the brother of Aqipi. She lived in her partition with her unmarried sons, while her eldest

son, Gaba, was married and had five children. Kathrine's eldest daughter, Kristiane, was married to Juda, and the couple had three children. The last household consisted of one nuclear family, Julius Jeremias with his wife and two children. Rosalia's brother, Vilhelm Kunnak, also lived in the house.

In the winter of 1922 Rosalia died, and towards the spring Gaba died in his kayak. After Rosalia's death her brother did not live with the family again.

In the house there thus lived descendants of two brothers, Aqipi and Sinngertaat, both of whom had died by that time. Their widows were the female heads of the two households.

1922-23, Ikkatteq. According to the usual definition then, the Aqipi family lived without other housemates or co-settlers. But they were not isolated. Within a couple of hundred metres on the same island there were three houses. In one lived Justus Mathias with his household, which consisted of himself and his wife, as well as two sons and their nuclear families. One of his sons had however formed his own household, as he lived in his own house with his wife, the settlement midwife, Oline (*cf.* Petersen 1957:109,119). In the third house lived one of their relatives, Markus, with his wife Marie, and his old foster-mother, Kista. Foster-children could thus also support their foster-parents.

Justus Mathias, or Aattaaseqarteq, was the same person as Qitsikajik, who as a foster-son of Ilingivakkeeq had gone with Gustav Holm from the Ittuluartivit region to Ammassalik (Holm and Garde 1887:358). He was given the by-name *Aattaaseqarteq,* 'the Gun Man', because Holm gave him a gun with ammunition as thanks for his help. This year there was an addition to Aqipi's family.

1923-24, Kakalik. According to the normal form of registration in the Ammassalik district 37 people lived this winter in Kakalik, but Massanti Aqipi said that there were 21 people. He stated that there were "seven partitions", but the 21 people mentioned could be divided into five partitions, so there was further room for two partitions and sixteen people. The five partitions and the 21 people belonged to two households. Three partitions were used by the Aqipi family. In the next two lived Rasmus Aavaartik, now with his wife and one daughter, and his brother Karl Kaattuattak, with his wife and two children. Their nephew (sister's son), Aron, who was unmarried, also lived in the house.

As indicated above, there is no information about the relationship with the rest of the housemates.

1924-25, Nattivit. This winter there was only one person who did not belong to the Aqipi family household, Aage's 12-year-old brother Nikolaj. Nattivit was an isolated place west of the mouth of Sermilik.

1925-26, Ittitalik. The Aqipi family was now back in Sermilik, but again lived by themselves without other families. Again, though, the midwife Oline's family lived within half a kilometre. This winter two children were born in the Aqipi family.

1926-27, Tiileqilaaq. In the house in Tiileqilaaq there lived two households. Besides the Aqipi family there were Gerth's cousin Jonathan with his wife and six children, as well as Jonathan's sister Apollonia, who was a widow with children. She belonged to Jonathan's household. Jonathan was Gerth's cousin on the mother's side.

1927-29, Kakalik. For the next two winters the Aqipi family again lived at Kakalik. For the first winter they had no housemates, and could spread out over three partitions. In the second year Bibeane's youngest son Josva married, and could now have his own partition. But five partitions were mentioned, and we have no information about who lived in the fifth.

The Aqipi family now had 17 members, but in the winter of 1928-29 27 people were registered at Kakalik.

1929-30, Ammassalik township. This winter there were four communal houses at the place. In one house lived the Aqipi family in four partitions, while the fifth partition was occupied by Paula Sanimuinnaq and her four children. She was the widow of Marie Aqipi's brother. Massanti Aqipi lived in the spring at Ikkatteq. In this winter too Gerth and Marie had a son.

1931-32, Sarpaq. There were two houses in Sarpaq, each occupied by one household. In one of them lived the Aqipi family, in the other Apollo Kaajammat's household, which at the beginning of the winter consisted of Apollo and Erna and their two children, and Levi Imaakka, Apollo's brother, with his wife and two

children. Apollo's eldest daughter Ludovika, who was a widow with one child, also lived in the house. Towards the spring Apollo's daughter, Tersa, married Massanti Aqipi, and the two lived for the rest of the winter in Kaajammat's house. Gerth Aqipi and Apollo Kaajammat were cross-cousins (Gerth's father and Apollo's mother were siblings).

1932-37, Pupik. For the next five winters the Aqipi family lived in Pupik. Massanti Aqipi mentioned no housemates in this period. But both in 1934 and in 1936 according to the official registry five more people lived in Pupik than there were members of the Aqipi family. By that time it was becoming common for every household to have its own house (Høygaard 1938:86f), so it is possible that there were two houses, each with its own household.

The subsequent period. For the next two years the Aqipi family lived in Ammassalik, where there were several houses, and then they went to live in Tiileqilaaq, where there were also several houses.

The Aqipi family's housemates and fellow settlers

We have seen that in some years the Aqipi family shared a house with people to whom they were not related. Most of these 'outside' families were their housemates only once. Verner Pappi's family was the only one they shared a house with twice, once in Sermilik, and once at the Ammassalik fjord. Since they lived among 'strangers' there, this family was presumably the one they felt closest to. They also lived for two years running with Julius Jeremias' family in Kakalik. In this case we have no information on kinship. During the two winters when the family lived on the same island as the midwife, a total of three children were born.

On the other hand they had lived several times with households with whom they had kinship relations. It is probably worth noting that in several cases the actual person who represented the kinship link was dead by this time – i.e. the link was the kinship between two deceased brothers, or a deceased spouse. These cases were in 1915-16, 1916-17, 1920-22, 1926-27 and 1929-30. The in-law relationship thus led to some everyday communal relations, unless it was actually the second-generation blood tie that bound them together.

We must assume that some of the years were atypical, for example the two stays in Ammassalik and a stay at Qernertivartivit.

The recurrent feature that one only lived once in a house with a non-related household is interesting, and might suggest that such a close proximity to outside families for a whole winter must involve elements that encouraged housemates to break up – that is, all the wandering around in the days of the communal houses may be due not only to hunting factors but also to social ones.

The fact that people only lived now and then in houses with people who were not close relatives may perhaps tell us something about the communal house as a social unit. One must remember that people not only lived in the same house, but in the same large room for 7-8 months, along with people to whom they were in many cases unrelated: people with their own personalities and presumably often with their own peculiarities. Since one must not quarrel, and one could not deal with tension through singing-contests – as long as one lived in the same house – it cannot always have been equally pleasant to live in a communal house. The situation one hears about in connection with an uneasy atmosphere was that not all housemates were so good at sharing food with others. After all in a household everyone could see when one ate. This tense situation probably mainly arose among people who were not close kin, for in this situation there were no mechanisms for defusing such a situation. Among relatives, especially cousins, there was often the 'joking relationship' which could nip a tense situation in the bud.

That such a house was so common for a couple of centuries, when such tensions could arise, and could only be 'settled' when people moved away, may be mainly due to economic factors. Many people lived in the communal house, space was not wasted, so body heat played a certain role in keeping the house warm. In addition the house was larger than a nuclear family's house, so the relationship between the volume of the house and the surface of the walls was more favourable than in the small houses. We have calculated that the body heat share of the house heating in some known communal houses at the beginning of the twentieth century was *c.* 1/3 of total heat production, given the same insulation and heating to the same temperature in the house (*cf.* Krogh 1913). The saving

corresponded to about 40-150 kg of seal blubber per hunter per winter (Petersen and Rix 1987:271ff). This could correspond to 2-7 ringed seals per hunter per year (*cf.* Muus *et al.* 1981:414), and in addition there would be light and heat in the house even if some families had used up their blubber provisions.

Supplementary information on kinship and residence

We have seen examples of how people who had lost a family supporter before the children could manage for themselves moved to the household of their closest blood relative.

Among other widows and orphans mentioned during the review of the co-settlers, we heard of Mathilde, who became a widow while she lived in an uxorilocal residence. She thus remained living with her own family, but moved away when she married again. On the other hand there were two widows, Apollonia and Ludovika, who were widowed with small children while they were living virilocally, and they moved in with their original households. The basic principle here was no different from the one we saw in the Upernavik district. Unfortunately we cannot say anything specific about whether Paula Sanimuinnaq followed a different rule when she lived as a widow with the household of the sister of her late husband. It was only for one winter, and we do not know why she lived in Tasiilaq.

On the other hand Bibeane Aqipi, Beate Maqi and Kathrine Sinngertaat were each the head of a self-sufficient household when they were widowed, and they were not obliged to go back to their original households, if these still existed at this time. The widow Julie was also head of a household where her son-in-law lived with them and was the household's supporter. In addition Julie was able to have her late sister's children with her. But we do not know what happened to the family when the son-in-law died in his kayak.

We saw in the case where Gerth Aqipi and Karl Kaattuattak became widowers with small children that they married again fairly quickly. It was mentioned in that connection that this was because their children had to have a (step)mother. It is probably true that this issue counted – we can see that Rasmus Aavaartik, who became a widower without children, did not marry again as quickly as his brother, who became a widower with a small child. But this can also be related to the strong, gender-determined division of labour: families with small children needed female labour power. That youngish widows with children also married again accorded well with the fact that women who had proved good child-bearers were in demand (Dalager 1915:50). And as a hunter, the father could not stay home during the day.

When young unmarried family members were described as housemates who did not occupy a partition, this is because in general the young men's sleeping-place was the 'window bed', while the young daughters had their 'protected' sleeping place farthest back in the nuclear family's partition (Holm and Garde 1887:297).

Mobility and potential communal settlement

In the Ammassalik district it is more difficult to speak of 'co-settlers' and of a 'locality' in connection with marriages. While we had a fairly firm kind of settlement formation and a scattered summer life in the Upernavik district, in the Ammassalik district there was a 'rotating' kind of winter settlement and groups of summer camps, either at the mouth of the Ammassalik Fjord or the mouth of the Sermilik Fjord.

With good contacts at the summer camps and with changing co-settlers it was probably easier to obtain uniform norms, and it was also probably easier to find a suitable spouse among people at the same place. Thus it is said of '*Innartivarmiu*' that he found a wife with a family that wintered at his settlement (Sandgreen 1987:140-143).

Beyond this, the high degree of moving around meant that people did not distinguish so strictly between the actual co-settlers and the potential ones. In 1969 in Tiileqilaaq, for example, '*maanimiu*' meant 'someone from the Sermilik settlement group', and not someone from Tiileqilaaq as such. Thus the 'settlement endogamy' is ambivalent unless we take the whole Sermilik group as a general endogamous group.

It should be added however that although all the moving around was the most common practice, there were some families who lived more or less permanently at a place. They were often given the suffix *-miu*, 'resident of'. There was for example a Naaja from Sermilik who was called *Innartivarmiu,* 'the man from Innartivaq' (Sandgreen 1987:140), and Aaqqii from Akorninnaq (*ibid.* p. 74), Justus Mathias from Ikkatteq (Appendix 2), and Jonathan from Tiileqilaaq (*ibid.*

p. 61) in fact lived 'permanently' at each of these places.

Endogamy or exogamy: examples from two places

The examples, collected in 1969, come partly from Tiileqilaaq, partly from Iserteq.

The difference between the surroundings of Tiileqilaaq and Iserteq is that Tiileqilaaq is 'in Sermilik' (*i.e.* in the fjord valley), which has been inhabited since time immemorial, while the Iserteq area has been inhabited with certain interruptions, and the present continuous settlement only goes as far back as the 1920s.

Of 26 married couples from Tiileqilaaq, in 25 cases both the husband and wife came from the Sermilik settlement group. Among these 25, though, there was one wife who originally came from Ikertivaq, but lived for a long time in Tiileqilaaq, and was now considered local. Only one wife came from the Ammassalik Fjord. All those who came from Sermilik were described as "someone from hereabouts".

Like other new settlement areas in Greenland, Ikertivaq was populated in the 1920s by people who were interrelated, and even in the second and third generation there are many of them who in the opinion of some people are still subject to the incest prohibition. This has meant that the potential for finding a spouse within the local group in Iserteq is considerably smaller than in Tiileqilaaq. In the 16 houses in Iserteq in 1969, there were six siblings spread over six houses, either as the father or the mother. In addition there were three other brothers who were fathers in three houses. One of them was married to one of the six above-mentioned siblings. And then there were three other adult siblings, one of whom again was married to one of the six siblings.

The list includes 18 married couples, a few of whom still did not have their own house, and two families, the catechist's and the manager's, both came from Tiileqilaaq, just as the wives in both were from Sermilik.

In six cases (33%) both the spouses were from Iserteq, and in twelve cases either one or both spouses were from outside, but from the Ammassalik district.

In four cases (22%) of the locally exogamous marriages the husband came from Iserteq, while three of the wives came from Sermilik, and one from Kulusuk.

In six locally exogamous marriages (33%) the wife came from Iserteq, while three husbands had moved from Nattivit, two from Kulusuk, and one from Sermilik.

In two cases (11 %) both the spouses came, as we have seen, from Sermilik.

On Iitsalik, a nearby island, there also lived a married couple where both the spouses came from Sermilik – both were 'first-generation settlers'.

In Iserteq there is thus a striking degree of local exogamy, since only a third of the marriages were locally endogamous. The more widespread local exogamy was presumably the situation of second-generation settlers, since it was justified in terms of the close blood ties at the age level of the adult generation. But this alone cannot explain the widespread uxorilocality.

Undoubtedly the Iserteq-Ikertivaq area, as a relatively new hunting area, would be attractive to men from settlements where the hunting had been in decline for a long time. Most locally exogamous marriages in Iserteq were started around 1955, and both a surplus of girls (only one of the above-mentioned six siblings was male) and the limited possibilities of finding a spouse at the place must have necessitated the influx of a number of young people.

In this case we unfortunately cannot say whether these marriages, described as locally exogamous, took place after the outside spouse had moved to the place, or whether the new spouse had only moved to Iserteq on getting married, or possibly later. In contrast to the situation at Tiileqilaaq, these men and women were described as having come from the outside.

But as we have seen in connection with the Aqipi family's housemates, uxorilocal residence was by no means uncommon. There was Peter Pikki, who lived with his parents-in-law. He had been orphaned at an early age, so that his household was broken up early, he said himself in an interview on Greenlandic Radio. There was Aage, who married Mathilde and lived with Bibeane's household. There was the young Abel, who was the supporter in his wife's family, and there was Juda, who lived with his wife's family in 1920-22. These men all came from nuclear families that had broken up at an early stage.

From older times we also hear of Naaja's father, who lived with his affinal family (Sandgreen 1987: 38,52). In Akerninnaq, Tikkannii lived with his wife's

family (Holm 1888:193), and Kilimii lived with his wife's family when Iisimmartik attacked him (Rosing 1960:59f).

Uxorilocal residence seems to have been considerably more common in the Ammassalik district than in the Upernavik district. This can probably be related to the fact that people in the Ammassalik district moved more often to new settlements, so that the men were less tied to a single hunting area. But at the same time there is a tendency in the examples about which we could get information for young men whose household was split up early by the father's or the parents' early death to live with their affinal family. In the case of strong uxorilocal residence, however, we see another possible explanation, since the sons-in-law at Iserteq had moved from places where hunting was in decline to this relatively untouched hunting area. In addition ice-hunting was rather less important in the Ammassalik district than in Upernavik, since the kayak was also often used in the winter. There is no doubt that ice-hunting in the winter requires thorough knowledge of the local ice conditions, and this reinforces the tendency towards virilocal residence.

Neither in Tiileqilaaq nor in Iserteq did one find district-exogamous marriages. There were neither East Greenlandic-West Greenlandic marriages nor Ammassalik-Ittoqqortoormiut marriages. One girl from Iserteq was however married to a Dane, and in 1969 lived in Fredericia, Denmark. The Danish-born trading post manager in Tiileqilaaq was married to a girl from Sermiligaaq.

Settlements with a single household

Oddly enough it is more difficult in the Ammassalik district to find settlements inhabited by a lone nuclear family than in the Upernavik district. This is partly because the decision on the next winter settlement was earlier often made as an agreement between several heads of families. But it probably also played a role that the break-up of one extended family was often involved in the development of another extended family. Uxorilocality was not rare in the area either.

But there were a few examples of isolated households. At Kangaartik in the Ammassalik Fjord in 1915-17 a nuclear family lived, and this was probably also the case on Suunaajik in 1934-37. At Sarpaq in 1942-43 Josef Kaajammat's nuclear family lived alone.

Around Skjoldungen in Uummannat a nuclear family lived in 1949-50, and there was one at Iittivarmiit in 1952-53.

From 1952 Massanti Sanimuinnaq's nuclear family lived at Iitsalik. The children, however, settled elsewhere when they married.

These primary basic settlements – inhabited by a family without co-settlers – were all in the permanently inhabited part of the district. Apart from Iitsalik, the places were only inhabited for a brief period of years. At none of these places did the family develop into a three-generation family – that is, the settlers left them before the nuclear family became an extended family. Outside the permanently inhabited part of the district we have no examples of a primary basic settlement. People who already lived in isolation preferred to avoid further isolation.

The primary basic settlements mentioned lay in close proximity to other inhabited places. There is for example only a sailing time of quarter of an hour from Iitsalik to Iserteq, although each lies on its own island. Sarpaq lies about 2 km from Tiileqilaaq.

Our interest in looking at the primary basic settlements has to do with the development of the households; consideration of the issue of nuclear families or extended families as economic units is less interesting here. It is probably more interesting to look at the relationship between the number of supporters and the rest of the family members.

Primary basic settlements with extended families also occurred. We found them among the Aqipi family's settlements, without co-settlers. Kukkujooq and his mother's family lived on Qeertaalaq around 1910 and 1915 (Appendix 2:294). The Maqi family lived alone as an extended family at Kakalik from the middle of the 1930s until 1947, and then at Akerninnaq until 1957 (Appendix 2:216, note 100f.). The Maqi family also wintered at Umiivik in 1960-61. The places mentioned were all – except for Umiivik – in the permanently inhabited part of the district.

In earlier times primary basic settlements were also found in isolation, at least for one winter at a time. Maratsi's family wintered at Kangersuttuatsiaq in 1905-06 (Petersen 1957:90). In 1912-13 some families wintered at Kialeeq, while a single household spent the winter at Kangersuttuatsiaq (Petersen 1957:116). None of these places outside the permanently inhabited part of the district was inhabited for more

than one winter at a time. All the primary basic settlements that were occupied for more than one year lay in the permanently settled part of the district.

But the distance from a primary basic settlement to the neighbouring settlement was not so great in the permanently settled part. When the Aqipi family lived at Nattivit, the distance from the inhabited areas was however 30 km on each side. But Nattivit is on the route between Iserteq and Sermilik-Ammassalik. When Kakalik and Pupik were occupied simultaneously, the distance as the crow flies was 5 km, but across the Sermilik Fjord. When Pupik was depopulated, Kakalik came to lie about 12 km from the closest settlement. The rather isolated Qipa was only occupied simultaneously with Innartalik and Qeertartivatsiaq, about 15-25 km away.

While the winter life could lead to isolation, especially for women and children at such small places, the summer was the time for gatherings.

When the *ammassak* (capelin, *Mallotus villosus*) began to spawn, almost the whole population of the district gathered at Qinngeq in the Ammassalik Fjord, where the *ammassat* were caught.

When the big hooded seal hunts began in July-August, the population of the fjord valleys gathered in two large camp areas. People from Ammassalik and Sermiligaaq met on the islands around Kulusuk, while people from Sermilik and Ikertivaq gathered on the Ikkatteq-Aammaat island group.

At such camps people lived in tents, each of which as a unit contained a 'tenthold', in many cases congruent with a household. But since the tent camps were close to one another it was easy to get together. In such camp groups there was also some bartering (Appendix 2:295), and some social functions were held there, for example singing contests.

Factors contributing to the unity of the settlement

Common concerns

In much of the period with which we are dealing in East Greenland, hunger in the winter was a real possibility. The nature of the products meant that even the most industrious people had to start from scratch every summer when they had to gather winter provisions. The possibility of scarcity and famine must always have threatened in the background, even if people did not talk about it.

When the older East Greenlanders spoke of a place where they did well they would almost always add that the hunting was good, and that their health was good there. For people who enjoy economic security it might sound rather materialistic that being satisfied was almost always associated with good hunting. But one must consider that people shared a concern about the real danger of famine, and every good catch therefore had the extra dimension that it helped to ensure the continued existence of the group. People were one another's support and one another's economic security.

From East Greenland examples have been seen where a period of famine divided people and split up families (Rosing 1963:107-151), but it also mobilized a great deal of solidarity during the poor periods (Hanseeraq 1933:153; Rosing 1963:150-151).

Grief too came to the small places. In 1922 in Kakalik there were two deaths that affected the settlers deeply. In one case a mother with small children died, and in the second case a family supporter died (Appendix 2:283). In 1919, in a kayak at Qernertivartivit, a young hunter died who was the only supporter of a large affinal family. The grief and worry of those he left behind could only affect other housemates, and such a common fate had to tie people more closely together. Later the widow, if the children could not support her, would have to resort to one of the households of her siblings (*ibid.*: 279).

General distributions of food

For practical reasons the meat gift distribution took place within the framework of the settlement. A settlement was thus a kind of insurance unit. In the days of the communal houses the 'distribution' often took the form that the men ate together when the head of a household invited them. Then portions were distributed to the women and children, who ate on their platform sections.

Unfortunately we do not know how common the communal eating of the men was after the individual households each got their own house, so that there were several houses at the individual settlements: whether it was a daily occurrence or was only done on special occasions. On the other hand the distribution of portions was still common.

Friends, and especially relatives, were often invited to a nearby settlement to come and taste good food. Johan Petersen, Ujuaat, who was Ammassalik's first colonial manager, once complained that hunters who came visiting this way did not first inform their families at home that they would visit and spend the night at another place. They were often lamented as having been killed when they did not come home in the evening (Petersen 1957:49). This shows clearly that one was expected to come home the same day from the settlement's everyday hunting grounds. In all these forms of distribution there was a kind of general reciprocity where it was probably expected that one would receive the same treatment from the others. In the everyday distribution of food in particular, it was also distributed to people who had no real possibility of giving anything in return. Thus the giver could also expect to participate in the ordinary distributions one day when he or she could no longer make a contribution. This form of distribution, as already mentioned, is a kind of gift-giving, but functions as insurance.

Besides the ordinary distribution of food, in the communal house there could be another general kind of reciprocity – when for example one gave skin for boot soles to someone who needed it. If the receiver was able to give something in return, one would probably not ask for any immediate payment. But one could ask for something in return if the receiver did not have the same possibility of paying back what had been received, whether because the person in question had no supporter, or was only visiting and normally lived so far away that there would be practical problems returning the favour later.

One could to a certain extent see the same kind of reciprocity in connection with services. When it came to reciprocity with goods, the two parties would probably be equal as long as the receiver was associated with a household with its own supporter. But in connection with reciprocity with services, it also seems to have played a role how many participants one could bring to the work. One informant said that both he and his wife frequently participated for example when others' umiaks were to be repaired, but that they often did not get help from the others when their boat had to be repaired. It would appear that families with more participants in the work calculated in terms of a kind of balanced reciprocity.

At such a little place people got together quite informally, although there were also formal gatherings. People could visit one another without further ado, and this was made easier by the fact that no fuss was made about such informal visits. If people had gone to bed when one came, they did not in fact need to get out of bed, so such visits were not regarded as a great inconvenience for the host family either.

When strangers came to visit, they were entertained more formally. As long as they were regarded as strangers they were treated quite formally. The same was the case if strangers arrived and the local people visited them.

When a settlement grew somewhat, the daily relations throughout the settlement would decrease, and thus it also became more difficult to keep visits informal. Although the co-settlers did not actually become strangers, others than one's close family would be entertained with certain formalities. Some food, coffee and tea would often be involved as entertainment.

The above-mentioned communal eating in the communal house of course contributed to the sense of community simply by gathering people together in a way that would give them a certain shared satisfaction. But as the experiences of the day were recounted and discussed during such a gathering, it would contribute to shared communication among the hunters of the settlement (*cf.* Rink 1866-71:I,178). The boys who participated in such meals had the opportunity to hear about the various details of the hunting life. Thus they also functioned as a kind of theoretical introduction for the young hunters. It is also quite conceivable that such common meals and exchanges of experiences made it possible for different households to agree throughout a whole winter without being able to appeal to any superior institution.

Just as the shared meals of the communal house channelled communication between the households, the invitation of people from the neighbouring settlements would certainly have passed news between the settlements.

Links between the settlements

Some of the above-mentioned men's visits to the neighbouring settlement were earlier made either by kayak or on foot, but in more recent times in the winter usually by dog sledge (Appendix 2:294). This may

of course be because today there are fewer settlements in the central part of the district, and thus the distances between them have become greater.

There are also several indications that dog sledging increased in the twentieth century. But from Ammassalik too we hear of hunters without dogs, for example Apollo Kaajammat for a period (*cf.* Appendix 2:294), but not all the time (*cf.* Sandgreen 1987:401). Justus Mathias from Ikkatteq also liked to go out on foot.

But it was the men who kept up this kind of connection in the winter. The women normally did not have proper winter travelling clothes, because they rarely travelled in the winter. They were very tied to their locality in the winter. Only on special occasions did they go to other settlements, for example when there was a song-feast (Appendix 2:256), and the distance was not so great. On longer trips they might be exposed to dangers, like Akku's two wives, whose lives were endangered during a trip to a song-feast (Hansêraq 1933:134).

From isolated settlements, which still did not lie too far from the permanently inhabited part of the district, people could come in the winter to a place with a shop to supplement their provisions. When no one had heard anything about the fate of the families since they had left in the summer, there was great interest in such visits. For example Maratsi came from Kangersuttuatsiaq in the winter of 1906, arousing great attention (Petersen 1957:90). People from Pikiitti also went in the winter to Iserteq (Appendix 2:307), and after Pikiitti had been settled, people could even come in the winter from Umiivik to Iserteq via Pikiitti. Pikiitti was uninhabited in 1998 (Madsen 1998).

Links between the centre and isolated places

I have mentioned that people in the isolated settlements which did not lie much too far from the permanently inhabited part of the district could themselves keep up contacts with the closest settlements. But people from Iserteq could also go on trips to the area around Pikiitti (Appendix 2:306f.).

At places that were even farther away, the isolation was formerly complete. The family heard nothing about the fate of those who had gone away between the time in the summer when they left and when they came back the next summer. In the same way those who had left did not themselves know how things were with the family back home. It was always exciting to hear news, and all the more pleasing when the news was good.

There were people who did not return from such winterings, and were only found dead several years later. One of the known examples was the 'dead house' in Nuuaalik, 'Dead Man's Point' (Petersen 1957:84). These people were later identified as Maratsi's cousin and his family. In 1913 at North Ikertivaq a house was found where all the occupants had died. The conclusion people arrived at was that it must be Niitaq's family, who had gone off some years before (*ibid.* p. 116f). There were also those who went off and were never found again, as happened to Kunitsarpik's family in South East Greenland, although Knud Rasmussen's presentation of the story was coloured by his source, Kunitsarpik's opponent (Rasmussen 1930a:114).

Although there were other similar cases, I will still claim that they were the exceptions and that wintering in isolation was as a rule successful – that is, as a rule there was good hunting and as a rule people stayed in good health. Some of those who were dead when they were found in fact had some winter provisions in their caches, which suggests that they did not die of hunger.

But there is no doubt that the fact that one did not hear from those one had left behind – and from those who had gone – created strong concern. One could sense for example that the news from Maratsi's successful wintering greatly interested people (Petersen 1957:96).

In recent decades people who had to winter in isolation have been able to take radio receivers with them. Thus they could still hear news from outside, and even from home. They could also receive radio telegrams. While the isolation of those who had gone off was thus significantly ameliorated, the situation was on the whole unchanged for those who had been left behind. Normally they did not have the possibility of hearing news before those who had departed came back the next summer.

Occasionally, though, news came when someone had been on a visit to weather stations. Some of the things that were understood as people being in distress from such contacts were due to the fact that the expression which in West Greenlandic meant 'to be in distress' meant in East Greenlandic that they simply needed something, for example fresh meat, tobacco or the like. In 1969 the news came that people on

Nuuaalik "were in distress". Air drops of food supplies were arranged. In the summer it was realized that it was tobacco and soap that had run out. But of course such news helped to ensure that people wanted to hear more news.

This sense of uncertainty may be one of the most important reasons why isolated settlements were abandoned again after one winter. Then those who had left returned to the central part of the district. Only through the formation of a large isolated group – for example Skjoldungen – was this urge to return reduced. But after 1965 it also happened at Kangersuttuaq that the place was used every year, but with new people from year to year, such that the small groups in this case too returned after one winter.

Some types of links among households

Wife-swapping

In East Greenland there was formerly both an occasional type of 'public' wife-swapping and a private type. The 'public' type, the so-called 'lamp-extinguishing game' was connected with shamanism, and could thus be regarded as a fertility rite. One of the examples was doubtful, however: a boy once wanted to demonstrate his skill as a 'shaman imitator', but discovered to his chagrin that the adults had used the putting-out of the lamps to engage in sexual liaisons (Holm and Garde 1887:312). Holm, however, represented the lamp-extinguishing game as something that was primarily related to visits from the outside. A marriage might result from a lamp-extinguishing game (*ibid.* p. 328). If a child resulted from such a liaison, the lineage of the child was counted from the mother and her husband.

But private wife-swapping was also known from the Ammassalik district. Sammiooq and Amatsinneq, for example, were such partners. And Mitsuarniannga and Kiki exchanged wives (Petersen 1957:48). By all indications these wife-swappings took place amicably.

Iisimmartik and Attiartortoq swapped wives too, each paddling by agreement in a kayak over to the other's wife. Not much time passed before Iisimmartik fell out with Attiartortoq. They stopped swapping wives, and Iisimmartik even tried to kill Attiartortoq, but gave up when the latter made ready to fight (Rosing 1960:43f). Later the two men were reconciled and began swapping wives again (*ibid.* p. 46). Or was it 'husband-swapping'? If the object was to make all married women mothers, it was presumably the husbands who were swapped.

Although it is difficult to draw a conclusion from the case of Iisimmartik, who had a difficult temperament, this might indicate that wife-swapping in itself was not an effective means of keeping friendship intact, although wife-swapping was in fact regarded as a sign of a friendship between two men.

The social role of the name

The naming custom and the idea of the name soul that passed to the child who bore the name of the deceased was more or less the same in West and East Greenland.

Nevertheless, there were perhaps certain differences. There was a story about Nikki, who allegedly died as a result of his own witchcraft (Rosing 1960:76-79; *cf.* Petersen 1964:76). When he died a long time passed before any child was named after him; only two years later was a child given the name Nikki. Once, when the family did not participate in a singing-feast, the name soul wanted to leave the child, and the father had to shoo it back into the child. The old Nikki was known as a skilled, keen feast-singer (Rosing 1960:84-86). In this story the name soul has retained its old consciousness. Whether pleasure in singing was one of the features that was passed on through the name has not been confirmed.

But the story was atypical, because here the name soul was regarded as a being that could leave the child to cultivate old interests, and was viewed in a magical-religious way, not the social way that seems to be the normal view in everyday life. This can be seen from the fact that many children were named for deceased people. The social connection greatly recalls the West Greenlandic view, but in many cases repeated use of the same name can make it difficult to calculate which of the people with the name one is dealing with.

Singing-evenings and song-duels

In East Greenland, too, we must distinguish between the actual singing-duel, *'iverneq'*, and the informal singing evenings where one might well sing against someone without a prior challenge and without special host obligations.

Tappinngaajik's husband left her and their chil-



Fig. 20. Singing duel, Iverneq, Ammassalik Fiord, 1906. (Photo W. Thalbitzer/Arktisk Institut).

dren for a younger woman. Later he fetched their winter provisions and took everything to his new settlement. In the winter he died. The next summer there was an evening when people stood up and sang whichever songs they wanted to. Tappinngaajik used this occasion and performed a song she had composed. It was clearly aimed at her late husband's new widow, who had also had a child by him. She asked in the song whether it was a pleasant thing for her to be left with an unsupported child. The song is called an '*anersaat*', a type of song that could be used on various occasions, for example as a preliminary song in a proper singing-duel (Rosing 1960:28f; 1970:30; Hauser and Petersen 1985:16). This song form, which is used to point out or complain about something one wants to criticize, corresponds to the West Greenlandic '*ileqqorsorneq*', which is different from the East Greenlandic song of the same name (*cf.* Rosing 1970:22), with which one can give vent to one's vexation. The singer could gain a certain satisfaction, and since the 'victim' could respond with a new song, such criticism could become an exchange of songs instead of a proper duel.

The true singing-duel, *iverneq*, is probably best known from East Greenland, partly because we have the best eye-witness accounts from there, and partly because most of the actual duel songs we know were written down in East Greenland. But in general it is reasonable to assume that the basic rules of the singing-duel were the same in East and West Greenland. The rules of the singing-duel required that one sent a challenge to one's opponent. The challenger had to come with followers and had to be entertained as a welcome guest by the opponent. During a singing-duel people had to wear new clothes. Two singing partners could challenge each other alternately. As an important rule it is also said that two people who participated in the same singing-contest must not have other disagreements at the same time.

The singing-duel was a mechanism that was used to settle disputes between people from different settlements in a peaceful way. It was perhaps more a negotiation between two parties than a real 'legal action'. The object was not to compensate someone who had been wronged. But it was effective in preventing a tense relationship between people from developing into actual violent hostilities. Although the reason for the singing-duel itself had to be mentioned, it was not certain that the main emphasis would be on it.

All the same it would be reasonable to regard the singing-duel as kind of legal action.

- In the first place it was important that people who had some kind of disagreement would present the 'case' in a public assembly.
- Secondly, in this way it became possible for the details of the dispute to be brought up directly by those implicated, and not just be heard about as rumours.
- Thirdly, the two parties would have their ad-

herents with them, who would thus be confronted by one another, and could hear both parties' view of the matter.

- Fourthly, there were preliminary songs that brought up earlier 'cases' as a kind of reminder.
- Fifthly, there were very fixed rules of procedure and one could hardly break these rules without risking turning the mood against one.

But it must be emphasized that this very form would in many cases make it difficult to speak unambivalently of a winner and a loser, not least because one could in fact continue the singing-contest the next year (*cf.* Rosing 1970:88). But in this way the singing-duel could also develop from a conflictful situation into a friendly contest.

It is also difficult to speak of winners and losers when both parties received both praise and mocking laughter. It would be quite human if each opponent paid more attention to the applause he himself was given and the mocking laughter the opponent received than vice versa. Each could thus leave the scene with a feeling of having 'won'. Perhaps this was the very thing that made the peaceful staging of the singing-duel possible. It is also another reason for calling the singing-duel a negotiation – because both parties got something out of it.

Some people have thought it is doubtful whether the singing-duel can be called a legal confrontation, because in some texts it is clear that it was more about ridiculing one's opponent than singing about the actual disputed issue. But the same people could say that ridicule was a very serious 'punishment' in the Inuit society. This ridicule in fact has a point in a singing-duel. That this could lead to friendship could perhaps also be compared to the cousin-teasing, which was meant precisely to counteract exchanges of real insults.

It has been said in East Greenland that a man who felt that someone was seeking to kill him could save his life by challenging his 'enemy' to a singing-duel. Since opponents in a singing-duel could not have other disagreements at the same time, someone who was actually thinking about murder would have to abandon the idea if he accepted the challenge to a singing-duel (R.P. field note 1961). In addition it was generally said that two singing-duel opponents became good friends in the course of the process.

While we found examples from the Upernavik district suggesting that two relatives must not engage in a singing-duel against each other, although no such prohibition is explicitly formulated, it was permissible in East Greenland for two fairly close relatives to have a singing-duel between themselves. Thus Akku's second wife, Ammalilik, challenged her niece to a singing-duel (Hanseeraq 1933:134).

On the other hand it could hardly happen in the Ammassalik district that two people of different sexes could engage in a singing-duel against each other, as happened in the Upernavik district (Nielsen 1957b: 201).

The singing-duel was also a confrontation of two opponents who were in principle equal, and who were willing to subject themselves to peoples' expressions of opinion.

If singing-duels were not held between two housemates or two people from the same settlement, this might of course be because if they were, one would not be able to prevent one's opponent hearing one's version of the issue at a far too early juncture. This would weaken one's chance of a successful, surprising presentation of the songs. Another, probably more important reason is that preparations for a singing-contest between two housemates could very easily split the housemates into two opposing parties. The tension could not be resolved before the actual singing-duel took place, and this would be such a long-lasting process that it could destroy all domestic peace. That singing-duel opponents lived at different settlements still did not mean that the singing-contest was a confrontation between the two settlements. It was a match between two people. In a singing-duel someone else could represent one of the parties (Rosing 1960:29-31), but not the latter's settlement.

Similarities and differences between the two districts

The gender-related division of labour

It is not really my intention to deal with the division of labour within the family according to gender. But in the life of the Greenlandic hunter's family there is a certain fundamental point in the separation of the man's and the woman's tasks, and it is possible that the organization of the family, and on the whole the

use of marriage as a basis for family formation, have arisen from this division of labour.

It is a very important consideration that the children in a marriage will be unable to support the family or themselves for the first 15-20 years. They must have food and clothing, and they must be instructed so that as adults they can become active contributors to the maintenance of their families. Since there are no professional teachers in such a society, they can only receive instruction from a female and a male family member.

In the life of the hunter it is important that he may leave the family to go hunting, and may be away a whole day or even several days. Although in the good season he normally lives with the family, many days can pass without the children seeing him, as mentioned elsewhere. For these reasons he is of no use in looking after the children, while they are still small and need looking after. It is his wife's task to suckle the babies – the husband is no good at that – to ensure that they have clothing and food and to see that they are not exposed to risks where they cannot be helped and taught about the dangers.

While the husband goes out and comes home with his catch, which can be used for food and clothing, the wife's job is to turn them to use with the tools her husband can make for her.

The mother and the father are the best people to show the children how they can do their own tasks. The parents and older siblings must give them the opportunity to play so they can train their muscles, strengthen them and control them, and through these games the children can also learn cooperation and endurance.

The parents are also motivated by the fact that when they are old they will not be able to cope with the various tasks, but must have support. And in societies without facilities for care of the elderly, is it the family's duty to ensure that the elderly members have a relatively secure old age.

The division of labour according to gender is very widespread all over the world. It is highly functional among hunting peoples, and probably to a certain extent among some of the farming peoples too. This way they also create the preconditions for marriage as the basis of family formation in societies without professional instruction in dealing with tasks, since not only the boys, but also the girls must receive instruction at home, from their father and mother.

Family units – household units

The independence of nuclear families was not a matter of course in the two Greenlandic communities. A nuclear family consisting of father, mother and children plus any foster-children (*cf.* Murdoch 1967:1f) could earlier appear as an independent unit at some point, but often developed into an extended family (*cf. ibid.* p. 2), which could consist of:

1) a nuclear family with a sibling of one of the parents plus the sibling's nuclear family,
2) three generations consisting of an elderly couple with their children and the children's spouses and children

We call a family, either an extended family or nuclear family, who are housemates and who form an economic unit a household. There were quite certainly nuclear families who did not at any time form an independent household, but started as members of a household, and later developed into a new extended family in a new household.

Of course deaths also occurred during the development of these families. There could also be divorces. If one of the spouses died, or if the spouses separated, we would get an incomplete nuclear family, that is a family that has been reduced to less than the father-mother-children size. If one of the spouses dies and the surviving spouse marries again, we again get a nuclear family, even if both the spouses bring children into the marriage, and have further children with each other. The man to whom the mother is married when the child is born is regarded as the father of the child. The man who, after three years' absence, comes home in Arctic Canada, and looks forward to being a father the day before his arrival is not really as funny as he is often made to seem (*cf.* Rasmussen 1934:40f).

This social father-role entailed certain rights and duties, for example the father's role as raiser and instructor of the sons, and their role as supporters in his old age. That people were still aware of the biological father role can be seen from the wife-swapping forms that were known. That a child might now and then be 'the spitting image of his father' was also well known.

An extended family could be formed when a sister of one of the parents became a widow and became a member of her sibling's household, whether she brought children with her or was childless.

But in a hunting society like the Greenlandic one the extended family was most often formed when a child of the nuclear family grew up and got married and his or her spouse moved in with the family and they had children.

Finally, one or both of the grandparents could die. The individual nuclear families might then remain together for some time. But the original extended family might now perhaps either be broken up into nuclear families or develop into new extended families. A common type of development could however mean that a person from the original family's children and this person's spouse became grandparents, and separated out as a new three-generation household. In such a development the oldest couple would logically often end up with the son who had last become a grandfather. With the decided virilocality of these hunting communities it was often the daughters who moved away on marrying. A daughter was thus in fact an 'investment' in favour of other households.

If the children's parents died before the eldest children could support the family, the group of siblings would be scattered as they gradually got married. Even brothers could often come to live with their wives' families. But if the oldest couple died before any of their children became grandparents, their extended family would probably be broken up into a number of nuclear family households.

While it was difficult to collect examples of true bilocality, alternate stays with the families of both spouses, it was not unusual for a new married couple to live first with the family of one spouse, then to move in with the other's family from the next season. The change often took place such that the new couple first lived with the bride's parents for the rest of the winter in which they married, and moved in with the husband's family from the next summer. It would appear that in cases of marriage in the winter they had to see where there was most room.

In the event of a divorce the children generally belonged with the mother, and only in one exceptional case is it said that the child of a divorced couple lived with the father (Rosing 1946:38). If the father died, of course, they belonged with the mother. In fact it was only if a man became a widower that he could keep his children with him. The mother's right to the children thus clearly took precedence over the father's. This can probably be related to the informal type of marriage that was practiced. Husband and wife moved together and became an economic and labour-division unit.

An extended family could therefore also consist of a husband, his wife and their children, as well as the father's or the mother's sister with her fatherless children (or children of a divorce). Such close kinship was however not a condition of acceptance in the household of relatives. If a lone woman with small children did not have siblings, she could be accepted in a cousin's household. From Sermilik there was an example of a lone woman with children being admitted to a niece's household (Appendix 2).

An extended family was usually restricted to a lineal three-generation family. But we will regard this unit as an egocentric unit – that is when speaking of such and such a generational distance we will not be focusing on Ego's ancestors, but simply indicating which generation from Ego we set as a limit; thus without a more detailed definition one would be able to give an account of the generations that came from Ego's own great-grandparents, and from Ego's own generation one would also be able to give an account of kin down to the fourth generation.

An extended family of three generations, provided it also forms a residential unit, will also be an organizational and economic unit, that is a household. There was an incest prohibition between siblings, and between parents and children. In eighteenth-century West Greenland breaches of these norms were very rare, and were clearly not accepted by others (Dalager 1915:50). Between cousins marriage is undesirable for some – and one could in fact also speak of an incest prohibition if it were meaningful to speak of a 'prohibition' in a case where one could do nothing about it if it was infringed. But what was regarded as right and wrong can still be discovered by listening to what people pointed out in ordinary conversations – also when those mentioned were not listening. At any rate incest was unwanted. Some people in fact also had a negative opinion of marriages between second cousins. This could possibly be because certain groups of Inuit used sibling terms for certain cousins, in a system of the so-called 'Hawaiian type' (Søby 1977-78:82; Nicolaisen 1965:92). But there seem to have been different opinions about this, which may also be related to the fact that in the so-called 'Eskimo type' there are

different names for full cousins on the one hand and second cousins on the other – that is, different names imply different kinship categories.

In everyday life kinship through the same great grandparents required no special recognition beyond the ordinary awareness between fellow settlers. Nevertheless it was counted as kinship, and it was generally the limit of the kinship for which one could account. Names were used which were not used for other members of the group.

One of the reasons for the lack of everyday awareness of second-cousin relations may be that a number of types of social awareness change for some people as they grow older, and others through the kinship distance. The features that changed in the course of life were the ordinary everyday awareness, which was strongest among siblings as long as they lived as children in the same house and had normal daily social relations with one another, but turned towards their own families when they became adults, married and had children. It was further weakened when as elderly people each had become head of a household. All the same, the distance from one's siblings remained the same. It was daily relations that had less and less of a chance.

On the other hand, in principle, the incest prohibition and the expectation of support against one's enemies remained unaltered throughout life. The two things belonged together. By contrast, the two things were weakened by generational or kinship distance. Strictly speaking only the closest kin must not marry one another, given that marriages between cousins and between two adoptive children of the same family did in fact occur despite the disapproval of some people. Only the closest kin could take the initiative for a revenge action. But they could expect support from the other kindred if they considered it necessary to take the initiative.

With Ego at the centre we can look at the relatives, and we already have terms like nuclear family, the family unit that has the same parents, including stepparents, and the extended family, which is descended from the same grandparents. In reality it is probably also necessary to speak of the kindred group, when it comes to relatives who are descended from both pairs of grandparents. The kindred group comprises people who are all related to Ego in that they are descended from both the father's and the mother's parents. Its individual members thus need not all be related to one another by blood (Fox 1971:164). As for the limit for the relatives for whom one has kinship terms, we have people who are descended from the same four pairs of great grandparents. These we will call fourth-generation kindred. Many people will also know the names of their great grandparents, but hardly the name of those grandparents' siblings, unless there is a special reason for this. The children of the parents' cousins are described as *illuusaq* in most of West Greenland, and *aaviaq* in East Greenland, and can be regarded as borderline cases between kin and ordinary fellow settlers. Sometimes two second cousins speak of each other as *eqqarli*, 'relative', instead of using the proper kinship term, possibly because they are aware of a kinship of which they still cannot really give an account.

Negative reciprocity

Mutual help has been discussed partly in connection with the distribution of food and partly in connection with the performance of major tasks. This kind of reciprocity is general, and in that connection was described as positive reciprocity. But one also finds some negative balanced reciprocity whereby someone who has been subjected to a violation responds with another violation (*cf.* Sahlins 1965:144).

While the singing-duel takes place between individuals, blood vengeance takes place between families. Since there was no generally accepted outside authority the *lex talionis*, 'the law of revenge', was probably the common form, which meant that the closest family of the injured party had to obtain 'justice' through revenge. Because of alliances within the closest family a serious violation, for example a killing, could become an issue between two families. In many cases, blood vengeance, as the most common response to a killing, would be seen as an attempt to restore 'balance' to the account within this reciprocity. However, in many cases too it could be regarded as an attempt to create a 'deficit' in the opponent's account. Thus in principle a killing could generate an endless blood feud, since there were no arrangements for compensation for killings. One could say that there must be 'measure for measure' if friendship (or in fact enmity) is to be maintained. But an endless blood feud has at any rate not been documented.

Escape to foreign parts was one of the ways of avoiding vengeance. If it appears that this could help

in some cases, that is because there could be a kind of graduation of the obligation to take revenge, where the closest family of the victim, that is those within the nuclear family, seem to have been those who could take the initiative for a revenge killing, while the other relatives would be more likely simply to support such action. The risk that by taking revenge one might end up as the next victim seems to have played a strong role, so that people did not simply rush off on a revenge spree (*cf.* Sandgreen 1987:437f). The possibility inherent in escape could be that those who could take the initiative might not be able to do anything about the matter any more. Killing as part of a blood feud did not have the same negative connotations as murder in the eyes of the community, and was generally described as a duty. Yet the general attitude is not the crucial thing; what is crucial is how the family of the last victim sees it.

But there are also examples of enemies agreeing to abandon hostilities (Rasmussen 1921-25:II,354; III,267; 1981:65).

There seem to be mechanisms for avoiding a blood feud, inasmuch as by a general decision one could have someone killed who was considered a danger to his surroundings. One could let someone within the nuclear family carry out the killing (Glahn 1921: 218, note; Gad 1974:166). Such situations were also known outside Greenland (Rasmussen 1931:30).

Since death from illness was also regarded as killing by magic, there also seems to have been a mechanism here that could reduce the risk of blood feuding: elderly people without families were often accused of witchcraft (Rasmussen 1921-25:II,55), or else feared shamans with many sons were blamed (Sandgreen 1987:207). Since witches were often alone and unsupported, killing them would not always trigger a revenge action. On the other hand not many people would simply plunge into a mission to kill a feared shaman. Thus two very different mechanisms were used to avoid a new blood feud.

Suicide was normally not ill-regarded, and help given to a suicide would not lead to revenge.

The 'lex talionis' is normally explained as 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'. If one means by this that both great and small violations were to be paid back with the same coin, one must probably, in connection with Greenlandic practice, change the formulation to 'an eye for an eye, but not necessarily a tooth for a tooth'. Bigger violations had to be paid for with a similar action, while people instead tried to settle the matter peacefully in connection with smaller violations. Instead of recompensing the person who had suffered the injury, people often tried to prevent tension that had arisen from developing into real strife. Singing-duels were used to smooth out problems between two people.

I have already mentioned that such disagreements between close kin were prevented, partly because they had shared heads of families and partly because they had teasing relationships that made it possible accept such normally insulting actions with good humour.

Between unrelated people songs were often used, partly to point out unfortunate circumstances, party to resolve any tensions. There were two ways of using songs: *ileqqorsuutit*, whereby one could vent one's dissatisfaction by using a song to comment on an unfortunate situation; and *iverneq*, the true singing-duel with a set of rules that had to be observed and where the object was more clearly to resolve a tense situation. This will be dealt with later.

If 'justice' is to be regarded as balance in the reciprocity between the various individuals and between various groups, then the Greenlanders, like many other people, took the attitude that 'justice' should be viewed in relation to one's ability to achieve one's wishes, and considerations of whether it was worth it to demand compensation in all matters. If the price of compensation would be too high, or would lead to an endless tug-of-war, obtaining this specific compensation would do more harm than good, and a settlement, or a kind of return to square one, would be preferable.

In the accusations of people without kin described above in the case of the presumed 'soul-stealing deaths' it seems that the assault on the individual's life could paradoxically be seen as a way of preserving a group's sense of justice, inasmuch as one was thus emphasizing that it did not pay to harm or kill people. But one could not let the presumed murderers get off scot-free either. The results were often based on circumstantial evidence obtained during a seance, and such indications weighted heavily. That some old people without families became odd could easily be interpreted as knowledge of witchcraft. The 'proof' of this witchcraft was the victim. The community as such could hardly tolerate the 'killing' of people this way

without anyone reacting. Latent beneath all these obvious factors lay the fact that one could make an example by killing the witch; and that one could do so without running any great risk of starting a blood feud. But this fact was of course more difficult to see, presumably also because it would be unpleasant to see it. This view is so convenient that one could perhaps regard it as a deliberate solution, a miscarriage of justice accepted to preserve the sense of justice; but one presumably finds this in all the societies where the belief in and persecution of witches exist.

Potential and balanced reciprocity

Although the potential reciprocity discussed in Chapter 3 did not distinguish kin and non-kin, at settlements with few households related people would often live together, such that the exchanges would in the long run more often be among related people than unrelated people. This also applies to the groups who wander about a lot, since they would also often live with related people. If related people lived near one's settlement, one would presumably also invite them more often to taste one's catch.

The potential reciprocity took place between people with equal categories of giving-potential. which in the traditional Greenlandic society meant that they could contribute the same goods in kind. It did not mean so much that the groups could contribute equal amounts to the exchange. The individual households with supporters distributed food without demanding the same back. Such distributions thus had the character of 'gifts' inasmuch as one did not demand anything in return when one presented the others with the goods. But there was a certain expectation that everyone who could would distribute food in the same way. One would also often participate if another household needed a major task performed. In this case too no wish was expressed for similar help from the person one helped. When the individual households in principle had equal status, these forms of help were voluntary. But there was no doubt that with such types of help one expected to get something out of it, either something similar when one needed it, or simply continued positive relations.

Disregarding the distributions of food, the non-balanced exchanges were mainly limited to people who could give something in return.

But the relationship between households and people with no supporter had more of the characteristics of balanced reciprocity – still disregarding the distribution of food. This means first and foremost that in this case people expected and demanded measure for measure. People who were not members of any household in fact had to sell other goods to obtain the goods that were not part of the ordinary food distribution. One could also perform a particular service for which payment could be received in goods. In this way a few individuals outside the households could obtain the goods that they would otherwise be unable to obtain.

There was also a tendency towards this kind of barter between households that lived at different places. There were presumably two things that played a role in this kind of balanced exchange. In the first place daily exchanges were not possible if each group lived in its own region – the insurance-like character of the arrangement would fall apart if things were given to households that were not likely to give anything in return. In the second place the goods that could be exchanged were different, since people who participated in barter normally came from different resource areas. In fact this happened when barter took place at the local level. The people concerned might for example be fishermen in a sealing community. Some of these fisher people had no supporters. But they could also be supporters who were fishermen. Since in our own time they often convert their products into money, they do not have the same ability to give goods in kind as the hunters (*cf.* Kleivan 1964:68f). The fact that one can find worked stone implements far outside the areas where they occur naturally shows that barter has existed throughout the period Greenland has been inhabited (Gulløv and Kapel 1988; Petersen 1996).

It should also be mentioned that the trading firm that bought skins, but in earlier times also bought other hunting products, was in the same situation as the local people outside the households. It could not contribute the same products as the hunting households either, and as with other people in this situation, it was quite natural to have a balanced system of exchange with it.

Group norms in the light of mobility

We have looked at the occupational utilization of resources as the important factor in the spread of settlements; but this is in fact rather a crude simplification. Viewed in terms of the limits of resources or

their utilization it must be correct to regard hunting as the factor that intensified the tendency for the settlements to spread. But viewed in terms of the annual distribution of the resources it must be most economical to spread the population in the summer in small units, and to gather them in slightly larger units in the winter (*cf.* Freeman 1967:154). In the pattern of utilization there are thus factors that both permit and limit the degree of dispersal.

The property ownership situation has perhaps not exactly reinforced the scattered form of utilization; but the wandering life has been facilitated partly by the individual form of utilization and partly by the system of non-balanced reciprocity. If some people were to wait to receive meat in proportion to what they themselves contributed, they might sometimes have to wait a long time.

In an area with communal houses the lack of a common head of several households was a factor that limited how long unrelated people could endure living together without tension arising. In the organization of the communal houses, where the extended families often stayed together, the leadership was left to the oldest married couple, who could thus more easily make decisions about the travelling life of the household.

With the dissolution of the communal house form and settlement in smaller houses where the individual households lived without unrelated families, we could see from the tables that concurrently with this dissolution the form of settlement became more permanent. This may however also be because the dissolution of the communal house took place in a period when people began to use more wood in house-building. This meant that the various households had purchased assets tied to their houses, and it made it more difficult for them to move around. In connection with the decrease in settlement mobility the wish to live in isolation also decreased.

The incest prohibitions too – and on the whole the norm of marrying outside one's closest family – made it necessary for people to keep up regular connections with the unrelated families, even though the families where one could find a spouse were one's potential enemies. Undoubtedly the incest prohibition helped to ensure that potential enemies still needed one another and had to maintain shared norms and a common society.

The units of the group

After these remarks, which took their point of departure in marriage and kinship, it will be useful to look at the collectivity from another point of view.

In hunting societies where people travelled around and had a succession of co-settlers, one could find settlements with the following compositions:

1. A settlement with one house occupied by a household. We will call this a primary basic settlement.
2. A settlement with one house occupied by several households. We will call this a secondary basic settlement.
3. A settlement with several houses, each occupied by a household. We will calls this a primary composite settlement.
4. A settlement with several houses, each of which – or just some of which – contained several households. We will call this a composite communal-house settlement.

Since there was some moving around, the character of the small settlements in particular will often change.

The residents at a primary basic settlement might go on living by themselves for several years, but not necessarily at the same place. They could move from place to place.

They could move together with people from another settlement, and if they built houses together we could get either a secondary basic settlement or a basic communal-house settlement. But if they decided to live in separate houses, we would either get a primary composite settlement or a composite communal-house settlement.

A composite communal-house settlement could also arise when the inhabitants of several such settlements were 'reshuffled'.

In other words new settlement forms could be formed from all of them, but a settlement could also be completely abandoned. Total depopulation was however the most likely result for the basic settlements. These would usually arise during a dispersive trend, while they could easily be closed down during a concentration trend. A composite communal-house settlement where every house was a communal house was presumably a rarity in Greenland, but probably did occur (*cf.* Egede 1939:39; Hanseeraq 1864-65:587f).

A secondary basic settlement could change to a

secondary communal-house settlement, although a primary composite settlement could also arise from it.

Although a secondary basic settlement could in fact exist at the same place for several years, the composition of the housemates would often be quite impermanent.

The settlement forms that were based on households did not need to remain very permanent, but their composition was generally more permanent. In the case of primary and secondary basic settlements in particular, the units first and foremost changed with the development of the individual households.

Living together can be viewed here in two ways:

1) living in the same house at a given time, or
2) moving together from place to place over an extended period.

To avoid ambiguity, we will call those who live together according to the first definition housemates. 'Housemates' need not have anything in common beyond the shared residence and the above-mentioned general distribution practice as well as a shared resource area. The co-occupancy of housemates is agreed before they move together, but can be dissolved fairly easily, although this of course most usually happens in connection with moving out of the house in the summer.

Those who move together according to the second definition we will call a household. A household is an organizational unit with shared property, a division of labour and common heads. Two conditions have to be fulfilled to form a household: a) the people must be related to one another either as a nuclear family or as an extended family; and b) they must live in the same house. That is to say that housemates who are not members of the same family do not form a household together, and members of an extended family who do not live in the same house each form their own household. A nuclear family is normally in the same household, but can then form households with members of the same extended family.

Formerly, the ordinary development of a household might well start with a nuclear family, but if the children in the same family grew up and married they could remain in the same house, especially the boys, and they would then form a three-generation household. But if the same children became grandparents, they would normally move out as a new three-generation household. If the oldest couple was still alive, they would probably in the end live with the son who had last become a grandfather, and this was the normal limit for the duration of the households. The daughters of the original nuclear family would usually move out to the husband's household when they married. But through this development some nuclear families would start up as non-independent households, that is as members of a three-generation household.

Settlements

In this work 'settlement' normally means a winter settlement, where the residents have daily – or almost daily – contacts with one another through mutual visits, meat gifts, a common observation post, and often a common landing-place as well as a shared hunting ground. It will be appropriate to use this definition for the small hunting settlements to be described here. People would normally live together from August-September until May-June.

The settlement would formerly be broken up in the summer, and re-established in the late summer. But in the period described there would either be a permanent core or a slower turnover of co-settlers than before. There was no need for a proper boat harbour, as long as the landing potential was reasonably good. Several settlements were founded at places without fresh water. This was obtained from melted ice. In the twentieth century all-year-round settlements developed.

Tentholds and summer camps

A tenthold will often correspond to a household. But a household could be divided into several tentholds. Especially in the twentieth century, when some people settled permanently, the household could split up in the summer so that some people remained in the house while others moved into a tent. The minimum unit in a tenthold is also a nuclear family.

Here a distinction is made between three kinds of summer camp: 1) a basic summer camp, where there is only one tenthold; 2) a composite summer camp with at least two tentholds; and 3) a camp group, where several camps have a common meeting-place and some social interaction.

In recent decades in particular, it has been possible to use a tent on a hunting trip. If the participants in

the trip were men from different households, the composition would often only apply to the one hunting trip. If the distribution of the catch was made in a pool system, some shares would indicate who belonged to which households. We will call such a group of travelling hunters tentmates.

In composite summer camps families from different settlements often lived together. So for the women and children in particular the summer camps provided opportunities to get to know other people. But such summer camps were also very important for the maintenance of the sharing of the extended resource area, since people got to know one another and shared norms became known to more people. In earlier times in East Greenland the next year's housemates were often agreed at the summer camps.

In the camp groups there was some shared social activity. There would often be a place where there were some gatherings, some shared entertainment, races and contests, trading and not least in former times singing meetings etc. In recent years these were probably mainly replaced by dancing-places. At the larger camps there could be people who gave a helping hand in the various tentholds. At the same time they would often function as the news-bearers of the camp groups.

Tentholds were often at the same time also umiak crews. But several tentholds could use the same umiak, either together or such that some tentholds could borrow others' umiaks when the owners themselves were not actually using them.

Settlement groups and regional groups

At settlements that were close to one another the population throughout the group's area would know one another, among other reasons because guests would come from all of them, and some from a particular settlement would visit the other settlements.

In the summer, when people left the house and the settlement and went to various hunting camps, they often shared camps with households from other settlements in the group. In connection with the summer resources, especially the migrating seals, various settlements thus shared the resources with one another. Not least during the hunting of the spring seal migration, the camp could be composed of people from several settlements in the vicinity. These camps could be at the same place, for example on the same island. But they could also be on several islands so close to one another that people could gather on one of the islands, hold feasts together and entertain one another, all together or in family groups. In the camp groups there were also some gatherings, and in former times there was also trading, singing-contests, dancing etc. This happened, as mentioned before, at the *ammassat* catching time in East Greenland, and during the hooded-seal hunting at the mouths of the two large fjords. The same happened in several regions, for example on the Kitsissut Islands north west of Cape Farewell, or at the Taseralik island group during the great halibut fisheries at the mouth of Nassuttooq. From there we also know of lively barter activities, since people often came there from far away.

In West Greenland's most important caribou areas in particular, people came from different regions and shared the camps there with people from other regions. In the southern hinterland of Kangerlussuaq people often came from the Sisimiut and Maniitsoq areas, and shared the camps at Angujaartorfik, Eqalummiut etc. And in some periods even people from the Nuuk district came to these camps (*cf.* Secher *et al.* 1987:9).

This situation undoubtedly helped much of the population of West Greenland to get to know one another and learn about other regions, to preserve the various expressions of the language and other norms, and to obtain spouses from other regions. In Ammassalik, though, it was only the district's own population that could gather in shared camps. This lack of contact with people from the outside has, as suggested before, played a role in the rapid turnover in the vocabulary. There were formerly camps shared with the South East Greenlanders outside the Ammassalik area, but they were discontinued towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Special roles

There were some special roles requiring that certain members of society must have experience and skills that others did not have. There were often specialized midwives who were summoned from the neighbouring settlement when a woman was about to bear a child (Alaufesen 1983). In addition we could see that the Aqipi family lived close to a midwife a couple of times when an addition to the family was expected. It was especially elderly people who were summoned

when a child was to be named, or when a purification process was to be carried out after a tabu period or the like.

The actual tabu situations, especially those connected with a death, were often avoided as much as possible. Burials etc. were therefore also carried out by the closest family of the deceased.

Shamanistic functions were often special actions performed by people whose main profession was hunting. If they did not have special knowledge beyond their shaman role it would probably only be in connection with the actual shamanistic practices that they would function as leaders of the community.

The leadership role in a hunting situation was associated with people with special knowledge of hunting conditions. They became undisputed leaders in such communal actions, but became ordinary members of the community again as soon as the task had been performed and was over (Petersen 1968:111). But in dangerous situations too – for example when the ice one was on during the hunt began to drift – the experienced hunters became leaders who had to ensure that as far as possible, everyone got on to the safe ice or ashore (Nooter 1976:88).

These special roles are mentioned here, but not described in further detail as I have no knowledge of any special structure that determined the way they functioned in social life. In particular, they seem to be difficult to relate to the actual formation of settlements, apart from the fact that families with women of childbearing age would be likely to want to settle in a place where it was possible to get a midwife. The presence of people who could play the other roles would probably be more difficult to predict, and would be unlikely to be of crucial importance for the choice of a settlement or co-settlers.

These special roles require special skills and experience that cannot be found in every household. What the members of the ordinary household pass on to the children is their ordinary knowledge and skills. Since the specialized knowledge is differently distributed in relation to the households, one must pay to be taught it or to get help. Various kinds of quality work also belong in this category.

Notes

1. In this story told by Markus Eliassen, he speaks of his father Elias as a son of Paangu and his wife. The two did in fact have a son called Elias Enok, who on the other hand did not have a son called Markus. If this Elias was Tuuaaq, he was not the son of Paangu and Ane. But why would Marteeraq mention a Tuuaaq as their son? Severin Villads Jens had a son with the name Markus, but not surnamed Eliassen. Marteeraq distinguished between Elias Enok and Tuuaaq.
2. She died while living with Nalakkaaq's children.
3. The information that the Maqi family lived in Pupik this winter comes from Massanti Aqipi's written list. In an oral comment he said that this was in the winter of 1914-15 (Appendix 2:49). However, Beate Maqi and her children lived in Ammassalik in the winter of 1914-15, and were baptized in March 1915. The correct winter must therefore be 1915-16.
4. The presence of these brothers, Rasmus Aavaartik and Karl Kaattuattak, may require an explanation. Rasmus Aavaartik was married to Beate Maqi's eldest daughter, Najattaarajivat. His brother was married to Takkalaatsiaq. Beate had a younger sister with this name.

   In 1914 Quninngi's umiak came from the south to Ikkatteq after wintering in isolation farther south (*cf.* J. Petersen 1957:120f). The umiak came ashore on the outer coast of Ikkatteq Island, where they celebrated the first pleasure of seeing one another again, and happy people went aboard to sail the umiak to a better landing-place on the other side of the island. There were thirteen people on board, and Quninngi himself steered the umiak. On the way they sailed past an iceberg, which suddenly broke up and wrecked the umiak. Eleven people perished, including Rasmus Aavaartik's wife Najattaarajivat, and his brother's wife Takkalaatsiaq. Only two were saved, that is Quninngi himself, and Kaattuattak's and Takkalaatsiaq's little son, who later came to be called Lars (Appendix 2:49).

Chapter 4

Changes in the settlement pattern

Upernavik. The seasonal moves

The seasonal moves in the Upernavik district do not differ in principle from the other earlier moves in West Greenland. The winter was normally spent in a house at the settlement, but the summer in a tent or a hunter's hut at various places within one's resource area. Besides these there would then be a proper winter house at the settlement.

In earlier times the spring was also the time for departures, when one moved either to a hunter's hut or tent. In the days of the skin tents one could move out from the house as early as May so one could hunt *uuttut* (basking seals) from the best places. Earlier, too, people went from Søndre Upernavik to Kangaarsuk, where they either lived in a tent or in a hunter's hut (Bryder 1921:489). They went there by dog sledge and umiak (Appendix 1). In the northern district too the spring *uuttoq* hunting was based at hunting camps about which Marteeraq wrote: *"The ice at the settlement Ikermiut becomes rotten early in the spring, and an ice hole is formed that reaches across to Illulik. Since open water thus appears at the settlement, those who want good uuttoq hunting move out to hunting camps"* (Nielsen 1957a:166).

Since the winter settlement was normally established with a view to ice hunting in the winter, it did not need a good location with respect to kayak hunting. So the winter settlement might also be poorly situated for the autumn kayak hunting, which was necessary before the ice settled. For that reason there were houses at several places that were mainly used for the autumn hunting.

Finally, in earlier times special huts were used for ice-hunting stays in the winter. Marteeraq spoke of such a hut: *"Nulooq's daughter said that her father had a special hunter's hut to which he went in the middle of the winter... Nulooq had such a hut on one of the outermost islands, and from there he went peep-hunting. Such a hut was not covered, and when one came to the island one first had to shovel the hut free of snow. One put a gut-casing window in and then set up a bearing roof construction (aavii), on which one spread the outer cover of the skin tent which one then covered with hay. Outermost one laid hard snow, in layers that were not too thick, and one sealed the joints with soft snow. A hut that was covered over in this way was called a "qulisivik". Arriving at it was not a very pleasant thing, since it was full of snow. But when the snow had been shovelled away, the hut put in order and lamps had been lit and it got warm it became quite cosy"* (Nielsen 1955b:199).

Technical innovations and changes in hunting life

The introduction of the gun and the sealing net meant that many of the old hunting methods passed out of use, for example creep-hunting and peep-hunting, and this meant that the actual hunting from the winter settlement had become easier. The use of collective hunters' huts as an advance base lessened the need to move to new settlements, apart from the fact that the autumn hunting grounds played a certain role.

Thus the hunting-related seasonal moves now play a smaller role than before. Nor are they strictly necessary for accommodation purposes, which undoubtedly played an important role in the past when turf houses had to be aired out in the summer. Wooden houses are on the one hand easier to clean, and on the other hand they cannot simply be uncovered, so this reason for moving out is no longer relevant. There do however seem to be special needs in houses occupied by extended families. In 1966 in Naajaat, for example, a tent had been pitched close to a house. The oldest people remained living in the house, while the young nuclear family lived in the tent.

Some changes in the seasonal moves could perhaps be viewed in connection with changes in the animal life. The seasonal migrations of beluga and narwhal changed (Appendix 1), and the caribou stocks were greatly reduced. In addition, in the years up to 1950, there were winters with very poor ice cover.

But the most conspicuous changes can undoubtedly be related to the social effects of innovations in the material hunting culture, where the technical changes led to new methods and new patterns.



Fig. 21. Hut for kayak hunting in the autumn, at Ikerasak near Søndre Upernavik, 1966. (Photo R. Petersen).

The introduction of the rifle and the sealing net in the nineteenth century meant that certain ice-hunting methods disappeared, and were replaced by *uuttoq* hunting and net hunting. In particular the introduction of net hunting meant that the dark season, which was earlier used for contacts among the settlements, was to some extent incorporated in economic activities. With the disappearance of the umiak the combined umiak and sledge journeys in the spring could not be kept up any longer. The spring trips, which required people to return by boat, had to wait until the ice had gone. The use of the motor boat in the summer made it possible for more men to exploit a larger hunting area. Thus it became easier to combine the utilization of the hunting area with a more rigid type of settlement pattern.

These seasonal moves were part of an adaptation where the economic unit of time was one year. That people moved around in the summer, and especially that they had earlier moved more in the summer, was due to the fact that the ecological adaptation to the summer hunting was different from the adaptation to winter conditions. The good hunting of the summer was used to gather provisions that could be used as a supplement to the poorer hunting of the winter in the harsher and more sedentary period. Whether a hunter had collected many or few provisions for the winter, the next summer he still had to start from scratch again. This is the way it was in a natural economy.

The famines that used to ravage the local communities sometimes showed clearly that the winter catch, the winter provisions and the remainder were each smaller than the necessary winter consumption; if one was to survive the winter, the winter catch, winter provisions and remainder had to be equal to or greater than what was consumed.

The value of the catch was on the whole equal to its consumption value, and the added value of the hunting products would therefore depend on the price of the convertible part and whether the unutilized remainder could be utilized substantially. When most of the parts of the catch were utilized – and one could not increase the value of the catch substantially through trade – then the response to an increase in population had to be either more efficient exploitation of the hunting area – that is the incorporation of the reserve areas in the daily hunting grounds or geographical expansion.

Summer camps far from one's winter settlement were probably relatively rare. One's ecological adaptation took place around the winter settlement. When this adaptation no longer felt adequate one had to move the winter settlement to a new place and this would give rise to new hunting camps in the summer.

If we want to look at the adaptation in the longer term we must therefore also look at the moving of the winter settlement.

The non-seasonal moves

In connection with the changes in the actual settlements, the accommodation conditions also played a role. As early as around 1880 – when regular statistical

information began to be collected every year – the number of occupants per house was so relatively small that the communal house must have disappeared in the areas, and experience shows that this led to less turnover in co-settlers. But the really rigid settlement formation came in the twentieth century with more and more use of wood in the houses. When there is less moving around it will often be the small places that disappear first. The small settlements may be too small to meet various social needs in the longer term. However, they can exist for several years as part of a larger social formation. The individual counts as part of the group in small local communities, but from this there can also arise a skewed distribution of gender and age groups in terms of what is necessary to the continued existence of the group. But if the population moves as a group to fewer places, the risk of an uneven grouping diminishes. On the other hand the utilization of the resource area can be concentrated too much. But the utilization of the area was made easier by the fact that wooden boats could still be used as advance bases, and this extended the hunting area of a settlement somewhat. The utilization of a hunting area can be made clearer in the following.

The everyday hunting area of the settlement lies close to the settlement, up to a few kilometres from it. Around the settlement there will often be a field with a 5 km radius where sealing from a motor boat is prohibited out of consideration for the kayak hunters (*Nalunaerutit* 1965:36). This area is what is regarded here as the intensively utilized area. The criterion is that one can get home to the settlement in the evening. At the earlier central West Greenlandic hunting camps for the hooded seal migration the most remote lookout points for daily hunting were about 10 km from the camp. The everyday hunting area thus had a radius of *c.* 10 km. It was at such places that the family's children did not see much of their father during the hooded seal season. At the small settlements of Upernavik we must think in terms of the above-mentioned radius of 5 km.

By the extensively utilized area I mean a hunting ground whose exploitation required one or more overnight stays outside the settlement. This could be at one of the more remote sealing grounds or an area with other more seasonal resources. In the event of population growth without the possibility of expansion people might establish settlements in the extensively utilized area, but it is likely that the exploitation will increase without any extra resources. At some point this may affect the resources. Other animals species than the traditional ones must then be added to the resources.

While the everyday hunting area was normally associated with and used by one settlement or a small settlement group, for example Kuuk and Mernoq around the turn of the last century, the extensive hunting ground could be utilized by several settlements. It might consist of the uninhabited stretches between the settlements, nearby fjord complexes or localities with resources for seasonal exploitation; or it might be the large bird cliffs, places with char stocks or the like. The extensive areas of two settlements overlap, but here they will be treated as if they are only used from the closest settlement, counting from the middle of the distance between the settlements.

Settlements and population figures

As already described, the Upernavik district lies on a long coastal stretch, inhabited today from Søndre Upernavik to Kullorsuaq in the north, and it is surrounded on both sides by uninhabited stretches which can be regarded as extensively utilized areas.

The first statements of the population seem to have been inadequate. There was a registration of the population in 1798, in which some settlements north of Upernavik Isfjord were mentioned (*cf.* Ostermann 1921:513), but in fact none of the places that Rasmus Brandt spoke of in 1799 as inhabited (Ostermann 1939) was mentioned in the list. In another registration in 1806 there was a "decline" (Ostermann 1921: 513), which by no means corresponds to the figures stated for the population in 1805 (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:418). In the statement from 1806 some settlements north of the ice fjord were also mentioned, but here too there was no mention of the places that the mineralogist Giesecke spoke of as inhabited "a short time before" during his journey in the area in 1807. Both were situated north of Tasiusaq (Johnstrup 1878:56-59). Either people moved around a great deal or these population figures were inadequate. The latter interpretation is very likely the correct one. It is clear from the registration of 1806 that the communal house was the common dwelling type, since the average number of occupants per house was 18.2. In addition the area between Kangersuatsiaq and Søndre Upernavik was

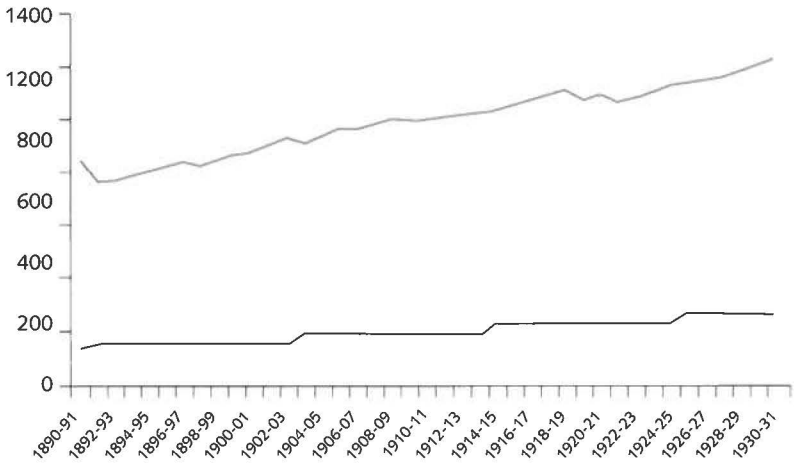

Fig. 22. The lower line shows the distance between the northernmost and southernmost settlement in the Upernavik district 1890-1930, while the upper line indicates the population which rose from 853 in 1890 to 1230 in 1930. (*Sammendrag* 1946, VII; *Grønland* 1968, 1969-1970).

inhabited – at Nunngarut, Illunnguaq and Illorsuaq (on Saattoq/Fladø) – but "Inuillisoq" must be Ingiullisoq on Søndre Upernavik Island. This means that the whole area around Kangersuatsiaq was probably a collectively used resource area shortly after 1800.

The size of the population changed during the known period, although some of the first statements seem rather incomplete. The above-mentioned population count from 1798 stated that there were 380 people, of whom 170, or 45%, were said to live north of Upernavik Isfjord. The stated figure for 1806 was only 364, with 145 (40%) living north of Upernavik Isfjord (Ostermann 1921:513). A population count of 449 in 1805 (*ibid.* p. 513) seems more reliable. In 1834 a population of 297 was stated, and in a count in 1840 there were 328 (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:418). The population grew steadily after that time. As mentioned before several times there was a smallpox epidemic in 1814, but if one can more or less work with doubling periods of around 25 years for isolates without medical help but with reasonable resources (*cf.* Sauvy 1963), then it is reasonable to assume that the population in 1814 had been reduced to a third of the just 475 people who must have been there around 1814. This corresponds to just 170 people who, given a doubling within about 25 years, would grow to about 330 in 1840. The reduction of the population to a third could correspond to a reduction of the utilized area to a third of what it was before 1814 – which was in fact the situation. It is therefore not so strange that the utilized area was later expanded in keeping with the growth in the population figures.

There is of course no automatic relationship between population figures and the size of the utilized area, in the sense that the area is reduced with a falling population and grows with a rising population. It was probably for this reason that people who wanted to move to a settlement had to be approved by the residents of the settlement (Rink 1866-71:II,174). In a way this is logical enough, but it probably requires that the form of resource utilization does not change and fill out the whole local area. But in this case there were several factors that played a role: that there was in fact an empty expansion area; that the value of the yield was close to the consumption value throughout the period; that there was no significant trade and the unutilized parts of the catch were already so small that they could not be put to use in any significant way; and that no new resources were brought into the utilization pattern apart from a household-related coal mine at Innerit near Søndre Upernavik (Porsild 1921:432).

In an area which like the Upernavik district lies along one long line, one could measure the utilization area very simply by measuring the length of this line, that is by measuring the distance between the ordinary resource boundaries of the northernmost and southernmost settlements (Fig. 22). One would thus be measuring something very close to the utilized area, since the two outermost settlements have each exploited an area farther out. In addition one must know something about the areas of the settlements themselves so one can calculate an average width of the field utilized for hunting. This is rather simplified, because it disregards any overlapping of the local hunting areas. But the simplification is unlikely to interfere drastically with the overall picture. However,

this measurement does require that the utilization is spread with reasonable uniformity over the whole area, a requirement met by the fact that there is permanent game around all the settlements, and that the migratory resources, especially the sea mammals, are either spread throughout the area or come through the same area. Migrating game provides more than half of the meat that is used (Hovelsrud-Broda 1999:42).

The degree of settlement

Today the largest uninhabited areas are between Kangersuatsiaq and Upernavik, and between Nutaarmiut and Nuussuaq, the distances involved being some 50 km as the crow flies at each place, and finally between Nuussuaq and Kullorsuaq, where after the depopulation of Illulik in 1973 it had reached about 60 km, while the sledge route between Nutaarmiut and Nuussuaq was some 100 km, and between Kangersuatsiaq and Upernavik a little more than 60 km (Olsen 1964:54f).[1] But before 1950 there were significantly shorter distances between inhabited places. Between Nutaarmiut and Nuussuaq there were two inhabited places where the longest sledge route was 35 km (*ibid.* p. 55). And between Kangersuatsiaq and Upernavik lay Qaarsoq, which according to H. Olsen was inhabited until a little after 1950. In addition there were hunters' huts, which on the one hand ensured that the whole area was still exploited, and on the other provided overnight accommodation in the winter.

We can therefore establish that the inhabited part of the Upernavik district throughout the period described was continuous, since the hunting areas of the settlements are contiguous, as also discussed by Haller (Haller 1979).

Contacts with the Europeans began in prehistoric times, since European whalers probably reached as far as the present Upernavik district around 1700. We do not really know when they began. Regular whaling is said to have begun in the Davis Strait around 1719 (Jenkins 1921:168), but even before this the Dutch knew West Greenland, including the part north of Disko Bay (Haan 1915:47), and some early whalers went fairly frequently up to Melville Bay (Vibe 1967: 90). From the Kullorsuaq region Marteeraq spoke of house ruins where one could see European items. It is of course impossible to say with reasonable certainty when these places were occupied before they have been dated by an archaeological investigation. But it would be reasonable to assume that they must be from the last half of the 1600s, when Ostermann estimated that whaling began in the Upernavik district (Ostermann 1921:509). And even if we could safely assume that the southern limit of the inhabited area was around Kangersuatsiaq, we can of course say nothing about whether settlement was continuous, but the distance between the southern and northernmost settlement would then have been *c.* 200 km.

Since it has been assumed that Melville Bay ceased to be an immigration route around 1600 (Holtved 1944:186), the northern settlements were probably inhabited by the population of the Upernavik district.

Around 1800 Kittorsaq was the northernmost inhabited place, and some islands around Qeqertaq and Mernoq were also inhabited (Ostermann 1939:73f, 76f). The region around Tussaaq was also inhabited (*ibid.* p. 81). South of Upernavik Isfjord there was settlement around Kingittoq (at Inussuk), at Aappilattoq, at Upernavik and down to Kangersuatsiaq.

The distance between the southernmost settlement mentioned in 1798, that is Ikerasak at Søndre Upernavik, and the northernmost, Uiorleq, is 140 km, but if we include Kittorsaq, which was mentioned in 1799 as inhabited, the distance becomes 197 km. In 1806 Ikerasak and Uiorleq were again mentioned as the outermost settlements. But the distance from Ikerasak up to Nuuluk, which was mentioned by Giesecke as a good place for narwhal hunting, is 150 km. Giesecke reached no farther north than this (Johnstrup 1878:58). After 1833 the missionary Østergaard only spoke of settlements from Aappilattoq to Kangersuatsiaq (Ostermann 1935b:69). The distance between Kangersuatsiaq and the northernmost settlement was 56 km. This was a reduction of 140 km since 1799.

The beginning of expansion

In 1850 thirteen settlements were mentioned; of these, only Aappi with fourteen residents lay on the north coast of Upernavik Isfjord; the other twelve were south of this, from Aappilattoq to Ikerasak on Søndre Upernavik Island. Sioraq, just off Kangersuatsiaq, as well as Kissaaq, were also inhabited, and off Aappilattoq Qaamaneq, Kingittoq and Ammaasaq were

inhabited. The distance between Ikerasak and Aappi was 85 km as the crow flies.

Until 1880 it was difficult to follow all the changes in the settlement pattern; but there was in fact expansion both to the south and the north. In 1856 the southern boundary moved 25 km farther south, as Søndre Upernavik was established by some families from Kangersuatsiaq. For generations they had used the northern part of the uninhabited area south of Kangersuatsiaq, not least the actual area around Søndre Upernavik, Kangaarsuk and Umiiarfiup Sullua. Søndre Upernavik is to this day the district's southernmost inhabited place. But from there and from Kangersuatsiaq there have been a number of moves to Ikerasak and Uluaa (*cf.* Lund Drosvad 1938; Bang 1943). A proper attempt at expansion from Søndre Upernavik southward lasted only one year.

In 1876 some families moved from Søndre Upernavik to Amitsoq. The number of people registered was 28. But they found it too isolated and unsafe to continue living there (Appendix 1:207). They travelled back the next year (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 2).

But to the north expansion was more stable.

Aappi on the north side of Upernavik Isfjord was the northernmost inhabited place in the district in 1850. The inhabited stretch was now, as mentioned before, 85 km long.

There were a few detailed reports that Nulooq's family lived there (Lynge 1955:19; Nielsen 1955). But Aappi was not officially described as inhabited until 1876-1896. Before 1876 its population was included in the parish register as living at Aappilattoq (*ibid.*). There are several indications that it was Lynge and Nielsen who were right, and the statement in the parish register was either only a practical indication or a wrong address. This issue is discussed in the section on the first pioneers.

The expansion north – north of Aappi, that is – began a little before the southern expansion, as Gabriel Aviu, who later became known as Paangu, lived with his nuclear family at Paangutsit west of Tasiusaq at least in 1854-56, since two of the family's children were listed as having been born at Paangutsit. Before that time Paangutsit was only described as inhabited in 1798. But the family probably lived at the place from 1853 to *c.* 1860, although a child who was born in 1858 was described as having been born at Tasiusaq. He was baptized in Tasiusaq, where registration and church services began in 1860 (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 2). The inhabited stretch now became 105 km long in 1854, and when Søndre Upernavik was founded in 1856, this was increased to 130 km. The distance between Aappi and Paangutsit measures about 35 km as the crow flies.

People were thus registered at Tasiusaq in 1860, and it became a trading post againin 1853. A comment that the place had already become a trading post again in 1827 (Olsen 1964:8), when Upernavik again became a colony, may be due to plans to re-establish old trading posts; but since the whole area north of Upernavik Isfjord was uninhabited in those years, there was at that time no basis for realizing the plans. But it was inhabited in 1860, since church services were conducted again from that year, that is before Qassersuaq had been made into a trading post in 1864 (*cf.* Olsen 1964:10). There was thus apparently a population basis for a production site in the new northern district.

Paangu's family lived at least until 1875 in Tasiusaq. But in 1876 they lived at Ikerasaarsuk. Since Amitsoq south of Søndre Upernavik was inhabited in that year, the distance between it and Ikerasaarsuk was 190 km, but the next year it was reduced to 150 km, since the expansion experiment at its southern end was abandoned. After that Ikerasaarsuk/Itilliarsuk was inhabited for several years by Paangu's family. But Paangu himself spent three years with a son and a daughter and their families from 1878 until 1881 at Uiorleq, *c.* 10 km south east of Itilliarsuk. After this Paangu's group travelled back to Itilliarsuk, thus once more becoming the northernmost-living West Greenlanders.

The number of inhabited places in the period 1871-1875 was said to be eight, but one gets the impression that the places mentioned included the 'surrounding areas', since places like Qattarmiut on Upernavik Island were said by other sources to be inhabited, but are missing for this period from the official census lists. "Upernavik" was clearly regarded in these official lists as the whole of Upernavik Island.

But small places were still mentioned: for example 25 people were said to live at Aappi in 1876 (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 1). The southernmost of these officially mentioned places was Søndre Upernavik, and Tasiusaq was the northernmost. The other places were Kangersuatsiaq, Qaarsoq, Upernavik, Kingittoq, Aappilattoq and Qassersuaq.

In 1876, as indicated above, there was again a simultaneous expansion to the south and north, since Amitsoq and Itilliarsuk were inhabited that year. Aappi was first officially described as inhabited this year, although Rink (1855:194) spoke of it as inhabited as early as 1850.

In 1877 the only one of these places missing was Amitsoq. It had been abandoned. But in 1878 and 1879 Uiorleq was missing from this list, while we know from other sources that Paangu and his little group lived there.

In 1880 both Uiorleq and Uingasoq were inhabited. Uingasoq lies just south of Tasiusaq Island on the sledge route over land. So these occupations cannot be described as expansion in the sense that a new resource area began to be used, rather as a better distribution within the resource area.

In 1881 Saattoq too was inhabited. This was probably Saattoq a little east of Itilliarsuk, not Saattoq south of Innaarsuit, partly because the locality was mentioned in connection with Tasiusaq, partly because Marteeraq said that there was no overnight accommodation on the island route between Tasiusaq and Upernavik at the beginning of the 1880s (Nielsen 1957c:206). In that case this was the first time since the occupation and famine mentioned by Giesecke that anyone settled on the island. Qattarmiut was added to the list of inhabited places in 1881, but had been inhabited for a substantially longer time. For example it was inhabited when Kuungasoq was killed in 1835 (*cf.* Olsen 1964:72 and Lynge 1955:64), and when Siimuk from Qaarsoq died (Olsen 1964:73) in 1837 (Lynge 1955:76; *Upernavik Ministerialbog* 1). Upernaviarsuk and Inussugaarsuk a little south of Upernavik Isfjord were also described as inhabited in 1881.

In 1882 the same places were mentioned as inhabited, apart from Upernaviarsuk and Uiorleq. Qaarsoq was not mentioned in 1886 as inhabited in the list from the parish register. When it appeared again on the list the next year, it had declined in population from 34 in 1885 to 17 in 1887. This would seem to indicate that people moved from Qaarsoq to Inussugaarsuk, since the decline in the Qaarsoq population more or less corresponded to the population of Inussugaarsuk, unless the inhabitants of Inussugaarsuk had earlier simply been counted together with those of Qaarsoq. All in all in this year, a decline was noted for the whole population of the district of four people compared with the previous year, which could mean that about ten people are missing from the register.

In 1883 Upernaviarsuk again appeared on the list with 16 residents (15 in 1881).[2] Since in other years the population of centres "with surroundings" was given together, it is probably the most detailed statements that are also most reliable as regards which places were inhabited.

From 1884 and 1885 I could find no information on the population at Upernavik. I do not know whether this could be related to the replacement of staff at the Upernavik parish in those years, but it is a likely explanation.

There were then no changes in the number of settlements until 1891, although Kingittoq was missing in the "Statistical register" in both 1887 and 1888.

But in 1891 twelve people from Søndre Upernavik spent one winter at Ikerasak. In 1892 a couple of families moved from Itilliarsuk to Ikerasaarsuk and the next year also to Nutaarmiut. Inussugaarsuk, where the population had slowly grown smaller, was inhabited by nine people in 1891, and was abandoned in 1892. In addition, in 1891 some families moved from Aappi to Kuuk, which then became the northernmost settlement in the district (*cf.* Olsen 1964:67). The distance between the southernmost and northernmost settlement was now 176 km. It is interesting to see that the expansion in the northern district so far had taken place in the years when there were also changes in the settlement pattern in the southern district. This may mean that the impulses that set changes in motion affected the whole district. The distance between Itilliarsuk and Kuuk was 22 km as the crow flies.

In 1894 twelve people also moved to Mernoq. These were people from Kuuk (*ibid.* p. 67). Mernoq now became the northernmost inhabited place. The distance between Mernoq and Søndre Upernavik was 180 km, but it was only four kilometres from Mernoq to the closest settlement.

In 1895 there was again a minor change in the settlement pattern, as some people moved to Itillilik, about 10 km north east of Tussaaq. The place never became large, and was definitively abandoned in 1909, but it was not listed as inhabited in two periods, i.e. 1901-03 and 1905-07 (*cf. Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1903-39).

In 1895 too Tussaaq was settled. For many years it

had been used as a hunting place from Qassersuaq, mainly for seal and walrus (Olsen 1964:10f).

In 1897 there was again an internal redistribution, since one family moved to Tunoqqu midway between Upernavik and Aappilattoq. This place was inhabited right up until 1938. Its population only reached ten in 1911, and only in the 1920s did it reach 20.

Itilliarsuk was abandoned in 1898, as the oldest people died and the families were split up geographically. One family moved down to their closest relations at Tussaaq; the remainder spread out between Ikerasaarsuk and Nutaarmiut.

Sarfaq, which lies 6 km south of Kuuk, was settled in 1898. Nine people moved there. Situated at the mouth of Kangerlussuaq/Giesecke Isfjord with a sea current, the place must have been good for sealing in the winter.

In 1900 others moved to Naajaat, also from Qassersuaq. This place too is on the island route between Upernavik and Tasiusaq. But the foundation of the settlement was probably due as much to the favourable location of the place in relation to ice fjords with seal stocks.

Saveerneq, close to Aappilattoq, was inhabited for three years, 1901-03, but was also inhabited in 1905/06 (*Nordgrønlands Fangelister* 1903-39). The new departures in this period were either northward-oriented or redistributions within the same area. This must be one of the cases where some impulse was active on both sides of this fjord.

But the northward movement continued in 1904, as 16 people moved that year to Itussaalik on the other side of the large guillemot cliffs. The distance from Mernoq, which was their neighbour to the south, was *c.* 37 km by the shortest sledge route, and the distance to Søndre Upernavik was as much as 210 km as the crow flies. But the next year some families moved from Kuuk to Kittorsaq, which lies some 20 km along the sledge route from Mernoq, and 13-14 km from Itussaalik. Kuuk was abandoned two years later. People went there again in 1914.

In the same period there was some moving around in the settlements south of Upernavik Isfjord. Assorseriitsoq near Aappilattoq was inhabited from 1904 to 1908, but it is missing from the list in 1905. The population was seven people the first year, and only three in 1906 and 1907. In 1908 it had become six people before it was abandoned. In the same area Nunaku was inhabited by eight people in 1906. At Qasigiannguit, also in the same island group, five people lived in 1906, and at Ingiullisoq near Søndre Upernavik too eight people lived in that year. Nunaku, Qasigiannguit and Ingiullisoq were only inhabited for one year.

At the northern end of the district too there were short-lived settlements in those years. At Uiorleq 20 people lived in 1907. Illulik housed some families who moved with the great hunter Abel Danielsen at their head (Nielsen 1957c:207) in 1908. The distance from the nearest settlement by the shortest sledge route was *c.* 35 km, and the distance from Søndre Upernavik was now *c.* 250 km. This northward move was the only one in this part of the history of expansion where the northernmost settlement was abandoned again the next year. It is conceivable that the short sledge route that went across the Nuussuaq Peninsula (behind the later Kraulshavn) was not known yet. If that was the case, then the sledge route to the nearest neighbours was more than 50 km, and in that case Illulik was rather isolated. But since in the same period a number of settlements were only inhabited for one year south of Upernavik Isfjord, one could also imagine that the poor hunting conditions that often caused a certain dispersal had perhaps not stabilized enough, although there was a certain improvement after the trough in 1906. Another possible and more likely reason is that Itussaalik was abandoned in 1909, which meant that the distance from the neighbours from Illulik would now also exceed 50 km. If the settlers at Itussaalik already had plans to move south in the winter, the neighbours would know in advance, and would accommodate themselves to this. Without being able to document a connection I consider it interesting that the Illulik family gained a new member in the spring after their move south. And this might suggest that there was no midwife at Illulik, but there was one at Itussaalik. If one had to fetch a midwife from the neighbouring settlement, the increase in distance from 35 km to over 50 km could be important. In the course of the summer of 1909 the Illulik family would know that a birth was imminent. In the same year a number of other settlements were closed down, for example Saattut, as well as the above-mentioned short-lived settlements around Aappilattoq and Søndre Upernavik. The next year Uingasoq too was abandoned.

Things also happened in the southern district, although to a lesser extent. At Ikerasak north east of Søndre Upernavik a family lived in 1907 and 1908, and several families lived there again in 1912-1926.

Uluaa, slightly north of Søndre Upernavik Island, was settled by a couple of families from Kangersuatsiaq in 1917 and 1918, and then again from *c.* 1928 to 1950. Ikerasak was populated by families from Søndre Upernavik. Ikerasak is 15 km from Søndre Upernavik, while Uluaa lies 25 km from Kangersuatsiaq. In a way Uluaa was a good example of the subsistence problems of some of the isolated settlements, since in the 1930s several girls of marriageable age were mentioned, while there were no marriageable men there (Lund-Drosvad 1938).

In 1909 the distance between the southernmost and northernmost settlement again became 210 km.

From 1910 on Qulleq was described as inhabited. It is situated on Qulleqqorsuit *c.* 15 km north west of Sarfaq. It was inhabited for four years, and was then abandoned again. In the first year people moved from Saffiorfik and Eqqorleq. The next year a family also came from Søndre Upernavik.

In 1914 a family moved from Qassersuaq to Innaarsuit, which lies between Tussaaq and Tasiusaq, and thus not too far from Saffiorfik. The distance from Tussaaq was 15 km, and it was 12 km from Saffiorfik. Qassersuaq itself, which in 1890 was no longer a trading post, was depopulated slowly, and was then abandoned in 1923.

But some abandoned settlements were used again. In 1913 Kuuk was repopulated, and was inhabited permanently until 1972. In 1914 ten people moved again to Illulik, and they lived there for many years. In the period from *c.* 1916 to 1923 Appaalissiorfik by the great bird cliffs was inhabited.

But there were constant minor changes. Sarfaq was depopulated in 1919. On the other hand a couple of families moved to Ikermiut in 1916. The place is on an island *c.* 6 km west of Illulik. For many years the many settlements that had grown up north of Tasiusaq had the problem that the district's northernmost shop was in Tasiusaq. The shopping trips to Tasiusaq from the northernmost settlements could take several days, so that a new trading post was for several years on the wish-list of the northernmost settlements. It only happened in 1923, when Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn was founded around the point of the northern Nuussuaq peninsula, which had earlier been called "the closer Nuussuaq" (Nielsen 1957c:208). It was 20 km from Kittorsaq, 30 km from Ikermiut, and 35 km from Illulik. The hunters who moved there in connection with the establishment of the shop left it again within a few years. But other families arrived in their place.

In 1925 some people moved to Qaarusulik. This is slightly south of Melville Bay, and thus became the northernmost settlement founded during this expansion. It was 50 km north of its closest neighbour, Ikermiut, and 70 km from Nuussuaq. Thus the distance between the southernmost and the northernmost settlement in the district reached 275 km. The consolidation of the northernmost part of the district took place in 1928, when three households moved to Kullorsuaq, *c.* 20 km south east of Qaarusulik. The two places existed side by side until 1952, when Qaarusulik was abandoned. A depot was established near Kullorsuaq in 1937, but Kullorsuaq only became a proper trading post after 1950 (Nielsen 1957c:224).

With this the expansion stopped for the time being, perhaps because it reached the boundaries of Melville Bay. In connection with the establishment of a depot at Kullorsuaq there was talk among the inhabitants of an agreement between the Royal Greenland Trading Company and the hunters, where the latter agreed not to move farther north. This was done by getting the local population to sign a statement that they would not continue to settle farther to the north (Knudsen 1964:122). In fact it was superfluous, since they were actually at the limit of possible expansion within the district.

Settlements that were abandoned

In the period described above, and especially over the next few decades, another process unfolded, involving the abandonment of a number of smallish inhabited places.

Qaarsoq slightly south of Qaarsorsuaq disappeared from the list of inhabited places in 1934, but this had probably already happened a few years before, because the names of the male inhabitants featured in the catch lists from Upernaviarsuk for both 1933 and 1934. How Hendrik Olsen's remark that Qaarsoq was inhabited until *c.* 1950 (Olsen 1964:12) is to be understood, I do not know. It may be that his memory failed him, but there were examples that the occupants of places that were in fact inhabited ap-

peared on the official lists for the local 'centres'. The problem with Qaarsoq is however that it was itself a 'local centre'. The distance between Qaarsoq and Upernaviarsuk is *c.* 20 km.

Tunoqqu was abandoned, as indicated above, in 1938.

Itilliarsuk was finally depopulated in 1945. Kittorsaq was abandoned in 1953, Ikermiut in 1954, and Itussaalik and Saattoq in 1957. At none of these places was there a population of over ten people. There was a slow depopulation at both places in the years before the closure.

There are several possible reasons for this tendency towards concentration. There was a political campaign in those years encouraging the centralization of the population. The idea that a place could 'pay' came to play a role in the 1950s, and the need for education, which was one of the watchwords from this period, was used against the population of the small places. But the expansion that started in a period with hunting stagnation and a growing population was apparently superseded at the beginning of the 1950s by a stagnation in population growth; and a boom for hunting after 1946 – to which we will return later – may also make it easier to understand the centripetal forces. In the same period some families moved to more southerly municipalities (Knudsen 1964:128-134). But one important factor – perhaps the most important one – could have been a process of technological renewal that permitted the use of the hunting grounds at the abandoned places to be continued.

The next 'expansion tendency' will not be discussed here. It happened when this hunting boom was followed by a decline at the end of the 1960s and it crossed Melville Bay to Savissivik in the Thule district. But this situation was so different that we can speak of a kind of migration. Whatever the purpose of the journey, most of these migrants returned to Upernavik Municipality in the course of the 1980s and 1990s.

Settlement formation during the expansion period

The expansion took place at a steady pace. Quite a few years could pass from one extension of the area until the next, and then there would often be a few years with a certain reshuffling of the settlement populations within the inhabited area. Some of this probably took place because certain places had been depopulated by the expansion, or had fewer inhabitants. But often it was known places that had been used for seasonal hunting that received immigrants.

For some reason there were periods of disturbance in the settlement formation throughout the district, not least in the northern district. There the inhabited area was expanded some 200 km to the north in the course of 75 years, while the southern expansion was mainly 25 km to the south, and for a short while was extended further by about 40 km. The other moves in the southern district happened when people filled up parts of the extensively utilized area.

The calm pace of the northward moves can probably be related to the fact that people regularly tried to ensure that contacts with the neighbouring groups were not broken off. There were always contacts from place to place – probably also because the area in between filled up after each expansion to the north. Only once was the usual distance of 20-40 km exceeded. This was in 1908, when a group of people moved to Illulik. There the distance from the nearest neighbour was 35 km. And the next year the distance was to rise to over 50 km. Illulik was abandoned for the first time as early as 1909. But the crucial reason for the quick depopulation may have been that the neighbours wanted to move to the south the next year, so that Illulik would become isolated. One probable reason for this was mentioned in connection with the distribution of specialized skills in Chapter 3.

In terms of hunting it could be important that the northward expansion went in the direction of better hunting grounds – almost virgin territory which people also knew something about already. But experience had shown that hunting got better and better towards the north. People travelled from regions where char fishing and caribou hunting could supplement the ordinary catch to new regions where these resources were scarce. But this was amply compensated by the better hunting of seal, narwhal and beluga, and not least polar bear, which could be caught most easily in the north, and which meant prestige for the hunter.

Ittuersuaq and Makkorsuaq and their family

Rink wrote that "Arpik", that is Aappi, was inhabited as early as 1850 (Rink 1855:194). The first people who moved to the north coast of Upernavik Isfjord were Nulooq's family. Hans Lynge states, without saying

when, that Nulooq once lived at Aappi (Lynge 1955:18). But in the account of him from the epidemic it was said that he fled to his relatives at Aappi, but found the place uninhabited, and had to travel on to Tartuusaq south of Upernavik Isfjord before he met living people (Olsen 1964:89; Nielsen 1955b:192). But Hans Lynge's statement that Nulooq lived at Aappi (Lynge 1955:34) was so detailed that it must have been based on a real situation. This was not in 1814, however, but 1850. The circumstances of Nulooq's journey to the north may, as discussed in Chapter 6, turn out to be different from the other cases, since the district viewed as a whole was more than 'the minimum hunting area'. Around Qeqertaq, where he lived, the hunting area was becoming squeezed in between other settlements. If we see his situation as a kind of migration, then this can probably also be seen as a kind of return migration (*cf.* Høiris 1975:13), if one can speak at all of a migration to an unpopulated area. He was registered as living at Aappilattoq.[3]

Nulooq himself, according to the parish register died in "Aukpadlartok" (Aappilattoq) in December 1858. However there are reasons to believe that he died at Aappi, not at Aappilattoq. The lack of a death date may indicate that his death was not listed in the parish register until May 1859.

His daughter Caroline Frederikke, about whom we have also heard as Ilarsooqaat, lived at Aappi too, with her husband Kakanngualooq, baptized Thomas Peter, and their children. Kakanngualooq or Thomas Peter lived in the same place, and is spoken of at their wedding as Nulooq's "servant", and was thus a dependent housemate who cannot have been related to Nulooq. It was not mentioned directly whether he had been admitted to the household by agreement – in that case he would not have been regarded as biologically related.

It was something of a venture to move to Aappi, because the place became isolated from the rest of the district from the autumn until February. In this period one could neither sail nor drive on a dog sledge across Upernavik Isfjord. Those of their children apart from the first two, who were listed with a date of birth in the autumn and the early winter, were baptized in February or March, that is at the time when it became possible to cross Upernavik Isfjord with a dog sledge. The children were listed without a date of birth. This strongly suggests that this family did not live at Aappilattoq itself, but that the other sources were right when they said that they lived at Aappi. The two oldest were however, as indicated, listed with a proper date of birth: Simon Ittui "Bear Hunter", born on 19th September 1848, and his younger brother Markus, Makkorsuaq, born on 24th May 1857. Simon may have been born at Qeqertaq in 1848. For we have no information about how long before 1850 Aappi had been settled. But he was not baptized until February the next year, the same day as his parents were married in the church. This on the other hand supports the possibility that the family had moved to Aappi before his birth. Makkorsuaq's listed date of birth could possibly be explained by his birth at a hunting site where others who could state the date were also present. At their baptism it was mentioned that the family lived at Aappilattoq. Their younger brother Jens Nikolaj Villads was also noted as having been born in "1859", and baptized on 8th February 1860 at Aappilattoq. But since Aappi was not mentioned at all in the book, "Aappilattoq" must mean Aappilattoq and its surroundings. The brothers grew up at Aappi, and lived there until 1892.

There were a good few stories about these brothers, but often in anecdotal form. Both became well known great hunters. The elder brother, Ittui, was in particular spoken of as a great hunter in a class by himself. He was a respected person, known as a great bear hunter. A story that Hendrik Olsen had translated from Danish without stating its source has a passage about Simon (Olsen 1964:95), showing that he was not without self-esteem. But in the published catch lists he was so to speak always outclassed by his younger brother. However, Ittui was a good deal older than Markus, and in that case his hunting must have declined around 1900.

In a catch list from 1880, where the hunters from Aappi were listed under Qassersuaq, they were each responsible through three seasons for about a hundred seals, Ittui for two narwhal, and Markus for six (*Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1861-1902).

When Makkorsuaq was born, other people lived north of them, but in 1892 both brothers moved to Kuuk north of Tasiusaq. At that time Paangu's family lived at Itilliarsuk south west of them, but now the brothers were farthest north, and two years later Markus moved a little farther north, to Mernoq on the same island (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 2).

After 1900 Ittui's catch was listed as 75-133 seals a year, while Markus could manage 100-200 seals a year. After the brothers died, probably in 1917, Markus' catch also began to decline, but the year before his death in 1923 his catch was 91 seals, still above average (*Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1903-39).

It should be said that both had sons who were great hunters, and for many older hunters this meant that they did not have to make such a great effort any more. Ittui's son, Karl Simonsen, made his debut in 1907 with 21 seals, but over the next few years his catch rose to 200, and in 1924/25 he had a catch of over 300 seals (*Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1903-39). He continued in his father's pioneering spirit. He was one of the three who were first to settle on Kullorsuaq in 1928 (Nielsen 1957c:206).

Makkorsuaq's son, Tobias, was also one of the greatest hunters. His catch was rarely less than 250 seals a year, and in one year he caught more than 300 seals. The smallest number he achieved in the catch lists to which I had access was 145 seals a year. The ordinary hunters rarely took more than 60-75 seals a year (*cf. Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1903-39).

Paangu and his family

Paangu was born around 1816 – when he married in 1838 he was described as "around 22 years old" (*Upernavik Ministerialbog 1*). The marriage took place at "Prøven" (Kangersuatsiaq). The little we know about his life before he moved north is mentioned in Chapter 4. In the census list from Upernavik in 1834 he was said to be living at "Prøven". According to the list he was the son of a widow called Silannguaq. In the same house lived a motherless girl called "Sukale". Her age corresponded more or less to that of Quneqitooq. According to the list she was the daughter of "Sibiak" (*Befolkningsliste fra Upernavik* 1833-1834). Sukale and Aviu lived in the same house – she was listed as a foster-child along with the children of a widow, Jonassine. She was given the name Ane on baptism in 1836. Gabriel Aviu/Paangu married her in 1838. On marriage she was described as approximately 15 years old, but according to other information she was born in 1819.

Gabriel Aviu and Ane got married at Kangersuatsiaq. Their first child, a daughter, was registered as having been born in "July 1840". The next five of their children, born in the period from 1842 to 1851, were all baptized at Prøven, and their dates of birth were given, which suggests that they lived at Prøven itself. The last child mentioned was in addition baptized at home the same day as she was born (*Upernavik Ministerialbog 1*). Kangersuatsiaq thus had to be the point of departure for their migration to the north. They moved to the northern district between 1851 and 1854.

Gabriel Aviu, best known by the by-name *Paangu,* is said to have been given it while the family was living at the most northerly point of all on the island of Paangutsit west of Tasiusaq. This was presumably a kind of honorific title for the man who moved away from the inhabited area, away from shops and other security towards the good hunting grounds. The family certainly lived at the place in 1854-56,[4] but probably also up until 1860. The two children who were stated to have been born at "Paguseq" were listed without any date of birth, and were only baptized when they were one year old. The next child, Benigne Marie, who was stated to have been born in 1858, also lacked a date of birth, and was not baptized until 1860, the year in fact that one can see that church services began in Tasiusaq. Gabriel Thimotheus Severin, who was born at "Pagusek" in "1856", was listed as having died at Tasiusaq in 1860, also without a death date, but his death was only entered in the parish register in 1864. Someone had forgotten to register it; the reason is hard to guess, but he must have died without any registration clerk nearby. For their youngest son, who was born in 1860, was listed as having been born in Tasiusaq. This is probably correct, since his date of birth was given. The family did in fact move to Tasiusaq in this period, and they lived in Tasiusaq at least until 1875. Then Paangu's next-eldest son, Elias Enok, was the *forstander* or supervisor, that is an elected member of the council (*cf. Upernavik Ministerialbog 1; Upernavik Ministerialbog 2*).

The family's settlement at Tasiusaq lasted a few years, that is from 1860 to 1876. Although Tasiusaq was the northernmost inhabited place, the family moved farther north in 1876 to Ikerasaarsuk/Itilliarsuk. After two years there, Paangu moved with a couple of their children to Uiorleq, where he lived at least until 1881, while the rest of his sons moved to Itilliarsuk. The Uiorleq group moved back to Itilliarsuk in either 1881 or 1882, and again became the northernmost West Greenlanders, as Ryder remarked on his visit (Ryder

1889:232). While Paangu was alive, no one in fact lived north of them in the district. Many of Paangu's descendants live to this day on the island he chose in 1876.

In 1882 Paangu was described as a "still active hunter", when he was about 66 years old. He died around 1888. Marteeraq spoke of him as a very old man who was carried on someone's back when he came for a visit, while his wife could still walk on her own, supported by a stick (Nielsen 1949:113). His wife died about three years later. Paangu was remembered as a fine great hunter but what is remembered today is more or less anecdotal in nature. Marteeraq described him as an old man who was not particularly self-important, and liked to tease the children in small ways (Nielsen 1949:115).



Fig. 23. Abel Danielsen carrying his kayak, at Itusaalik. In the background his umiaq, 1929. (Photo Frederica de Laguna).

Abel Danielsen

The description of Abel Danielsen as a great hunter is no exaggeration. In 1904/05 he lived at Itillilik a little north of Tussaaq. From that year right up to his death in 1938 he was always in the top rank of Upernavik's hunters (*Nordgrønlandske Fangelister* 1903-39). But we also know about his catches in the period 1927-31, when catches were otherwise stated as summaries per settlement, and where only the names of the three best hunters from each colonial district were mentioned. He was among these three.

Like the other people mentioned here he probably had a certain urge to try new places. In 1905/06 Abel Danielsen moved to Kuuk, which Simon "Bear Hunter" left when he went even farther north, to Itussaalik. In 1908/09 he moved with some other hunters to Illulik, a good distance north of the nearest neighbour. But the next year the whole group moved south, probably because their neighbours moved south, which would have left Illulik isolated, perhaps mainly because the distance from the nearest midwife would have become too great. The next winter the family had a daughter. Abel Danielsen then moved to Saattoq, from where he moved in 1915 to Tasiusaq, but after two years there he went north again, this time to Kittorsaq, and lived there until his death. He died during a journey to Thule (Bang 1943:131). Apart from the one year at Illulik he thus took over the northern pioneer settlements which the advance guard left to move farther north.

Daniel Johnsen

Daniel Johnsen's prime was shorter than that of the others mentioned. He was still a young hunter in 1904, when he lived at Uingasoq, but he moved to Saffiorfik in 1906. Saffiorfik was inhabited already. His catch there fluctuated somewhat. In 1910 he moved to Qulleq with some hunters from Saffiorfik and a couple of other hunters from Eqqorleq. Already the next year some of his fellow settlers moved back, but in their place a family came all the way from Søndre Upernavik. Over the next few years they lived together, and it was clear that Daniel Johnsen bore the place up. Qulleq was in fact depopulated when he moved to Eqqorleq in 1914. His catch amounted to some 200 seals a year. When he went to Eqqorleq his catch dropped to under 150, and quickly to under 100 a year. But from around 1922 it rose again to almost 150 seals a year. It dropped in the last two years to under 100, until he again disappeared completely from the catch lists in 1925. He was thus no trailblazer, but a leader on the smaller scale. He filled a niche and was the bearing force in the settlement of Qulleq a little north of Mernoq.

Vittus Jensen and Ludvig Eliassen

Vittus Jensen was not quite a convincing pioneer, but was one of those who settled the northernmost part of the district. He was a young hunter at Sarfaq in 1910, and he was an ordinary hunter when he moved in 1914 to Kuuk. Over the next seven years he moved around among Kuuk, Kittorsaq, Ikermiut and Illulik. When Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn was built in 1923, he was one of

the first residents, but the next year he moved to Illulik, from where he moved again the next year to the northernmost settlement that was founded, Qaarusulik. Three years later he was again one of the founders of a new settlement, Kullorsuaq, along with Karl Simonsen and Ludvig Eliassen.

There is in fact contradictory information about who Ludvig Eliassen was.[5] But the Ludvig Eliassen we can follow through the catch lists lived at first in Tasiusaq, where "Tuuaaq", Elias Isak Paulus, also lived. He lived there until 1908, but moved to Qaarsoq in the southern district. From there he moved to Aappilattoq in 1915, and lived there until around 1925, after which we cannot follow him for a couple of years. At Eqqorleq, where the catch list did not cite surnames, the name "Ludvig" appeared sometimes. This was in the years when his catch at Aappilattoq was poorer than otherwise; but as mentioned before, he moved to Kullorsuaq in 1928, and he lived there for the rest of his days except for one year, in 1931/32, when he lived at Illulik.

As a hunter he had his ups and downs. In some years his catch was some 35 seals a year, but most years it remained between 60 and 90 seals. In a few years he was among the better hunters. For example he achieved 172 seals in one year at Qaarsoq, and 110 seals in one year in Aappilattoq, and after the move to Kullorsuaq his annual catch reached around 120 seals for several years in a row. In the period 1934-37 he caught around 80 seals, and in the next two years it dropped to about 35. After this I could no longer find his name. But while he lived at Qaarsoq, he caught a caribou now and then, and in the north he caught 3-6 narwhals in the first few years, in fact up until 1936.

Who followed whom?

It is rather difficult to trace those who accompanied the above-mentioned pioneers. As long as people were listed as living at the nearest centre, it was only through casual events, especially church ceremonies, that one could trace any moves among the settlements around the same centre.

Of Kakanngualooq, Thomas Peter, we do not know whether he moved with the others to Aappi before he became Nulooq's son-in-law, but in that case he would have been a dependent, a "servant", as he was described in connection with his marriage to Nulooq's daughter. We do not know of him as a hunter, but he was at least a good teacher of his sons, who became some of the greatest hunters of their time.

But in 1878 a Peter Carl lived at Aappi. His 22-year-old son Ole Abraham got married that year to Emma, the daughter of Thomas Peter and Caroline Frederikke. Unfortunately Peter Carl's wife is not mentioned by name, but neither he nor she could have been true descendants of Nulooq, if their son could marry Nulooq's grandchild. In 1880 Peter Carl caught 24 seals, so either he was worn out or he was one of those who followed the pioneers. His son, Ole Abraham, who must have been 24 years old then, caught 50 seals that year. In that sense father and son appear to have been quite ordinary hunters.

On the other hand it would appear that Paangu and his family, during their occupation of Paangutsit, had no fellow settlers other than Tobias and Cathrine, who had a son, Severin Salomon Julius. In 1880 the latter lived at Kangersuatsiaq, so the family had probably followed Paangu's family from Kangersuatsiaq, and later returned. I could not find any other information about them. Since children were born at Paangutsit, it is conceivable that it was Cathrine who was the midwife there, and when Paangu's family again lived with other families, Tobias and Cathrine could return to Kangersuatsiaq. At any rate they returned at some point.

But at Tasiusaq the Paangu family acquired a number of fellow settlers. In 1871 60 people were noted as living at Tasiusaq. In 1874 the number was 84, but in 1876 it had dropped to 56, while there were 25 people at Ikerasaarsuk. Elias Isak Paulus, "Tuuaaq", was one of their fellow settlers at Tasiusaq, but he moved with the others to Ikerasaarsuk. Later Tuuaaq's family came back to Tasiusaq.

At Ikerasaarsuk/Itilliarsuk, besides Paangu's family, which by now consisted of several households, there was also the catechist's family from 1883 on.

At Ikerasaarsuk they also lived for a while with Paangu's daughter Benigne Marie and her husband Jonas Mathias, and they moved with them to Uiorleq. Jonas Mathias was however not one of the better hunters. His catch in 1880 was only 24 seals. But other fellow settlers were also mentioned; for example Ludvig Kristensen's family was mentioned, and another family, Taka's family, which could manage among other ways because his wife helped other families. Ludvig Kristensen was also one of the better

hunters. His catch in 1880 for example was 102 seals. From 1876 we also hear of a widow, Louise Sofie Frederikke, as one of those who moved with the others to Ikerasaarsuk. But her relationship with the other settlers is not clear. She could have helped with childbirths. It would appear that the family ensured that it had a midwife both at Paangutsit and Ikerasaarsuk.

When Ittuersuaq and Makkorsuaq moved to Kuuk, they were the only ones mentioned. It was suggested that it was the family who moved, but if the brothers-in-law went too, they could have afforded the help and the back-up that one could consider a necessary part of the pioneer settlements. According to the colony's designation lists there were three households at Kuuk. The third was probably Gaba Olsen's. His catch remained a regular 50-75 seals a year. He probably went with Makkorsuaq when the latter moved to Mernoq in 1894. At least there were now two households there, and only one at Kuuk. Some years later Gaba Olsen was registered as living with Makkorsuaq. We do not know anything about Gaba Olsen's wife; it may be that it was her skills that were needed at the pioneer sites. But in 1908 it did not seem to be the situation at Illulissuaq that Gaba's wife – if she was still the same person – could help at a childbirth in Abel Danielsen's family. Nor do we know anything about her family relationships.

At Saattoq three households lived in those years.

In the twentieth century it became easier to trace who moved with the settlers, since the official catch lists became highly detailed.

In 1903/04 several households would often live in the very new settlements. At Itillilik, besides Abel Danielsen's family, there also lived three other families: Gabrielsen, Mathiesen and Thomsen. At Naajaat there were two households, Petersen and Simonsen. At Eqqorleq there were the families Kristensen, Jensen and Petersen. At Sarfaq there were two households, Lynge and Olsen; at Itussaalik besides the two brothers Ittui and Makkorsuaq, there was also Gaba Olsen.

When Abel Danielsen moved to Illulissuaq in 1908, Gaba Olsen went too, as well as a Gabriel and Magnus Thomasen.

Daniel Johnsen, who moved to Qulleq in 1909, was accompanied by Samson Gabrielsen and Niels Johannesen, both of whom came from Saffiorfik, as well as Søren Jansen, who came from Eqqorleq. But as early as the next year these families travelled back, and in their place came a family called Sakariassen from Søndre Upernavik. Most "followers", apart from Samson Gabrielsen and Søren Jansen, were poorer hunters.

When the occupants of Itussaalik moved south in 1909, it only lasted a couple of years before they moved north again. Makkorsuaq's family moved to Kittorsaq without fellow settlers, while Ittui, who came back to Itussaalik, was accompanied by Isak and Pele Olsen.

In 1913 three families moved from Søndre Upernavik to Ikerasak, the families Juliussen, Eskildsen and Kragh Thomasen.

Makkorsuaq moved to Ikermiut in 1916, accompanied by his son Tobias, along with Vittus and Jonathan Jensen. But some of Makkorsuaq's family remained at Illulik.

In 1917 Jeremias Olsen's family moved to Appaalissiorfik, and Marteeraq was their fellow settler and catechist; he too was a very able hunter, but clearly not a full-time hunter.

Vittus Jensen, Tobias Petersen and the Gaba Olsen mentioned a few times above moved in 1923 to the newly founded trading post Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn, but already the next year Vittus Jensen and Tobias Petersen moved away from there again and in their place came Lauritz Eliassen, Mathias Petersen, Jens Nielsen and Hans Thorgiussen.

When Qaarusulik was settled in 1925, Karl Simonsen, Ittui's son and Vittus Jensen went along; other hunters were Gabriel Halsøe, Søren Lynge, Mathias Petersen and Mathias Karlsen. One notes that the family names in the last part of the expansion period were very different when such pioneers founded a new local community.

There can be no doubt that the great hunters who are described here as the pioneers in this expansion were necessary to the foundation of the new settlements in the periphery of the district. Nor can there be any doubt that it was these great hunters who took the initiative to move to an uninhabited place. But one might ask whether their less striking co-settlers – their fellow-travellers one could say – were not just as necessary. From South Greenland we have an account of a hunter who wanted to found a new settlement at an uninhabited place, but did not dare in the end, because no one would move out with his family

(*Sujumut* 1939:32). There may have been several factors that made the less striking fellow settlers necessary. One was that the personal environment became rather larger, and this must have lessened the disadvantages of a single household living in isolation. The other factor must have been safety and security – a household that lived in isolation was totally dependent on the life and health of the active hunters. If there was an extra hunter, the death of the great hunter might mean a serious decline in the household economy, but the extra hunter would be able to avert a disaster if the great hunter died or fell ill. A third factor might be that in the good season a great hunter might well catch more seals than the women in his household could process, and thus the 'fellow-travellers' helped to ensure sensible utilization of the hunting at the new place. Thus there was a point in less good hunters participating in the establishment of a new settlement. Not least in connection with major urgent tasks such as the covering of a kayak or umiak, the extra settlers would be a necessary guarantee that such jobs could be done. The supporters of the second family were the safety net of the group, and its women helped to ensure that in a busy situation utilization did not come to a halt. The children of the family were playmates, and in the longer term could help to increase the marriage market at the local level. In a couple of cases one can see that the heads of the accompanying families were growing old, and in that case the wife could help with a childbirth. This can be a very important factor.

To a certain degree the catechist or 'reader', who was also a hunter, probably fell into this role. This may be one reason why from 1883 it was ensured that there was a catechist or reader at the new settlements, although there are gaps in the record.

What made people move to new places?

We can try to see whether anything special had happened in the periods when there were disturbances in the settlement formation, that is around 1850, in 1854, 1860, 1876, 1881, 1892, around 1908, 1914, 1923, and 1925.

When the first part of the expansion started in the period before 1860, there were no proper catch statistics. But if we try to use skin purchases as a kind of parameter for sealing, we must ensure that they are integrated with the household economy at the settlement plan. Skin sales rose evenly until about 1845, and only after that time did they begin to fluctuate up and down, probably with the actual fluctuations in the hunting. Some of these fluctuations were quite drastic. What appeared to be the beginning of a boom was followed by a decline of some 25% in 1848/49, from 3,641 skins to 2,866. It was apparently from that year on that the settlement at Upernavik crossed Upernavik Isfjord. After that skin purchases in the district rose to over 4,000 skins in 1850/51, but in the course of the next two years they dropped again to under 3,500 skins. It is from this period that we know of the next pioneering settlement, when Paangu's family moved to Paangutsit. It was also in the same period that the settlement area was expanded in the southern district. Paangu's family moved between 1851 and 1854.

The next wave where we can see the beginnings of a social formation at Tasiusaq again followed a new striking drop when only 2789 skins were purchased in 1859/60. Although it is not quite certain what the relationship between hunting and skin sales was, the skin trade in the district had lasted so long that we must assume that the fluctuations in skin purchases were related to similar fluctuations in the hunting.

And then we have other indicators. From the superintendent's records it is evident that there was a period of scarcity at Tasiusaq in 1876. This followed a decline in hunting throughout the district, from 15,971 seals in 1873/74 to 9,423 in 1874/75, a drop of 40.6%. It was in the next year that Paangu's family moved to Ikerasaarsuk. And it is also striking that people moved from Søndre Upernavik to Amitsoq the same year (*Upernavik Ministerialbog* 2). In 1881 too there was talk of a decline in the hunted animals, and it was in that year that Paangu and his household moved north again.

At the time of the next change around 1892 there was again a very drastic drop in skin purchases in Upernavik. The decline was from 7,137 skins in 1890/91 to 6,744 in 1891/92 and further to 5,738 skins in 1892/93, a drop of 20% in two years. In other cases we have seen that the rise in skin purchases was delayed by about one year after drastic drops in the hunting. The decline in 1892/93 in skin purchases could thus correspond to a trough in the hunting in 1891/92. In the southern district there were moves to Ikerasak in 1891. In the northern district, besides an expansion of the area up to Kuuk, there were other changes, as

Paangu's family was split up again, as in that same year they spread to both Ikerasaarsuk and Nutaarmiut.

According to the 'adjusted' catch lists (*Statistisk protokol, Ministeriet for Grønland*) the sealing declined in the Upernavik district from 18,963 in 1903/04 to 12,007 in 1906/07, a drop of 36.7% over three years, but in the unadjusted records the drop was more drastic, from 13,092 in 1905/06 to 9,348 in 1906/07 (*Nordgrønlandske Fangelister 1903-39*), a drop of 29.6% in one year. I do not know the basis for the adjustment of these figures, but it does not seem to have been simply because some localities were missing; it also seems that those in charge wanted to correct changes they considered unexpectedly great. It appears that these were adjusted by replacing them with cumulative averages. But great changes from year to year were not only a local phenomenon. They appear uniformly over large areas, and seem more reliable as indicators of the fluctuations in the hunting than the 'adjusted' figures. They also corresponded to the disturbances in settlement formation. It was in these very years that new settlements were established both around Aappilattoq and in the southern district, but were abandoned very soon afterwards.

There was another kind of decline in the hunting around 1920, a generally steady decline from 11,823 seals caught in 1911/12 to 5,634 seals caught in 1922/23. There was also a disturbance and not least a northward expansion in the same period. Kuuk was populated again in 1913, and some people moved to Illulik again in 1914; and a couple of years later Appaalissiorfik was populated. At the end of this period Nuussuaq/Kralshavn was settled in 1923, although its foundation also had other aspects. But the disturbance in the hunting continued for a few years to come, and must be regarded as contributing to the foundation of Qaarusulik in 1925, and Kullorsuaq in 1928.

Around 1913, 1917 and 1918 there were also changes in the settlement in the southern district. These mainly concerned Ikerasak, but Uluaa too was inhabited for some years.

There are certain indications that in order to expand for a period one needed a surplus. After the establishment of Kullorsuaq there was in fact a slight decline in the hunting until the middle of the 1940s. In the 1930s there were probably two factors that counteracted further expansion: that settlers had in fact reached the boundaries of Melville Bay, and that they probably felt bound by an agreement, mentioned several times, with the Royal Greenland Trading Company not to expand the settled area.

But in the 1940s there was a striking scarcity of materials for building and hunting equipment, as Hendrik Olsen described in *Avangnâmioq* (Olsen 1948). Although the hunting dropped until about 1946, people are unlikely to have had the surplus necessary for a proper expansion, although they may well have wanted one. But the number of the settlements did not change either in that period. The closing-down of a number of the smaller settlements between 1946 and 1966 should however be viewed rather as a weakening of the centrifugal forces inasmuch as the hunting improved slowly, while at the same time the yield from the hunting rose. But then the situation was certainly more complicated, because one can also note that the need for education had become more pressing than before, and the formation of settlements without schools was thus unpopular. But at the same time the acquisition of motor boats in increasing numbers made it possible for the individual settlements to expand the utilization of the hunting area, supplemented with the establishment of hunters' huts that permitted the exploitation of hunting areas that had earlier been used from the isolated settlements. The relationship between hunting and settlement was no longer as simple as earlier, but there is no doubt that a decline in hunting could still intensify the urge towards expansion.

Ammassalik. The seasonal moves

The seasonal moves in Ammassalik Municipality seem to have been easier to predict than at Upernavik. The winter season was spent at the winter settlement, from August-September until April-May, while the spring and the summer were spent at various hunting camps (Holm and Petersen 1921:622f).

The regular places were the *ammassat* grounds in the Ammassalik fjord, which as indicated above in fact gathered the whole population of the district in June (Holm and Petersen 1921:623), and the two main camps for hooded seal hunting, to which people came around the middle of July (*ibid.* p. 623f) in the Kulusuk island group and the Aammaat island group. But other camps were known, such as Noorajik and Tasiilaartik

in Ammassalik, and Mannginnerseerpik on Ammassalik Island.

The purpose of camping at such places was to gather winter supplies, but it was a good opportunity too for gathering population groups, so there were plenty of social contacts, song-duels and trading; but another important factor was the possibility of agreeing on the next winter settlement and fellow settlers.

After much of the population had become Christian, it also became customary for the people of the whole district to gather at Tasiilaq, where they all attended a collective religious service and took communion before leaving for their own future settlements.

There seems to have been a tendency to regard regularly visited hunting camps in terms of 'first right to use'. A West Greenlandic civil servant who lived in Kulusuk at the beginning of the 1960s told me that after a stay at a hunting camp he was made aware that a certain family had its regular camp at the place. But this is the only time I have heard of this, and without further details.

In the summer there is also char fishing from a number of localities, mainly up the fjords. In Sermilik Paarnakajiit, Kaporniakkat and Kuugarmiit are often mentioned in connection with char fishing. But in Sermilik, Sapulit at Imartivaq is probably the most important fishing ground (*cf.* Robbe 1994:137). Ikkatteq at Ammassalik (Olsen 1998), as well as a large number of rivers, have stocks that migrate up in the summer, spend the winter in a lake and swim down again in the spring (Holm and Petersen 1921:587). At these camps there is also a good deal of sealing at the same time (*cf.* Sandgreen 1987:369).

In former times the spring hunting trips often took place in April, and also took the form of a combined umiak and sledge journey. At the hunting camp people lived in tents, but some of them lived at the actual winter settlement in a tent in the spring.

Technical innovations and some changes

At Ammassalik too the introduction of the gun meant that some hunting methods passed out of use. Creep-hunting seems to have been abandoned at a fairly early stage, while peep-hunting was remembered for a longer time, and was tried again for a few days in the winter of 1968/1969 at Iserteq. This was an attempt to revive the method, and it produced seals for the two-man team who tried it. But their fellow settlers presumably regarded it more or less as a curiosity.

When Ammassalik became a colony the gun technology was already familiar and had been developed in West Greenland, so the transition happened quite quickly. Since there was no land game it was in connection with sealing from ice and kayak hunting that the gun was used.

In East Greenland the older men used to defend their authority over their sons by saying that it was they who had taught the young men everything to do with hunting: methods, techniques, practical animal psychology etc. With the introduction of guns it was often the young men who instructed the older ones in their use. It must have detracted from the older men's authority that the roles were now reversed, and this may explain why the East Greenlandic cultural changes, both economic and social, took place more quickly than in West Greenland.

While the transition to the gun happened fairly quickly, the use of sealing nets assumed a more modest position in East Greenland. The experiments seem to have been more individual. Those who tried it were normally not hunters themselves and had net hunting as a secondary job. This may have been seen as meaning that sealing with nets was for secondary hunters; but several practical matters may also have had a limiting effect. The ice at both Ammassalik and Sermilik is less stable than at Upernavik, and although one could find many *tasiilat* – smallish fjords with a narrow opening – the number of lost seal nets may have been greater than at Upernavik. And then nets were probably more expensive at Ammassalik than at Upernavik (*cf.* Chapter 7). At Upernavik it was common to buy twine or spun nylon, and then one could make the nets oneself, while in the Ammassalik of the 1960s people preferred to buy ready-made nets. It is hard to say what role the hunter's pride played in the slow spread of net hunting.

With the increasing possibility of buying goods in Tasiilaq, home consumption of skins was probably felt to be more and more of a burden. Around 1930 seal skin was still used 'a good deal' in clothing (Rosing 1930:35), although Rosing did not specify what he meant by the expression. He probably meant especially in footwear, trousers and hunting and travelling clothes, for early in the colonial period one could already see widespread use of cotton and linen clothes

on the upper body. Thus we do not know how many of the 742 inhabitants of the district were then dressed in skins, how much of their clothing was made of sealskins, how many skins were normally used for someone's clothing, and how often old clothes were replaced with new, and how many sets one could have to change with.

But even the use of cotton materials and linen on the upper body must have released a quantity of skins for sale to the Royal Greenland Trading Company. For many years sales of skins were almost the only source of cash at Ammassalik.

It is easier to see the importance of the transition from skin tents to canvas tents (*cf.* Chapter 3), since 25 skins were used for a tent. Each year the ten skins of the outer covering had to be replaced because they were used to cover the houses (Rosing 1930:35). The same was true of umiaks, where the nine hooded seal skins of the covering had to be replaced every year. Since both skin tents and umiaks were superseded by canvas tents and wooden boats, the spring hunting trips had to be postponed just as at Upernavik. Probably about 1500 skins were used for these purposes.

The non-seasonal moves

The effects of the dwelling on non-seasonal mobility can be seen in two periods at Ammassalik. The first is the period towards 1930 in connection with the dissolution of the communal house and the rise of several both primary and composite communal house settlements. Already at this stage there was a slowing-down of the moving around that took place from one communal house to another. We can see that the winter settlement became more permanent at the same time as the average number of occupants per house declined.

Table 10 (p. 145) shows that the change was slow until around 1925, after which it speeded up with moves away from the communal house. Around 1950 the average number of occupants was at more or less the same level as at Upernavik around 1880, and after this the turnover in winter settlements was also at the same level in both districts.

Several things contributed to this development. One factor was the increasing use of wood in houses. Wood was bought by individual fathers of families, and this accorded with the fact that the skins sold were the property of the nuclear family. With less turnover at the winter settlements the number of very small settlements in particular began to decrease. Living in isolation for several years running was clearly not attractive, not least when most family members had difficulty leaving the settlement.

The second phase was also associated with the growing use of wood, and in particular after the renewal of the available housing around 1950 this tendency made a strong impact. I have no specific examples of how much the cod fishing in the 1950s contributed to more permanent settlement, yet it is clear that a fisherman would benefit from living at the actual trading place. The cod fishing must therefore have affected both the seasonal and the non-seasonal settlement.

Settlements and population figures

Here we will deal mainly with the core area, which can also be said to lie along a coastal stretch – one, however, that is less straight than at Upernavik. Here too there are uninhabited stretches on both sides.

In the period 1884-1894 we do not know so much about the settlement movements. In 1884 twelve settlements were registered, eight of these in the Ammassalik settlement area, and four in the Sermilik area. In reality there were presumably thirteen settlements, since the Kunnak group was mentioned several times as living at Ikertivaq; but we do not know which year this was. In 1894 there were only nine, and of these only two were in Sermilik (Holm and Petersen 1921:590-91.). An interpretation that assumes that Ammassalik was well on its way to being depopulated because of hunger and murder has been refuted in Chapter 3. Sermilik's population in particular had gone south, to the South East Greenlanders' old area, and had not come back yet. In 1901, seven years after the establishment of the colony, the population had reached 436. An increase in population of 76.5% in seven years is hardly something a group on the verge of extinction could manage through reproduction alone. In addition we know that Ilinngivakkeeq's family remained in West Greenland.

In both 1884 and 1894 people lived by the Sermiligaaq fjord, and people were also said to be living at Ikertivaq, at least in 1884/85.

In Tasiilaq itself only the colonial employees lived at the place, but in 1896 people came to Ittimiit, proba-

bly Mitsuarniannga's family; but very quickly houses were built for catechumens who were given baptismal instruction for two years, after which they returned to their home region. But new catechumens came each year, so when the two-year catechumens left, new ones joined those who had started the preceding year. Thus the population figures for Tasiilaq changed from year to year. Until 1904 all the catechumens had to live in one house, but in 1905 there was so much progress with the mission that they had to expand the houses. Around 1917-19, when my best informant about these things, Massanti Aqipi, went to baptismal preparation, the catechumens still had to live in two houses, also because two other mission stations had been established in the meantime. In a way this accorded well with the tradition that the composition of the group of catechumens changed every year, while the individual candidates for baptism were at the place for two years. The last group of catechumens, from 1919-21, could probably live in three communal houses. But it was only from 1924 on that the population development at Tasiilaq began to resemble that of other colonies, with changes in very few people a year. The two new mission stations, Kulusuk from 1909 and Kuummiit from 1916, underwent a similar development.

In the main, the development of the Ammassalik and Upernavik districts was very similar, since very few people came from the outside. In general the changes expressed the difference between live births and deaths. The number of inhabitants at Ammassalik passed 700 in 1922, and in 1924 it reached 735, but in 1925 the figure fell to 659, when Ittoqqortoormiit was founded, mainly with a contingent from Ammassalik. The next striking drop in the population was between 1935 and 1937, a decrease from 875 to 831. This was mainly due to the severe influenza epidemic, which has been dealt with elsewhere.

As long as hunting was the main occupation the development in the population could also be seen from the number of inhabited places. In 1894 for example nine settlements were registered; over the next two years the number of settlements rose while people returned from South East Greenland, but stabilized at 13-14 settlements by 1901. By then everyone had come back. It developed slowly upward, reaching 20 settlements in 1930. In 1933 it reached 26 settlements, and peaked in 1935 with 28. After that the number of settlements remained around 20 until 1955. In this period very new settlements appeared in the core area; the figure was reduced to around 12-13 in the next few years; in the 1960s it reached 15-17, in connection with the utilization of the marginal district. The drop in the number of settlements in the middle of the 1950s, and especially the fact that several settlements reached populations of over 300, may well indicate that hunting was no longer the only occupation and cod fishing had made its appearance. One important reason was probably the renewal of housing with new wooden houses. There are a number of parallel processes at Ammassalik and Upernavik, also in connection with the increased use of wood in the houses.

Growth and change in the settlements

While we can regard Upernavik Municipality as a continuous social formation, it is only the core area in Ammassalik Municipality that we can view in the same way. Contacts among the settlements are possible all year round, although ice cover and the breaking-up of the ice can close the individual settlements for some weeks. Throughout the period for which we have registrations, Ammassalik and Sermilik were inhabited, while Sermiligaaq and Ikertivaq were uninhabited for a few years. Nevertheless they are included in the overall settlement pattern as long as we are working with the core area.

For much of the period discussed here there have been largish settlements in Ammassalik, even if we disregard the mission stations, which had changing population injections of families preparing for baptism. But outside these too it was not uncommon to find settlements with 30-40 inhabitants, especially in the time of the communal houses. On the other hand there was more of a turnover in co-settlers and housemates, and the population of the local community also changed more than at Upernavik, even during its expansion period. At Ikkatteq there were 13 inhabitants in 1894, but 27 the next year, 45 in 1896 and 22 in 1897. It then became uninhabited for a few years, probably because the families went to baptism preparation, and after a period with some 30 inhabitants, there were 44 inhabitants in 1904, and 23 the next year. After this came an extended period when the population changed every year, between 14 in 1900 and 46 in 1917. This is a good example of a very changeable population figure, clearly confirming that the population of the individual settlement in a particular year depend-

ed on the agreements reached at the summer camps. There are not so many examples of two consecutive years where the same families appear to have remained living together, for example 1911 with 19 inhabitants and 1912 with 21, 1921 with 25 inhabitants and the next year with 25, and finally 1938 and 1939 with 44 inhabitants for each year. After 1955 it seems that this turnover in co-settlers was checked somewhat, as the population remained around 80, but after 1960 it descended to around 40. It would appear that Ikkatteq made a strong contribution to the exploitation of the marginal district that became common in this very period. But the changing population figures may also be related to the fact that a midwife lived at the place. In the years when the Aqipi family lived on the island, there was a new child every year.

How technological innovation affected settlement is less clear at Ammassalik because we cannot always distinguish between proper motor boats and boats with outboard motors, which are normally smaller than motor boats, but generally faster. They are also used to a greater extent in the actual hunting. There are not as many restrictions on their use as at Upernavik, but they also make it possible to utilize the hunting grounds in the abandoned settlements in the core area. Another factor was the growing percentage of fishing in the district. It was first and foremost Sermilik and Ikertivaq that could still be regarded as hunting areas.

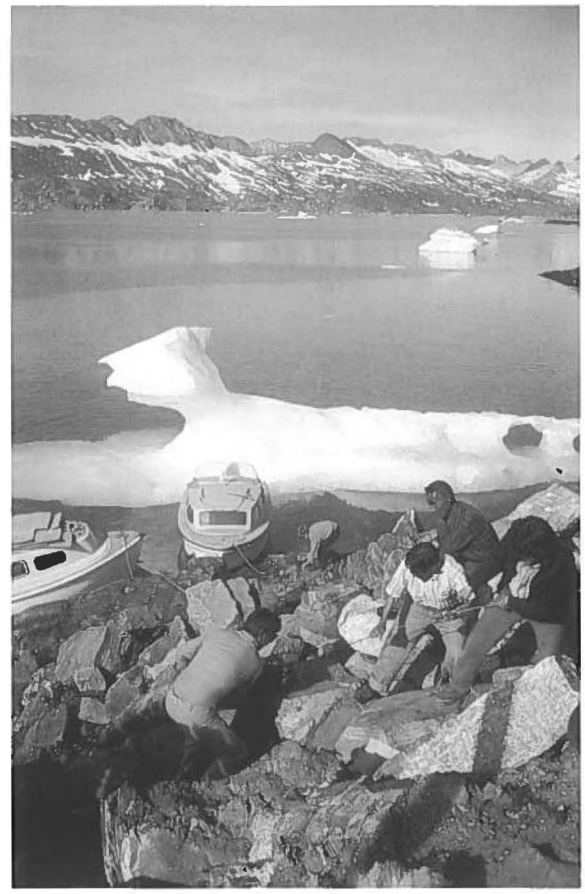

Fig. 24. Bladder nose seal hunting from boats with outboard motors, Kuummiit, 1987. (Photo H.C. Gulløv).

In a way it is also more difficult to base the limits of the areas of small settlements on population alone, because the settlements that were only inhabited for single years had larger numbers of inhabitants than the settlements in Upernavik Municipality.

Eeqqivatsaat at Sermiligaaq was inhabited by twelve people in 1895, and by 21 in 1902, but from 1906 it was inhabited throughout a long period of years.

Ikaasak was inhabited by 25 people in 1900, and Qinngeq by 21 in 1902. Akerninnaq was inhabited by 26 people in 1899 and by 23 the next year; while Innartalik was inhabited by 23 people in 1901, and after a few years it was inhabited by 39 people and by 41 the next year, and was then again inhabited by 25 in 1914, when the informant Massanti Aqipi's family lived there, and it was finally inhabited in 1930-1934 by a population of 17-23.

In 1935, when the number of settlements peaked, there were also a number of settlements that were not inhabited in the preceding and following year. These were the above-mentioned Eeqqivatsaat, Noorajik in Ammassalik Fjord, Innartuaq at Sermilik, Toqqulak at Ikertivaq, all in the core area, and Pikiitti and Umiivik in the southern marginal district and Kangersuttuaq in the northern one.

If we look at the distance between the northernmost and the southernmost settlements, there were few changes in the core area, which is continuous, while the utilization of the outer districts varied greatly and is more difficult to calculate since there were unutilized areas between the various inhabited places there.

If it is difficult to relate these changes to one another from year to year, the distance between the northernmost and southernmost settlement can be viewed in terms of ten-year averages and will in fact exhibit the same tendencies as at Upernavik, since the average distance between the northernmost and

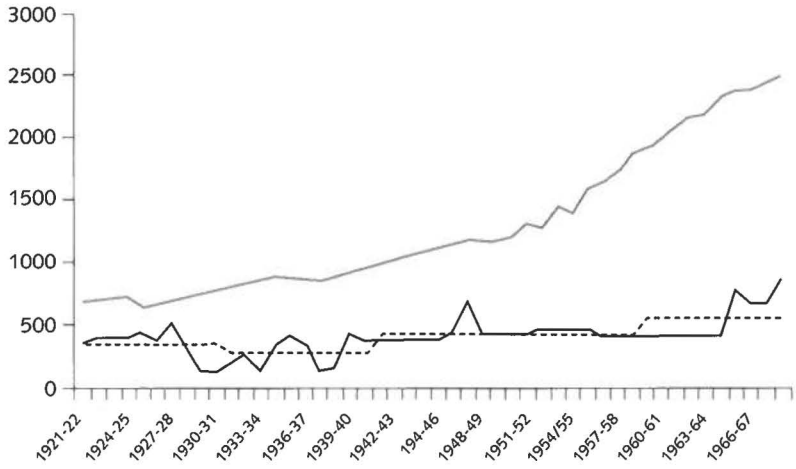

Fig. 25. The lower solid line shows the distance between the northernmost and southernmost settlement in the Ammassalik district 1921-1968, while the dotted line indicates 10-year-averages. The upper line indicates the population rising steadily from 663 in 1921 to 2509 in 1968. (*Sammendrag* 1946, VII; *Grønland* 1968, 1969-1970).

southernmost settlement also grew with the growing population figures.

In Fig. 25 new arrivals in Ittoqqortoormiit are no longer counted together with the Ammassalik population, while new arrivals in the Skjoldungen area, which is within the boundaries of the outer district, are included.

I was unable to collect information about any leaders of such settlement movements, as was possible in connection with the expansion in the Upernavik district. Since the settlement of the following winter was normally agreed at the hunting camps, one can imagine that the oldest among those who reached a common agreement would automatically become 'leaders', but probably with no further role than informing all those who were parties to the agreement.

A summary for both districts

In this section I will deal with some norms in a way I would like to call a *postfunctional* treatment. They are viewed in terms of norms that were changed, or lost their function in the society. They might still be maintained to a certain extent, and the lost function might be manifested in various ways.

In both areas there is a clear correlation between a disturbance in the hunting and a disturbance in settlement – especially when the total area continues to be too small for the population. In this situation a drastic decline in the hunting means an expansion of the area or some other way of filling out the space. This happens in particular if a decline continues for several years in a row.

This looks simple enough. But if we see settlement formation as a result of the need for economic expansion on the one hand, and the need to maintain social relations on the other, we must also ask the question whether there is a relationship between booms in hunting and concentration tendencies.

There are probably a number of factors that have to be considered together here. It may be a matter of thresholds that have to be exceeded. An attempt has been made to describe the drastic contraction of the total hunting area at Upernavik, and the presumed reduction of the population to a third. In connection with the closure of a number of small settlements during the actual expansion period we look at the areas from which people moved to the north as a kind of filling-out of the 'gaps' that arose.

In this connection we must not forget that the rising population is in itself a kind of change which in the long run means that the hunting yield per individual must be slowly undermined.

Various needs were described in connection with hunting and settlement: economic needs, social needs, security needs, the needs of the families, all of which preferably had to be fulfilled. Now we will look at them in terms of the American psychologist Abraham Maslow's (1908-1970) analysis of human needs, and his classification of them in a scheme known as 'Maslow's Pyramid' (Hansen and Jensen 1976:345ff), which puts the basic physical needs at the base of the pyramid, with safety and security needs immediately

above them, and then the social needs higher up, with the personal needs at the top. This was more or less intended for modern industrialized societies with various kinds of professionalized service institutions, but it is still useful here with some adaptations, among other reasons because it enables us to place wishes in relation to needs.

In the Greenlandic settlement society the physical needs must be related to the economy, clothing and housing, regeneration, and presumably also means of transport.

The economy requires that one has knowledge of animals, their occurrence and behaviour. This requires tools and technology that make it possible to procure the animals and make them useful. The technology leads to the development of hunting implements and means of transport, and modes of treatment that enable people to preserve the residual products from the good hunting seasons for the poor ones.

In the natural surroundings of the Arctic clothing is essential, especially warm clothing against the winter cold and for hunting and visiting trips. In addition heating methods are indispensable so one can keep warm, cook food and dry clothes.

Dwellings were generally turf houses in the winter and tents in the summer. In neither of the two districts was the igloo used. The advantage of the turf house or the turf-and-stone house was that one could find the materials, turf and stone, on the spot. One could build the house oneself. The other materials, wooden supports and skin proofing, and windows of gut casing, were things one could obtain and work. The same was true of hunters' huts. The tent required a bearing wooden construction and many seal skins. To procure these skins it was often necessary to go on seasonal journeys to good hunting grounds.

Already for these purposes it was necessary to have a family travelling boat and other means of transport such as a kayak and dog sledge in both districts.

Many of the arrangements were also due to the household-based organization and division of labour.

If the family was to survive beyond one generation, it had to reproduce. The framework for this was marriage, between a man and a woman who were not closely related, and who were both of reproductive age. Since, because of the incest tabu, one had to look for a spouse among the households who were not most closely related, it would not be possible to live in isolation for extended periods. Marriage was the framework for regeneration. With communal property rights and with a division of labour between male and female work, the upbringing of the children was a shared task for a woman and a man, the father and mother. The father had to procure materials for food and clothing, and the mother had to make the catch usable as food, clothing etc. Since the children could not contribute so much to meeting the needs of the household until they were 15-20 years old, they had to be supported throughout that period, and to be taught the ordinary skills so that they would be able to cope as adults in their new family formation, and in the end the children – especially the sons – would swap roles with their parents as far as support was concerned. Although we are still talking about the economy here, it is difficult to do so without dealing with the mode of organization.

The type of occupation and the technology made it necessary for the families to disperse at some point, but the need for regeneration and security set limits to how much they could disperse for long periods at a time.

The next level in Maslow's Pyramid is security. Since the household is an economic and legal unit, security is a matter of real dangers from nature and social dangers due to the fact that frictions between households with equal status could develop into full-scale hostilities without any outside authority to smooth things over.

Since the households formed self-supporting groups where the men's hunting was the basis of existence, the relationship between the hunter of the family and the size of the family as a whole was an essential factor. The hunting took place on the sea and on the ice in the two districts, and sudden storms could arise that could quickly endanger travellers and break up the ice in the winter. The current too could undermine the ice from below. In such a situation there was a chain of interrelationships that could be of great importance to the survival of the family. First and foremost, it was dangerous to live in isolation, dependent on the life and health of one hunter or a couple of hunters. But in addition security was built up through knowledge of dangerous passages, the dangers of angry animals, and knowledge of the signs of changes in the weather. Besides this knowledge, training in

dealing with bad weather and keeping out the cold was necessary.

The dwelling was also a kind of security in the Arctic winter. It had to be well insulated, and it had to be possible to heat it and ventilate it. And it had to be proof against changes in the weather in the winter. This may in fact be the reason why the igloo had been abandoned as a temporary winter dwelling in both districts. One could lose it because of a sudden spell of warmer weather, and if this was quickly followed by a new cold spell one was in trouble. One would be likely to get wet under a melting igloo.

Another danger could lie in disputes with other people. It was probably easier to deal with personal disputes through song-duels, while disputes between families might more easily end in blood feuds.

But security also required insurance against hard times. The preservation methods used as safeguards against a poor hunting season were very important. It was presumably also very important that one participated through the meat gift system in the distribution of food to those without supporters, thus ensuring oneself a reasonable chance of survival when one was unable to support oneself later.

The fact that widows with children who could not support the family often went to live with members of their original family is also a matter of security in the longer term, i.e. of the training of the children, especially the sons as hunters, and the possibility of receiving instruction when in some way – through exchanges or working for others – they were able to get a kayak and hunting equipment. This kind of instruction in the use of hunting tools, but also in practical knowledge of the behaviour of the animals, was also of fundamental importance to their security.

But another aspect of security which was dealt with in connection with the expansion period was the establishment of a new settlement such that within one day one could contact the neighbouring settlement, either to get a night's accommodation or to fetch help from someone who had a special skill.

The next level of needs, the social needs, has actually been discussed a few times, partly in connection with 'the physical needs', partly in connection with 'the security needs'. Living in the Arctic required not only that one could keep breathing; being able to eat required not only the presence of the resources, but suitable tools and knowledge, based on the experience of many generations. Thus the physical needs, security needs and social needs were intermixed, because the needs for food, heat and security could not in fact be met without socialization. And in this case the low level of social organization with no shared social leadership and with a strong division into men's and women's work was also a precondition of the form of socialization – the need for marriage because children who would not be able to fend for themselves for many years to come – whether male or female – needed supporters, teachers and protectors who were combined in the same individuals.

The social needs were also met through special property rights to the communally owned resources and to hunting produce, where the catches belonged to the individual families, such that the materials prepared from the catches also belonged to the same families, while the worked objects – including tools, clothes and toys – were owned by the individual user. But this was not just a matter of usufructuary rights, for this property right also involved the exclusive right to alter the object, to give it away, to sell it etc.

The solidarity was firm within a household, but was actually fairly loose beyond the household. One could easily share a settlement or a dwelling with others, and one could easily dissolve this relationship on suitable occasions.

The settlement had a shared resource area, especially with respect to the permanent stocks of animals, but in addition a settlement group, that is certain settlements within the same geographical boundaries and with regular contacts with one another, would share the right to hunt migrating animals, which meant that families from different settlements often shared a camping place. Of course this required regular contacts so that people within a settlement group not only knew one another but also knew in the hunting season which places within the shared resource area were used and by how many families.

This settlement group would also share the ability to invoke the assistance of people with special knowledge or skills, for example shamanistic knowledge or midwifery, and a person with this special knowledge would be fetched from his or her settlement when the need arose.

There was also a need to learn what knowledge was essential, perhaps as much for practical reasons as any others. Society as such considered murder unac-

ceptable, but revenge killing was a duty. While the society thus distinguished between wrongful and non-wrongful manslaughter, its attitude was one of very strict non-intervention, which meant that a killing became a matter between the families of the killer and the victim. In this case non-intervention was almost impossible, and the issue of 'right' or "wrong" was in fact neutralized. The killing of a family member – from the perspective of the victim's family – was viewed as an attack that required an action of the same kind but in the opposite direction. The justice that is on the one hand part of the need for security, on the other a need for socialization, was thus separated from the issue of right or wrong. It was turned into an 'account' between two families. We do however know of some stories where the personal need for security permeates the whole situation. The closest revenger makes himself skilled and strong, but his knowledge that he could well become the next victim if he carried out the revenge killing means that the revenge killing is not always carried out, although this means that the closest revenger must thus disregard (his notions of) the need to relieve his mind by having done his duty.

I have attempted to distinguish between physical, security-related and social needs, but have had to concede that they are interwoven, since the physical needs in the Arctic require security needs, and both require knowledge without which one risks starving to death and perishing in the wilderness.

But the account also touches on the fact that hunting as an economic basis can be affected not only by fluctuations in the hunting conditions, but also by a rising population.

Where the individual catch declines in relation to the resource area of a settlement, there is a growing need to expand the area. In that case it is mainly the good hunters who take the initiative for the expansion. This may be because of a wish to maintain their status as great hunters, and it may be in order to preserve their independence; it was also part of the ideal that one could demonstrate one's competence by remaining less dependent on a 'safety net' such as daily access to a shop. There is no doubt that this urge towards expansion had economic causes. But the pioneers also underpinned their status and the admiration they built up through meeting the need for achievement and performance.

They also set themselves their own goals for self-realization, where they found their own confirmation by pitting themselves against their surroundings – especially when others followed in their footsteps, which would certainly have given them satisfaction.

Given these needs in a small community with a low level of organization and with primary occupations, that is without professionalized social services, the individual household had to ensure its own economic basis, its own justice, its own insurance system and the family-based education of the children, and the basic needs were met in a system where the physical, security-related and social needs were more or less conditions for one another, simply in order to maintain the status quo, while the need for achievement and performance and for self-realization made people with a certain status take the initiative in situations that were becoming problematical.

Notes

1. The figure given is in fact 93 km, but if one looks at the distance from Kangersuatsiaq to Kingittoq, and from Kingittoq to Upernavik, the figures are 38 and 25 km respectively.
2. In the official population from the Greenland Administration's "Statistical Register" Upernaviarsuk was not listed as inhabited, while the population of Qaarsoq was correspondingly larger.
3. It was a characteristic feature of both this and the following family that birth and death dates were missing in several cases. While for the settlers at Aappilattoq one could always state birth and death dates, most children in this family were only registered with the months or even only the years of their birth and death. Winter baptisms for this family took place either in the last half of February or at the beginning of March, even when the children were born in the autumn months. Aappilattup Ikera/Upernavik Isfjord, which separates Aappi from Aappilattoq, cannot be crossed by boat or sledge from November to February. This supports the idea that Nulooq's family lived at Aappi, not at Aappilattoq, regardless of the fact that according to the population they were supposed to live there.
4. According to archives in Upernavik, Tasiusaq became a trading post in 1853, and we must assume that Paangu's family moved to Paangutsit in that year.
5. The one possible Ludvig Eliassen was born in 1882 at Itilliarsuk, then the northernmost settlement in the district. He was the son of Elias Enok and thus a descendant of Paangu. Hans Lynge's information about Ludvig Eliassen, that he was born in 1886 as the son of "Paangu's son Tuuaaq" (H. Lynge 1967:12f) has the flaw that his source, Marteeraq, distinguished clearly between Elias Enok, whose children were given the surname Eliassen, and

Tuuaaq. There was in fact another Ludvig Eliassen. He was born in 1886, the son of Elias Isak Paulus, also called Tuuaaq in the parish register. But this Tuuaaq's parents were Simon Cornelius, also called Uumajaaq, and his wife Regine. Tuuaaq was thus not a son of Paangu. Marteeraq did not mention the youngest of the four brothers – that is if he was not called Tuuaaq – inasmuch as he in fact spoke of "Tuuaaq" as one of the four brothers. Severin Villads Jens also had a son, who also had "Ludvig" as a middle name. But according to the parish register he had "Villadsen" as his surname. If the Ludvig Eliassen with whom we are concerned here was the son of Tuuaaq (Elias Isak Paulus), all the information fits him except that he was supposed to be a grandchild of Paangu and Quneqitooq.

Chapter 6

Hunting areas and the growing population

Upernavik

As mentioned several times, there was an expansion from Aappilattup Ikera/ Upernavik Isfjord up towards the southern boundaries of Melville Bay between *c.* 1850 and 1925, increasing the utilized coastal stretch of *c.* 56 km by a further 200 km, that is almost fivefold.

During the same period the population rose from 328 in 1840 (*Sammendrag* 1942, I:419) to 1,132 in 1925 (*Statistisk protokol, Ministeriet for Grønland*:1938), thus almost quadrupling. All other things being equal, this should have meant an improvement in the economic basis, provided that the value of the catch remained more or less unchanged. But this increase in inhabitants was not the same for all settlements.

Since we observed already in Chapter 2 that a reduction in the population, probably to one third, was matched by a corresponding reduction of the utilized coastal stretch to a third, it would seem that there is a connection between the size of the utilized area and the population when there is a possibility of expansion. The simple thing about such a solution is that one really did not need to change so much in the form of utilization.

Throughout this stretch the utilized area has been estimated by saying that the ice used for the winter sealing extended some 30-35 km from the mainland coast (Haller 1979:176). Haller's focus on this factor is based on the assumption that there is no land hunting of any significance, as is also evident from the title of his work.

During his stay at Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn of almost a year, with a detour to the Nutaarmiut region, Haller registered the hunting trips of some selected hunters, mapping the individual hunting trips in different seasons and remarking on the yield. These studies confirm the general notion that utilization takes place partly in the close area which can in fact vary slightly from one place to another, and partly in the marginal zone. Some of the hunting is done from kayaks, other trips are made in motor boats; but in the winter the hunting trips are normally made by dog sledge. This means in fact that the close zone is different in the summer and winter. To calculate the utilized area, it is necessary to calculate how much the individual dog-sledge trips cover – Haller indicates the sledge route – and here we assume that a stretch of a couple of kilometres on each side is in fact scanned for seals during such a trip. This assumption is true in the sense that the hunter watches out on both sides, but the distance has not been confirmed.

On the basis of the length of the coast, the width of the ice cover and the area of islands and stretches of land that must be subtracted, the total hunting area in Upernavik Municipality is calculated here. Given the traffic in the municipality, it is estimated that the total hunting areas of two settlements are always contiguous, and in fact overlap. For the same reason it was most practical to draw the boundary of a settlement's total hunting area midway between them. It is not certain that this is all utilized all the time, but as can be seen from Fig. 4, we also allow for unutilized areas – or unutilized resources – in each hunting area.

In connection with the division of the total hunting area into the everyday hunting area, the extensively utilized part and the unutilized area, we can try to estimate the hunting area utilized on an everyday basis. As could be seen from the Central Greenlandic hooded seal hunting, we must assume that the limit for the size of this area is a maximum radius of 10-12 km from the settlement. This is the kayak's daily radius of action when it also has to be used to tow the catch back. That this makes sense one can see from many memoirs by the children of West Greenlandic hunters which agree on one point: in the hooded seal season many days could pass when they saw nothing of their father (*cf.* Petersen 1996:282). When they woke up he had gone hunting, and they fell asleep before he came home from hunting. But since these accounts were from the Central Greenland settlements with several hundred inhabitants, we must assume that this distance was close to the limit of the daily radius of action. At Upernavik this situation was known from the *uuttoq* hunting (E. Mørch, pers. comm.).



Fig. 26. Hunters from Tasiusaq uncovering a meat cache, 1966. (Photo Ole Hertz).

There must be a shorter distance from the boundary of this area in the small hunting settlements with 10-20 inhabitants. Lacking sources similar to those for Central Greenland, I will stick to the fact that in Upernavik Municipality there is a stipulation prohibiting the chasing of seals in a motor boat for a distance of 5 km from the settlement (*Nalunaerutit* 1965:36). In the summer the area with a 5 km radius was zoned for kayak hunting alone.

This stipulation was thus justified by the use of the kayak, and in Upernavik the kayak really was used for hunting. Even on journeys made by motor boat the kayak was used for the actual hunting at the sealing grounds. And the kayak was also used for ice-edge hunting, where it was taken in a sledge to the ice edge and used there, not only to fetch the killed animals, but also to get out on to ice floes from which the hunters could catch seals (*cf.* Rosendahl 1967:87-102, 275).

But this means that the everyday hunting area must have been different in the winter, when the dog sledge was used for both net hunting and *uuttoq* hunting. In this case, however, I lack material with which to estimate the distance from the settlement for the everyday hunting trips. According to Haller's registration one can assume that an area of 75 km^2 is scanned every week (*cf.* Haller 1979:132-136). But whether this is the same 75 km^2, whether it is circular, square or three oblong areas I cannot say. The weekly estimate must also allow for the fact that the nets are inspected three days running in about three different directions; and finally, the stated distances need not be in a straight line.

In fact I cannot really use this for anything beyond the theoretical point that part of the total hunting area is used as the everyday hunting area, and the utilization could be intensified by changing the distribution of hunting between the everyday and the more extensive hunting areas. We could for example see this when people moved out from Itilliarsuk, where the

everyday hunting area was tripled by the establishment of two new settlements, while the total hunting area remained unchanged for the group as a whole. All the people at the three settlements on the island were related. The same does not seem to be the case with some moves from Aappilattoq to certain islands within the total area.

Today the total hunting area at Upernavik Municipality is estimated as 9,443 km², but in 1840 it was only 2,340 km² for a population of some 330 people, almost all of whom made their living from hunting. This meant a total hunting area of 7.1 km² per inhabitant, and thus must presumably be regarded as sufficient, as will also be evident from the following.

In 1848, because of the growing population, the hunting area per inhabitant had dropped to 6.9 km², and as such would also have met the population's needs. But when we look at the individual settlements, and not least at Qeqertaq/ Qaamaneq, from which the northern expansion started, probably in 1848, the situation seems to have been cramped. There were several settlements within Aappilattoq's present hunting area: Inussuk and Qaamaneq, and to some extent Tunoqqu, took up the outermost part of the archipelago, and within these Saattoq and Ammaasaq squeezed Qeqertaq's hunting area, which was only about 175 km²; since there were 37 settlers there a little before 1850 (23 at Qaamaneq plus the 14 who later moved to Appi), the hunting area was 4.7 km² per inhabitant.

1848 is mentioned in particular because it was the year in which Aappi north of the ice fjord was probably populated. This cannot be seen from the censuses, since the population of Aappi, as we have seen, was counted together with that of Aappilattoq. But for one thing Rink mentioned in 1855 that Aappi was inhabited in 1850, and for another the pioneering family had a child in 1847, and this was one of the few children from that family who were registered with a date of birth. The family then lived at a place where the date could be registered. Since a number of the boy's siblings were only listed with the month in which they were born, and a few times even only with the year, it is highly likely that the family still lived together with others when the boy was born, but lived separately in the subsequent years.

We have seen that the head of the household, Nulooq, lived in his younger days in the northern end of the district, which at that time extended north of Tasiusaq (Lynge 1955:15). But this whole area was depopulated in 1814, and Upernavik Isfjord was for many years an effective limit to settlement. The fjord, as mentioned before, was impossible to cross from some time in November until some time in February, which would expose a single isolated family north of the fjord to a serious risk if anything were to happen to the family supporters in November. This would have been fatal. Since Nulooq himself knew the possibilities of the area, it was probably the security aspect that delayed the move to the north. In reality the Aappilattoq-Qaamaneq hunting area had been too small for some years, but in the end someone had to take the risk. The risk was of course greatest for a single family with one or two hunters as supporters; as soon as there were two families, the risk would be considerably lessened for the group as a whole. This could be managed by persuading others to go along; but for some reason it was only one family that moved out at first. Since Nulooq was the last adult who did not wish to become a Christian, one could imagine that he wanted to get away from the mission's area. But of course we do not know the reason.

Although it can be seen that the Aappilattoq-Qaamaneq hunting area was too small, we cannot see how much sealing there was in these years. But by this time skin purchases were so well integrated that a decline in the Royal Greenland Trading Company's purchases of skins must in fact have corresponded to a decline in the actual hunting. Skin sales fluctuated up and down, and when it becomes possible to compare them with the catch statistics, the figures from the two registrations fluctuate together (*cf.* Fig. 1, p. 25).

After 1846 there was a severe decline in sales of seal skins in the Upernavik district. A minor drop in skin sales was followed the next year by a decline of over 20%, continuing from the preceding year. It was probably this decline in a hunting area that had already become too small that set the expansion in motion.

We do not know either when the next move to the northern district was made. The family that moved came this time from Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven in the southern district. As we have seen, it was Paangu's family that moved from 'Prøven'. The next child, a daughter, was registered as having been born in 'Pâguseq' (Paangutsit) in 1854. This child was listed without any indication of the date of birth, so it was within this period that the family moved.

Now Kangersuatsiaq/Prøven was also a little squeezed-in. In Kangersuatsiaq-Sioraq itself there lived 125 people, and north of the place Qaarsoq was inhabited, while to the south Kissaaq and Ikerasak were inhabited. This confined the total sealing area to *c.* 550 km² for Kangersuatsiaq-Sioraq's 125 inhabitants, which in fact only meant 4.4 km² per inhabitant, unless the hunting area was shared with those who had moved out to the south. On the face of it the situation sounds rather worse than at Aappilattoq; but it was probably not so much worse, since the place was better situated for caribou hunting, which was of some importance then, and for char fishing in the summer, and had a larger hunting area to the south to use in the spring.

Looking at purchases of seal skins in these years, there was first an improvement over the preceding years. From 1850/51 skin sales dropped for a couple of consecutive years, first by 12%, and up to 1852/53 by a further 14% over two years. In a sense this drop was not so great, but two or three years of declining sales were probably unpleasant at a place with a limited hunting area. Yet it can also be seen that for the next arrivals it was apparently easier to make the decision, now that a family already lived in the new hunting area and could be contacted with no great difficulty. There was a distance of 35 km between the two new settlements. Without other information it is tempting to assume that the family moved north either in 1852 or in 1853. This family then lived northernmost in the district. But this did not put Kangersuatsiaq's hunting area per inhabitant above the magic threshold yet, and already a few years later there was a further emigration from Kangersuatsiaq.

There was the same kind of two-year decline between 1854 and 1856, this time a drop of 37.4% over two years. Apart from the size of the drop, this probably meant that the decline continued over several years, and this time there were several families that moved from Kangersuatsiaq to Søndre Upernavik. In that year the expansion went south. The Kangersuatsiaq people were already familiar with the Søndre Upernavik hunting area. But this did not stabilize things. In 1859/60 the skins purchased were a little less than half of those bought in the previous year.

Tasiusaq was re-established in 1853. In 1860 more people came. I was unable to find out where people moved to Tasiusaq from. Most came from the central district, but Paangu's family from Paangutsit now moved to Tasiusaq, since the Paangutsit hunting area was in fact identical to Tasiusaq's. It must be said that the establishment of a place with a shop was the decision of the Royal Greenland Trading Company, and this was probably itself related to the decline in the skin trade throughout the district; but at the same time it showed that there was a population basis in the area. But the fact that Tasiusaq had 60 inhabitants from the start suggests that a number of people had been motivated to move.

In the central district the total hunting area was now 2990 km², and with a population of 578 the hunting area per inhabitant, which in 1850 had been as high as 6.9 km², had fallen to 5.1 km² in 1860. This was just about tolerable, but the halving of the catches that is evident from the skin purchases must have frightened people. What we can see in general throughout the period under discussion is that when the decline in the hunting area per inhabitant fell below 5-5.1 km², people moved away from the area in the first poor hunting year. In fact they moved in the summer after a winter with a severe decline in the hunting in one year; but also after a decline over two years.

The next time it happened was in 1876. But this was from the two outermost settlements, one to the north, and one to the south. This time the decline took place over three consecutive years, a drop of 48.3%. It would appear that a continuing decline over several years had a very serious psychological effect. And this time Ikerasaarsuk was settled from Tasiusaq, and to the south Amitsoq was settled from Søndre Upernavik. The Ikerasaarsuk settlement group was inhabited for many years, and the settlements of the region as a group are still inhabited. But Amitsoq was only inhabited for one year. It is still remembered that all the men travelled in December to Søndre Upernavik for Christmas shopping, while the women and children remained behind. The next day there was a storm with a thaw, and the ice broke up. A fortnight passed before the men could get home. But at Amitsoq people had coped, because a 13-year-old boy had found a scrapped sealing net. He cast it out and caught an adult ringed seal. But this experience was so daunting that the next summer people travelled back to Søndre Upernavik. The expansion to the south stopped there, and all further expansion went north.

The foundation of Qassersuaq in 1864 as a trading

post, that is a place with a shop, was as far as we know decided by the Royal Greenland Trading Company, not least in order to supply the growing population of the northern district and to buy up the hunting produce. This happened in a period with growing catches, and a growing trade in seal skins at least. Skin sales grew from 5,319 skins in 1862/63 to 9737 skins in 1864/65. That the station had been established for commercial reasons can in fact also be seen from the fact that more and more people moved from there to better hunting places in the surroundings. Naajaat and Saffiorfik were settled from there, and Tussaaq, which was settled the same year as Qassersuaq, also received a number of immigrants from Qassersuaq.

These moves meant that the total area of the central district remained unchanged, but the population of the area grew smaller, so that the hunting area per inhabitant rose above 5 km² again.

Some years thus passed before the next expansion, which came in 1892 from Aappi, the first settlement north of Aappilattup Ikera.

The first family to move to Aappi was successful, and when other families moved north of Upernavik Isfjord, their security increased substantially. In the first year their total hunting area is a little difficult to gauge, but since peninsulas and large islands often form natural boundaries, it would not be unreasonable to estimate it as 190 km². But in fact they had large reserve areas to the north. Around 1850 14 people lived at the place, so the per capita total hunting area must be estimated as 13.5 km² per inhabitant.

Since Aappi was the southernmost place in the northern district, people moved there all the time, and in 1889 37 people lived there, which reduced the hunting area to 5.1 km² per inhabitant. Two brothers considered really great hunters lived there. They often went north on polar bear hunts and thus knew the good hunting grounds to the north. Things clearly became a litle cramped at Aappi, so they moved north to Kuuk in 1892, and thus became the northernmost people living in the Upernavik district. With this family's move Aappi's hunting area per inhabitant again grew to about 9.5 km², and these northward moves thus also meant that the hunting area per inhabitant grew a little again at the places from which people had moved.

Kingittoq in the central district was one of the places where the population dropped a little when people moved to the northern district. In 1890 its hunting area per inhabitant was 5.5 km², but in 1906 it dropped to 4.7 km², and when a number of people moved north, the hunting area per inhabitant was doubled; all the same it was abandoned a few years later, allegedly because the population was reduced by a trichinosis epidemic.

Saffiorfik, like Aappi, also became a place to which people moved. It was well situated between two large ice fjords, and was close to the route between Upernavik and the northern settlements, but it was also somewhat squeezed in between the new settlements. In 1905 the hunting area per inhabitant was 5.5 km², but two years later this dropped to 4.7, and when some families moved north, it reached 5.5 km² per inhabitant again.

One place had too little space for the whole three years it was inhabited. This was Qulleq at the Qulleqqorsuit peninsula. Its total hunting area was only 60 km², and in fact could only support a population of twelve people. Thirteen people had moved there from Saffiorfik and Eqqorleq in 1910. In the first year the hunting area per inhabitant was only 4.6 km². This was no improvement for the two families that had come from Saffiorfik, nor for the family that had come from Eqqorleq. The latter family travelled back the next year, but a new family came from Søndre Upernavik, and Qulleq's hunting area per inhabitant reached 5 km². But the next year a new family came and the population rose to 17, bringing the hunting area per inhabitant down to 3.5 km², and Qulleq was abandoned the next year again by all the settlers and was not inhabited again.

A few short-lived settlements

A few settlement formations can hardly be regarded as expansion, because they did not extend the total hunting area. In terms of the total hunting area they must rather be viewed as an expansion of the everyday hunting area at the expense of the extensively utilized area. We can regard the moves from Itilliarsuk to Nutaarmiut and Ikerasaarsuk around 1890 this way. The total area was not increased, but three settlements arose, each with its own everyday hunting ground.

Often such local offshoots are only inhabited for very few years. From Aappilattoq people moved out to Qasigiannguit and Nunaku, and to Ingiullisoq they moved from Søndre Upernavik or Kangersuatsiaq, but

each of these places was only inhabited for one year, and it is not possible to see whether they were abandoned again for economic or for social reasons. There was a population of less than ten people at each of them.

Between 1900 and 1910 Saveerneq and Qasigiannguit were each inhabited for very few years – these two places were also settled from Aappilattoq. At Saveerneq seven people lived for the first year, and eleven for the last two of a total of three years, while the population of Qasigiannguit varied between three and seven people.

A relationship between Qaarsoq and Upernaviarsuk in the southern district is a little more difficult to see. Qaarsoq was inhabited in 1882, the year in which the regular census was taken *(Statistisk protokol, Ministeriet for Grønland),* and it was described as inhabited until 1934. Before 1900 the population was mainly between 20 and 30, and towards 1910 it rose to 50, then up to 1922 the population varied between 34 and 62, and according to these lists it then stabilized around 30, except for the last two years, when it dropped to 22, before the figures ceased to appear.

This seems reasonable enough, but from 1928 on there were indications that Upernaviarsuk was also inhabited, although the number of residents was not stated. A comparison of these population lists and catch lists shows very clearly that Upernaviarsuk was inhabited in these years, and it would appear in fact that the whole decline in the population of Qaarsoq was matched by a rise in that of Upernaviarsuk. Comparing this with other observations from these population lists, I am quite sure that the population of Upernaviarsuk was listed together with that of Qaarsoq. I would go so far as to claim that the keeper of the Upernaviarsuk catch lists knew better where people lived, but that the Upernavik list-keeper was reliable enough when he had to state how many people lived at the two places together. Rink was right: it was a long way from Upernavik to Upernaviarsuk/"Narsaarsuk".

Emigration

Expansion meant migration to new areas, but it also meant emigration from the 'overpopulated' hunting areas. But in this respect a couple of other factors can be pointed out.

One could hear about observations during the smallpox epidemic in 1814 that a few people survived in various settlements in the northern district, and got away. Some of them we do not know, but this summer of disease was warm, and there was mist everywhere. It was the kind of weather that is called *iminnartoq* in Greenlandic, where sounds from far away can be heard. In meteorology the phenomenon is associated with the concept of *inversion*, where the relationship between the milder, colder atmospheric layers is the opposite of the usual one. In such weather it could be very difficult to get close to the seals. From Tasiusaq there is a report that in that summer people from Illunnguit could be heard lamenting their dead (Olsen 1964:91). It was about 10 km from Illunnguit to Tasiusaq. The inhabitants could look across to each other's settlements. True, grief for the dead was known not to be a quiet matter, but this was impressive. It was also a sign that people were otherwise not making much noise that summer.

None of the people mentioned, who survived in the northern district, was said to be living at Tasiusaq, but there must have been some survivors from the place.

We heard about Nulooq, who himself rowed in his kayak to the southern district. But at Aappilattoq behind Tasiusaq Qupanu gathered the survivors and they could be gathered in one house, although it was described as over-full (Lynge 1955:30).

What is being said here is that the survivors from each place could not each form a new local community, and probably did not think either that they could form an isolated local community by themselves. They all moved to the central district together.

In fact we do not know how these remains of the population were composed. Apart from Qupanu's son, no other children are mentioned, and the accounts give an impression that the survivors were almost all adults; but they say nothing about what the proportion of women to men was, or about their age mix. There are some indications that they regarded themselves as an unnaturally composed community. At all events they did not choose to form their own local community, and moved to other communities south of the ice fjord.

I have mentioned that Kingittoq was struck by a major epidemic of trichinosis, and afterwards abandoned by the remainder of the population. But unlike the depopulation of the northern district, Kingittoq

was only abandoned some five years after the trichinosis. For some reason one could observe a delayed reaction one would not expect, given the reason stated. In 1856 Napasoq in Central West Greenland was struck by a famine, in which many people perished (Rink 1896:41-52; Petersen 1982:196). Ten years later Napasoq was abandoned in favour of Qipingasoq, allegedly as a result of the famine. At Ikkamiut a little north of Maniitsoq there were three houses in 1894. A stream that overflowed softened the turf of the walls, which collapsed and killed the occupants – it was not a snowslide as Bendixen said (Bendixen 1921:158). Six years later the rest moved to a new place about a kilometre away. Popular rumour has it that the accident was the cause of the move. A great wave, which may have been due to a large calving iceberg or perhaps an earthquake, struck Sarfaq in the northern district of Upernavik in 1909, and killed seven of its 25 residents (Lynge 1955:23; Emanuelsen 1981:10). This accident has been mentioned as one of the reasons for the abandonment of the place in 1919.

I have no explanation for this delayed reaction.

In connection with the death of a supporter before the children could take over his role, the family would move to a relative who could help them, and probably to a relative who could take care of the education of the boys as hunters, as we could see with the catechist's wife Marie and a couple of Paangu's daughters.

But in most of the cases we have seen, the move was away from places with a little too many hunters. Nulooq moved from Aappilattoq or Qeqertaq, and his sons moved many years later from Aappi to better hunting grounds with fewer competitors. We have seen Paangu's family travel from Kangersuatsiaq to Paangutsit, and a few years later a number of families moved from Kangersuatsiaq to Søndre Upernavik.

A number of moves from Qassersuaq to Tussaaq, Naajaat and Innaarsuit were also to places within their resource utilization area which were better for everyday hunting. In that sense these moves accord well with the idea that people moved to find better hunting places. But perhaps other considerations also played a role. Tussaaq, besides the ordinary sealing, was also a good place for walrus hunting. Naajaat was nearer Kangerlussuaq/Giesecke Isfjord and its seal stocks, and all three places lie close to the usual route between Upernavik and the settlements of the northern district.

Kingittoq was not described as better for hunting than many other places, but whalers often anchored near the settlement, and from them one could buy various things one might otherwise not be able to get. This might encourage people to gather there in numbers that affected the sustainability of the hunting. Kingittoq was abandoned by a number of families who travelled north, and each time the hunting area per inhabitant became a little larger.

But a few places to which people had migrated were abandoned after some years, often in favour of an even more northerly settlement. There was a general view that the hunting of seals, small whales and polar bears became better towards the north.

Sarfaq was settled in 1898, but was abandoned in 1919. People moved to Appaalissiorfik, but only lived there for four years, then moved farther north.

The three families who moved to Nuussuaq left there again, giving the reason that there were 'too many waves' – in other words too many days with the boats laid up – in the summer and in the autumn. They left the place after just two years. The same reason was given by the hunters who moved from Ikermiut to Kullorsuaq in 1944.

Such moves were generally explained in terms of hunting conditions, but after 1950 the picture looked different. The settlements grew fewer and larger and the distance between them grew greater.

In this period there was a certain political pressure to concentrate people in fewer places. Housing policy may have been used in Upernavik Municipality to exert such pressure, although not for long. But some parents were influenced by the children's need for better schooling.

If it seems that the control of housing policy was abandoned rather quickly as a way of encouraging denser settlement, this may have been because some families were persuaded to move, especially to Disko Bay, so that the population declined a little. But what seems to have been crucial was that sealing was improving, and the hunting products were fetching better prices. For that reason there was a certain amount of caution about centralizing the population of Upernavik.

At this time a larger number of small motor boats, 22-footers or thereabouts, appeared in the municipality. They had to be fairly small, since it was necessary to pull them up on land in the autumn. But they were

Table 4. Settlements in Upernavik and their total hunting area (THA), population and the hunting area per person (HAP). (*Geodætiske kort* VG 71-74, *Grønland* 1970-71; Haller 1979).

(km²)	THA (km²)	Population	H A P
Kullorsuaq/Illulik	1050	172	6.1
Nuussuaq	1500	140	10.7
Kuuk	533	20	26.7
Ikeras/Nutaarmiut	650	49	13.0
Tasiusaq	1030	154	6.7
Inn/Naaj/Tussaaq	880	165	5.3
Aappilattoq	1000	148	6.8
Upernavik	410	730	1.0
Kangersuatsiaq	930	193	4.8
Søndre Upernavik	650	129	5.0
Whole municipality	9443	1908	4.9

large enough to be used as advance bases for sealing. This made it possible to abandon a number of small settlements and still utilize their hunting areas.

The importance of the motor boat, inasmuch as some settlements with a shop could now grow larger, is indisputable. Even though one had to have fuel, one could still expand the hunting field. But in a few places such as Naajaat and Innaarsuit, people thought that the motor boat stabilized these settlements, because it had become much easier to sail to the shops.

But all in all the settlement was now becoming more rigid, and it was especially the very small settlements that were depopulated. This might suggest that the existence of the small settlements depended on a notion of economic necessity which was partly created by the technological side of the limitations of the means of transport.

The total hunting area (THA) and hunting area per person (HAP) at the individual settlements in 1970 are shown in Table 4.

Upernavik must be regarded here as a service centre, although there was also hunting from the place; but this was not what the township had to make its living from. Innaarsuit, Naajaat and Tussaaq could still manage with hunting; but it should be added that fishing had already in fact assumed a certain importance by this time in the southernmost settlements up to Aappilattoq.

Changes due to longer-term declines in the hunting

It is tempting to investigate whether one can see changes in the settlement pattern not only in connection with the acute major declines in the hunting, but also in more or less normal, steady declines that take place in the course of 4-5-6 years. In a way the reactions to such steady declines could come under the heading of adaptation. We shall try to see whether the declines of individual years are as important as declines in the hunting for two or three consecutive years.

In the preceding sections I have attempted to look at the need for moves in a place that is becoming overpopulated in relation to its area, but here I will attempt to look at whether improvements and declines as such were something people reacted to. But this requires that we look at a period with registration of settlements, hunting and population, that is from the 1880s up towards 1940.

In 1886/87 the hunting was halved compared with the preceding year, but there is no change to be observed in the settlement pattern. In the next year, 1887/ 88, there was a further small drop in the hunting, and 24 people moved to Ikerasak at Søndre Upernavik.

In the winter of 1891/92, the hunting results became poorer, and the next winter, in 1892/93, this was followed by a further drop. In the first year, as mentioned above, two families moved from Itilliarsuk to Ikerasaarsuk, and the next year a family moved to Nutaarmiut. More strikingly, three families moved to Kuuk, and this move can come under the heading of expansion.

In the winter of 1895/96 there was also a decline in the hunting, and in this year some families moved to both Qassersuaq, which had been uninhabited for some years, and Tussaaq, which later grew at the expense of Qassersuaq; one family also moved to Itillilik.

In 1896/97 the decline continued, and some people moved from Kingittoq to Tunoqqu. Unfortunately we have no direct information on the hunting from this period, only some estimates, and they do not always agree with the direct statements.

In the winter of 1898/99, according to the estimated figures, there was a minor improvement in the

hunting; nevertheless two new settlements had appeared: Eqqorleq and Nutaarmiut. Perhaps after a small delay a family moved to Naajaat in 1900.

In 1902/03 there was a small decline in the hunting, but no convincing change. Itillilik, it is true, appeared again after apparently having been abandoned for about three years, but the population had only changed by a couple of people, and the place was probably not abandoned at all. In 1903/04 there was a continued decline, and this time several families moved to Itussaalik.

The continuing decline in 1904/05 meant more moves. Saffiorfik was settled, as well as Assorseriitsoq in the Aappilattoq area, and its population corresponded to the decline in the population of Aappilattoq. Finally, Nunaku was inhabited in this year. The further decline in 1905/06 showed a continued disturbance in settlement formation, since some people moved to Ikerasak in the southern district, and in the same area there was a move to Ingiullisoq. In the central district people moved to Assorseriitsoq, probably from Qaarsoq.

In 1906/07 the decline continued and several families moved to Illulissuaq, and after a pause of some years three people also came to Uingasoq. It is not so strange that several years of continued decline in the hunting coincided with some disturbance in the settlement formation. Very small settlements were in fact inhabited for a very short time, but whether these people participated in the expansion elsewhere, the material does not show.

In 1909/10 there was also a decline. I have mentioned that Illulik and Itillilik were abandoned this year, probably for social reasons; but it was in this year that a group moved to Qulleq.

In 1913/14 there was again a decline in the hunting, and then some families moved to the formerly abandoned Kuuk, while Illulik was repopulated. The decline continued in 1914/15, but no moves were registered that year. However, the decline continued in 1915/16, and then Uluaa in the southern district and Ikermiut in the northern district were resettled.

After a year with a rise in the hunting, there was again a drop in 1917/18. Ikerasak, which had been uninhabited for some years, again became a place to which people moved from Søndre Upernavik.

1921/22 was again a year of decline, and two or three families moved to Itilliarsuk. The next year Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn was settled, but probably not for hunting-related reasons. It was the Royal Greenland Trading Company that established a shop there. In 1924/25 too there was decline in the hunting. That year the northernmost settlement during the expansion, Qaarusulik, was founded, and one family spent this winter at Itillilik.

In 1926/27 there was in fact a severe decline in the hunting, but no new settlements were registered. I am not sure how the move to Kullorsuaq in 1928 is to be explained, because these people came from Qaarusulik, the northernmost settlement. But this is perhaps an example of the often-quoted statement in the Upernavik northern district: the travellers had to have the possibility of overnight accommodation at a suitable distance from the closest settlements.

In 1930/31 the hunting results took a dip, and this continued with the next decline in 1931/32. In the first year three people were registered as living at Upernaviarsuk, and in the last year several families moved to Uluaa. It is interesting to see that the last moves took place in the central district.

After this, declines in the hunting continued to happen, but were not matched by moves, especially after 1937, when the emergency shop was established at Kullorsuaq. It was said that the Royal Greenland Trading Company at Upernavik got people to sign an agreement not to move farther north (Knudsen 1964:122).

In general the downward tendency in the hunting continued until 1946, and after this there was a slow improvement in catches until 1966. In this period the number of settlements fell from 22 to 13. But the tendency is difficult to relate to the fluctuations in the hunting alone. There was political pressure, there was growth both in the hunting and in the price of hunting products, and in addition technological innovations made it possible to exploit the abandoned hunting areas. I will not attempt to analyse this period of concentration here, as it will be discussed elsewhere.

Ammassalik

It is difficult to use the same method of measurement at Ammassalik as at Upernavik. On the one hand we are unable to work with a fixed boundary for the winter ice, on the other we must divide the area in three:

the core area and two marginal districts. Only the core area is directly comparable with the Upernavik resource area. This is where we have continuous utilization of the resources, and this is where we can speak of continuous contact potential all year round, and where society is a unity.

In the marginal district we find another form of utilization which can be regarded as a way of relieving the burden on the core area. But interviews with a number of the settler families that had moved out after 1950 often produced the explanation that people wanted to improve their difficult economy. There are three very important reasons why the utilization of the marginal districts can only be compared with Upernavik with some difficulty. (1) The settlements of the outer districts were not continuous, they were isolated not only from the core area, but also from one another, since there were unutilized stretches between them. (2) The isolation was more or less total from the time they left one summer until they returned the following summer. In earlier times in fact neither those who left nor those who remained heard anything from one another between departure and the next summer. (3) The settlement in which the winter was spent was often not used the next year, and there could be some years without any wintering in the outer district. (4) The next people who left would normally consist of different families.

Compared with Upernavik, Ammassalik's total utilization area was in addition more difficult to calculate. It was also an area for utilization of marine resources. But there is no fixed ice edge outside the islands, and in the summer there is no ice-free area either. With ice-filled waters the transport routes were also more difficult, since one had to weave among the ice floes.

Thus in estimating this area I had to rely partly on Pierre Robbe's (1994) studies of utilization, which are however mainly about the hunting area up certain fjords. Again, I had to use geodetic survey maps to delimit the areas between the settlements, and here again I had to subtract the land areas from the area calculation. I had to disregard the sea outside the islands, since I had no reliable guidelines. The utilization area is calculated here as far as the outermost islands.

In 1884/85 413 people lived with a total utilization area of 3,762 km². Ten years later, when the Ammassalik colony was founded, I have to count both Sermiligaaq and Ikertivaq as part of the marginal area, since like the rest of the marginal area they were mainly used for wintering as described above, and the core area now consisted of the Ammassalik and Sermilik hunting areas with a total utilization area of 2,762 km². There was a population of 247 people (*Sammendrag* 1946, VII:978). This gives us a utilized area per person of 11.1 km². The steep decline in the population has sometimes been interpreted as meaning that the population of Ammassalik was facing extinction; but the population of Sermilik in particular were outside the district, in the South East Greenlanders' old area. Some would presumably utilize the hunting resources of the region, but quite a few would be on trading journeys either to Aluk at Cape Farewell, or to the southernmost part of West Greenland (*cf.* Rosing 1960:61f). Many of these travellers came back after the foundation of the colony, and in 1902 the population reached 448. Some Ammassalik people, for example Ilinngivakkeeq's family, remained in West Greenland, so the claim that they were facing extinction was 'greatly exaggerated'. They even had the surplus necessary to make long journeys.

In 1902 a couple of places in Sermiligaaq were inhabited, and the utilized area had thus become 3,062 km²; this gives us a utilization area per person of 6.8 km². With the fast growth in the population the utilization area per person rose to 4.7 km² in 1908, and in 1909 people came to Ikertivaq, making a total utilized core area of 3,762 km². From Upernavik we have seen that an expansion was launched after a poor hunting year when the utilized area per person fell below 5-5.1 km². At that time there was no catch registration at Ammassalik, and the skin trade was still being built up and can tell us nothing about the fluctuations in the hunting. But Ammassalik's first colonial manager mentioned wretched winter hunting in 1907 and poor hunting at the two main fjords in 1908 (Petersen 1957:92,100). With Ikertivaq incorporated into the core area the hunting area per inhabitant reached 6.9 km².

But Ikertivaq was abandoned as a permanent settlement area in 1916, and was only inhabited again during sporadic winterings. This contributed to a drop in the utilized area per person to less than 5 km² again. This year Ikertivaq was again incorporated in the core area, and it was later inhabited. This move increased the figure per inhabitant to 5 km².



Fig. 27. The village of Tiileqilaaq, 1987. (Photo H.C. Gulløv).

The next thinning-out may have been a coincidence, since Scoresbysund was populated in 1925, mainly from Ammassalik. The initiative came from Denmark, but these figures – there was a drop to 5 km² per inhabitant again in 1924 – may make it more understandable that so many people, in spite of everything, could be persuaded to leave, and this raised the magic figure to 5.8 km².

Of course this only meant a short respite, and by the middle of the 1930s the figure was already below 5 km². In these years there was a severe epidemic in which many people perished, not least many adult men (Gitz-Johansen 1994). In these very years Ammassalik thus had none of the surplus necessary for expansion, which only came in 1938, when 152 people moved to Skjoldungen, *c.* 350 km outside the core area. In terms of the shape of the landscape this was a new hunting area, *c.* 700 km² in all. This increased the utilization area per inhabitant to 5.1 km² in the actual core area, and to just 5.0 in the new area.

These things meant that in Ammassalik people tried to find new utilization potential. In the 1930s there was more activity in arts and crafts at Ammassalik, and in the 1950s fishing was initiated at the larger settlements along Ammassalik Fjord. These experiments prevented a decline in the occupational basis, but even after that time Ammassalik was often described a hunting and fishing district. What happened at Upernavik after 1950 also happened at Ammassalik, since the hunting products fetched better prices, and of course all this helped the situation. We can follow the importance of fishing, but although arts and crafts had become an important source of income for quite a few people, we can today obtain no information about their importance for the community.

But before leaving the issue of the utilized area per person, we should look at it in the year 1970. The utilization areas for the settlements at Ammassalik in 1970 are listed in Table 5. The table shows that Tasiilaq cannot be regarded as a hunting settlement; but it is also quite clearly a service centre. At the northeastern end it is also clear that hunting would not be able to support the economy alone. The Sermilik settlements would be able to manage with hunting, but at Iserteq too there must also have been other kinds of supplementary sources of income. From there people could reach the area around Pikiitti.

For the settlements in the marginal district the situation is illustrated by Table 6. It is tempting to analyse the fluctuations in hunting and the tendency

Table 5. Core area settlements and their total hunting area (THA), with the population of the settlements and hunting area per person (HAP). This shows clearly that only Qernertivartivit could subsist on hunting in Ammassalik Fjord; Sermilik's two settlements can still be regarded as hunting settlements, since there is no fishing there. Iserteq too faces overpopulation. (*Geodætiske kort* ØG 65 1, and 2; *Grønland* 1970-71; Robbe 1994).

	THA (km^2)	Population	H	A	P
(km^2)					
Sermiligaaq	425	257		2.7	
Kuummiit	225	490		0.5	
Qernertivartivit	112	21		5.3	
Kulusuk	225	399		0.6	
Tasiilaq	175	887		0.2	
Ikkatteq	200	36		5.6	
Iserteq	700	163		4.3	
Tiileqilaaq	1600	200		8.0	
Core area	3762	2353		1.6	

to move away in Ammassalik Municipality with a method similar to the one used for Upernavik. It is possible to register the moves, but it is more difficult to follow the fluctuations in the hunting beyond the relation to the hunting area per inhabitant. In this case it was necessary to relate it to statements about poor hunting found in certain diaries, but it is difficult to relate one year of poor hunting to another.

As regards the use of the marginal district, especially after 1960, it must be noted that the winterings in the marginal district were by and large for other reasons than a direct annual decline in the hunting. The change in the mode of life, not least the increasing cost of living, was viewed as a very heavy burden, and one can see that the role of the dwelling had changed. From the end of the 1950s on there was a radical renewal of the housing stock, and this meant that the cost of housing grew somewhat. It does not take very great changes in the money demand in a society with a partly natural economy in which consumption value is an important factor which is not converted into money before the need for more money becomes urgent. And it must surely be related to the increased housing expenses that stays in the marginal district became an annual event in the 1960s. The value invested in dwellings that in fact made people more sedentary thus became a reason for stays in the marginal district. People's most common explanation of such a wintering was, as we have seen, that they wanted to improve their economy.

That the fulfilment of this need was diverted from hunting to some intermediate process can be seen from the fact that the municipality had to provide assistance to these emigrants. They had to apply for support, and the applications in fact had to be sent in two years in advance. The move that was made the following summer as the result of a winter with poor hunting thus changed character, and thus suggests that the new expenses were experienced as a long-term burden.

Table 6. Marginal area settlements in 1970, with the distance from the core area, their total hunting area (THA), population and hunting area per person (HAP). The distance from the first four places is measured from Iserteq, and for Kangersuttuatsiaq and Kangersuttuaq from Sermiligaaq. (*Geodætiske kort* ØG 64 and ØG 65; *Grønland* 1970-71; Robbe 1994).

	Distance (km)	THA (km^2)	Population	HAP (km^2)
Pikiitti	80	650	18	36.0
Umiivik	175	600	26	23.0
Skjoldungen	300	600	25	24.0
Uummannaq	450	130	4	32.5
Kangersuttuatsiaq	80	425	6	70.7
Kangersuttuaq	375	640	44	14.8
Marginal		2875	123	33.5

Upernavik-Ammassalik, the centrifugal forces

Common to the two areas, which for most of the period under discussion were hunting districts, is the fact that a decline in the hunting, either a true, visible decline or a decline compared with the population, intensified the tendency towards dispersal.

Even the 'normal' upturns and especially downturns can be related to the formation of new settlements or their abandonment. There were of course some years when one could see no change in the number of the settlements, and in general one can find a social reason for such a deviation. In East Greenland in particular the total isolation helped to ensure that none of the small marginal settlements was inhabited beyond one year.

We can see that a decline in the hunting, immediately followed by a continued decline, almost always leads to the formation of new small settlements. It is interesting that a number of the short-term moves between 1910 and 1925 in the Upernavik district took place in the central district, and can be distinguished from the expansion tendencies. These represented an expansion of the intensive hunting area at the expense of the extensively utilized area.

But in both districts one can see that, in the period when hunting was the economic basis, a combination of a hunting area less than 5-5.1 km² per inhabitant and a poor hunting year triggered off an expansion of the utilized area if the community had the surplus or energy necessary to expand. We can see that the serious epidemic in Ammassalik in the 1930s delayed the expansion. At Upernavik we can see that the insufficiency of building and tool-making materials seems to have prevented a dispersal.

At Upernavik we could see that an agreement with the Royal Greenland Trading Company may have prevented further expansion. It was at least something that played a role in people's consciousness, although this may just as easily have been because the northward expansion had in fact reached the limit of the natural expansion area. This can be viewed in terms of the fact that in 1967 people began to migrate to the Thule area, when the 20-year hunting boom was followed by poor hunting years.

In a sense the migration to Ittoqqortoormiit/Scoresbysund could be seen as an exception because it was initiated from Denmark, and thus did not only have hunting-related causes: but the fact that the minimum hunting area per person had been reached probably made it easier to get people to go along with the idea. The 'emigration' to Skjoldungen actually accorded well with the pattern, but the number of participants was highly abnormal, and in a way this too was an event partly planned from the outside.

Part of the background for the formation of many small hunting settlements must be related to the existing technology. The use of the kayak as an important hunting vessel in the summer meant that the hunting area of a hunting settlement was very limited, and if the whole coastal stretch was to be utilized there was probably a need for many small settlements. We could observe that the tendency to disperse was weak in years with rising catches, which probably underlines the fact that people did in fact prefer to live together when this was possible. The renewal of the technology, and especially the adoption of the motor boat in area utilization, made it possible – with the use of hunters' huts – to concentrate people in fewer settlements.

Table 7. Estimated potential population for the Upernavik settlements, if everyone were to make a living from hunting.

Upernavik	
Kullorsuaq/Illulik	210
Nuussuaq	300
Kuuk	107
Ikerasaarsuk/Nutaarmiut	137
Tasiusaq	206
Innaarsuit/Naajaat/Tussaaq	146
Aappilattoq	200
Upernavik	82
Kangersuatsiaq	186
Sõndre Upernavik	130

But this part of the study in fact also tells us that in the later years hunting was no longer the sole economic basis, although several settlements were still based on hunting. A differentiation had appeared in the hunting districts.

Potential population of the individual settlements

It is tempting to look at how large a population the total hunting area of the individual settlements would permit if the other factors in settlement life corresponded more or less to the 1970 conditions. Table 7 shows the estimated potential population for the Upernavik settlements, if everyone were to make a living from hunting. I still use an area of 5 km² per inhabitant as the criterion.

These figures mean that 1700 people can live on hunting alone, and the actual population was 1,549 people in 1993 and 1,563 in 1994. The total hunting area has not changed, although its utilization has changed. In the case of the town of Upernavik one must assume that 82 of the total population could live as hunters provided they could increase the value of the catch by selling products on the local market. Otherwise one must assume that as leisure-time

Table 8. Estimated potential population for the Ammassalik settlements, if everyone were to make a living from hunting.

Ammassalik, core area	
Sermiligaaq	85
Kuummiit	45
Qernertivartivit	22
Kulusuk	45
Tasiilaq	25
Ikkatteq	40
Iserteq	140
Tiileqilaaq	325
Ammassalik, marginal district	
Pikiitti	130
Umiivik	120
Skjoldungen	90
Uummannaq	65
Kangersuttuatsiaq	85
Kangersuttuaq	120

hunters they could use the catch as a supplement to their other incomes.

Table 8 shows the estimated potential population for the Ammassalik settlements, if everyone were to make a living from hunting These figures make it possible for 687 people in the core area, and 620 in the settlements of the marginal district, to make a living from traditional hunting. This makes a total of 1,307 people. But 1,625 people lived in Ammassalik's various settlements in 1993, and 1,663 in 1994. In the same way as at Upernavik, there is a small potential for living as a leisure-time hunter at Tasiilaq.

As for the marginal district, a couple of points should be made, each pulling in a different direction. The hunting areas of the settlements of the marginal district have been estimated here on the basis of, among other things, the boundaries imposed by the landscape, and within the historical period these were not crossed. But because of the very small population the need for services was very little articulated. If the population at these places were to grow, the demand for supplies, education, health services etc. would certainly reach a different, higher level. These outposts were in fact mainly able to manage because they accepted a low level of services, and because the hunting and health conditions there were quite good. But with their isolated position the value of the hunting would probably remain close to the consumption value.

Chapter 7

The non-self-sufficient hunting society

Definition

Since it can be seen from the traces of the first settlement of Greenland that the stone quarried to make tools was only found at certain localities, but stone implements from these deposits were found in all the inhabited places (*cf.* Gulløv and Kapel 1988), often far from the stone quarries, it is very clear that barter has played an important role in resource utilization ever since the earliest settlement of Greenland. Although the trading goods were often not finished products, but materials for the hunters to work themselves, finished goods were also involved in this bartering. Lamps and cooking vessels of soapstone could be most easily transported as finished products (*cf.* Dalager 1915:15). Beautifully worked quality tools were also involved in the trade at Taseralik, probably West Greenland's biggest market-place (Rosing 1984:199).

The definition of the *self-sufficient hunting society* must therefore involve more than the households themselves obtaining everything from nature, and making their own tools and other utility objects etc. from what they obtained. I choose to attempt my own definition, which allows not only for barter, but for trade as a whole. If there have ever existed '*self-sufficient societies*', which had no trading and made all that they needed themselves, they had to be prehistoric and live in a place that had all the resources, including mineral resources, within that area. Of course the inclusion of trade makes it more difficult to define a '*self-sufficient society*'. But an important part of the definition must be that *the members of the society value living on the products of the country which they themselves render useful,* and possibly it should also mean that *there are no professional service providers.* According to my definition trade, both in kind and with money, is involved in the concept of the *self-sufficient society*, but there is a high degree of self-sufficiency in food, clothing, houses etc. There is much making of tools, clothes, boats, houses etc. But what is missing is first and foremost professional, specialized craftsmen, and thus the society is not controlled by trading. Trade makes it possible to buy material, and to work it. I should perhaps present proposals for how much trade one can accept if one is to continue to talk about a *self-sufficient society*, but I must be content with this verbal, not particularly precise formulation. For anything more would presumably require an investigation that I am now unable to provide. But the concept must surely involve so much of a formulated ideology of self-sufficiency that people will attempt to obtain material from nature before the idea of buying it arises.

The *non-self-sufficient society* is of course a society where people must be able to buy some of their necessities, and not least to import some from abroad. At some point people also buy materials that they would otherwise be able to pick up locally, when the idea of 'what is worth it' becomes more important than the philosophy of making use of what nature can provide. Whether the raw material for what one needs is available thus loses its attitudinal importance.

But it is also important that in the *non-self-sufficient society* one has a number of professional craftsmen and other professional service providers. Thus the concept extends beyond material self-sufficiency, and its usefulness becomes rather limited. I would myself hesitate to include the concept of the supply of non-material goods in the definition.

On this basis one can say that the Greenlandic society has not been a wholly self-sufficient society at least for the past hundred years, although even today some people would claim that their lifestyle includes elements where they use what the land can provide. In this case it is probably unwise to speak of a *self-sufficient society*; one should rather speak of elements of self-sufficiency, especially among groups within the society. But I still use the concept in the heading for this chapter.

Some effects of the technological changes

The tools that were bought created a new technology, and in the long run thus also influenced the forms of

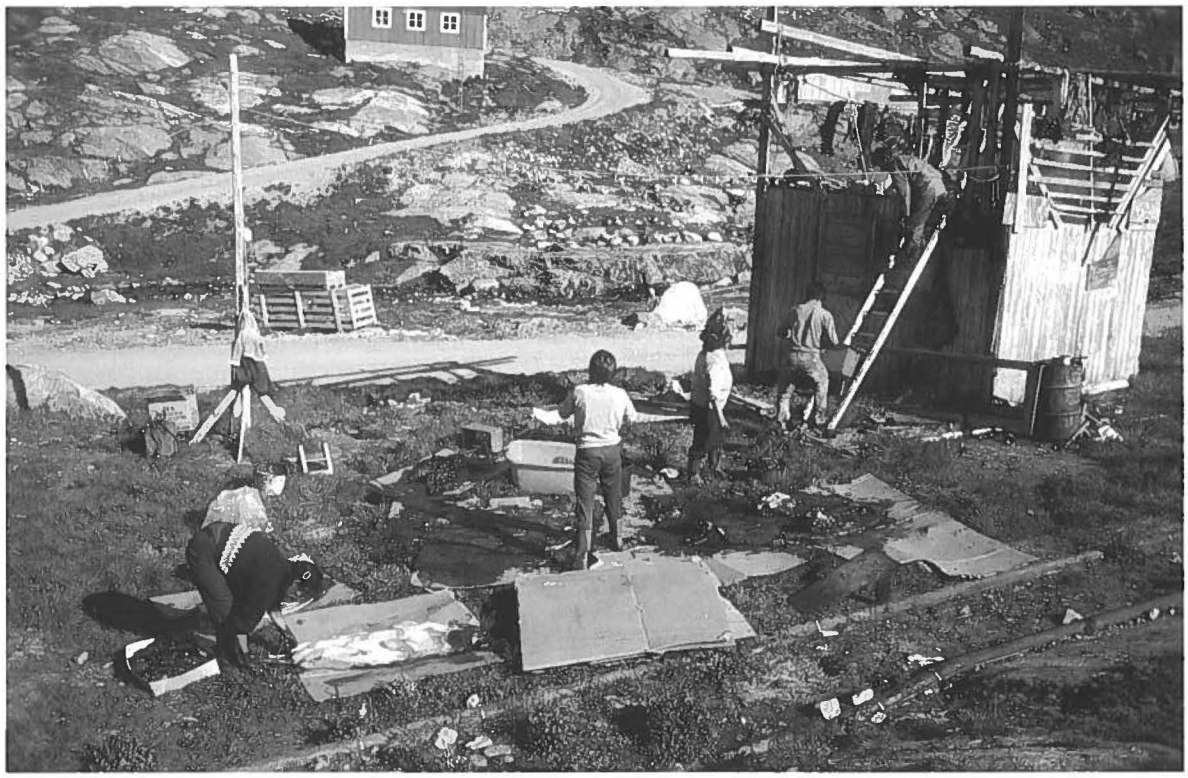

Fig. 28. Women flensing seals in Kuummiit, Ammassalik, 1987. (Photo H.C. Gulløv).

hunting. Certain hunting methods passed out of use, and new ones were developed, and new needs arose or could affect the annual hunting cycle. New hunting methods and new tools in fact had a stronger appeal for the young, who could now to some extent instruct the older people in the new forms of utilization. The authority of the older people was based – as they said themselves – partly on their ability to teach the young the traditional skills, and in the long term this could only affect the relationships of authority.

But in the two societies studied, the organization of the household was still the framework of innovation. It was still the men who went out hunting and came home with the catch. It was still the women who processed the catch into food, clothes and goods that could be sold. It was still the mother who took care of the children in their early years, and still the father who introduced the sons to their hunting skills. The framework was still intact.

Hunting equipment

Hunting equipment was probably the first thing that was affected by imported technology. The rifle was introduced very quickly in caribou hunting, and probably not much later in ice-hunting.

In earlier times the hunting tools were individually recognizable. The man could for example identify and document his catch with his tools, and the notion that the hunted animals might prefer to be caught by certain hunters could thus live on. This was of course easy enough in individual hunting. But it could also be practiced in organized communal hunting. Despite the term communal hunting, the acquisition of the killed animal was still an individual matter. We can in fact see this from the legends, which tell us about a communal caribou hunt with 'beaters' and archers hidden behind screens. In the story of Meqqisaalik's caribou hunt, he is placed by the other men so that he is unable to catch anything and gets no share of the catch. The next day he makes the caribou run, and since he is the only one able to keep up with them, the others get nothing (Rink 1866-71:I,134ff). The arrowheads were furnished with barbs whose number and placing were used as owner's marks (Rosing 1926-27:15). Owners' marks in hunting tools may have been interpreted by cultural researchers as a sign of a newly emergent self-

interest, but in reality what they tell us is that communal hunting had developed.

There were old summer camps for communal caribou hunting. *Aasivissuit* in Kangerlussuaq/Søndre Strømfjord had been used since prehistoric times as a camp for caribou hunting by the Dorset people, and presumably also by the Norsemen, by people from the Thule culture and later by the West Greenlandic cultures. But this system was in fact abandoned when the rifle was introduced in the hunting (Grønnow *et al.* 1983:53). Then one could no longer see who had shot the caribou. It did not accord well with the communal form of hunting that one could not find out who had shot the individual animal. The place was only used again when pool-sharing was introduced into rifle-hunting. The excavation of the place revealed a gap of some 150 years (*ibid.* p. 30). Each person who shot at the animal – they preferably had to shoot at the same time – got his share, irrespective of how many wounds the animal exhibited, and irrespective of the fact that some wounds might not have been fatal. Clearly, a technical innovation as crucial as the rifle had to change some fundamental features of the hunting.

The gun first replaced the bow and arrow, and the ice-hunting harpoon. During Denmark's involvement in the Napoleonic war against England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when there was a shortage of some goods in Greenland, including ammunition, in Kangaamiut a particularly good shot would be selected to shoot at the seals for the whole settlement, since the ammunition had to be rationed (Rosing 1926-27:59). Something similar is said to have happened at Upernavik when ammunition was in short supply (Emanuelsen 1981:15,19). But later caribou were hunted just one more time with the bow and arrow at Kangaamiut. This happened in 1854. People wanted to say goodbye properly to hunting with the bow and arrow. They wanted to celebrate the occasion with festivities; but both the hunters involved, two brothers, died of botulism after eating char that had lain too long in the sun before they held the feast (Rosing 1926-27:58; *Ministerialbog for Sukkertoppen Præstegæld*).

The use of the rifle in the kayak came later. It was muzzle-loaders that were used, and they could not be allowed to get wet; in addition there was little space on the kayak deck. And then the rifle had a recoil, so it was best that one did not fire out to the side, for one then risked capsizing, and since the rifle normally had to be kept below the deck, the lower edge of the kayak suit had to be loosened from the coaming, and capsizing in this situation would mean certain death if one was hunting alone. Despite a claim from Sutton that people did not go on kayak hunting trips alone (Sutton 1962), many people preferred to do so (Heilmann 1985:15; Rosing 1987:132-138).

At first the rifle was used as a supplement to the harpoon. The harpoon had the 'disadvantage' that one had to get very close to the seal to use it with a line that was *c.* 12-15 m long. This could work in a slightly rough sea, but it was difficult to prevent the seal hearing the hunter when the sea was calm. And in fact it was only in such a completely calm sea that one could permit oneself to fetch the rifle from below the deck. But this meant that one now did not have to get so close to the seal, and on the face of it this increased the opportunity for hunting. For some reason the bladder-dart does not seem to have been something everyone owned.

One particular concept, *iminnartoq* made it desirable to have a tool that had a longer range than the harpoon line's *c.* 12 'fathoms'. We can perhaps call this a *sound mirage*. In warm weather on land or at sea level, it appears that a front of slightly higher-lying air at a different temperature – through so-called *inversion* – reflected sound waves back, apparently in the same way as the water layers can affect the transmission of the whale's song over many kilometres. At any rate in such weather it could be well nigh impossible to get within throwing distance of the seals, especially in fjords with steep sides. The seals heard you no matter how careful you were.

Ungaaralak's description, which is missing from the Danish versions of his articles, comes from the part of Sermilik with high, steeps sides: *"If you look around and see continuous layered cloud formation that indicates the coming of milder weather, you have to allow for the sharpened hearing of the seal in the following way. Even if the seal seems to have noticed nothing, you row out carefully from the beach. You cautiously loosen the attachment knobs of the harpoon and put the throwing board on ... You throw the harpoon from a long distance, and keep a close eye on its flight. Just as it is about to hit, the seal dives with foam, and at the same time you hear splashes from other seals. When a hunter notices such a reaction from the seals, he might as well do something else: go ashore and sleep, or go fishing. For in such weather the seals he hunts will hear him no matter how*

carefully he behaves" (Ungaaralak 1995:153f). For some reason Greenland texts about important local knowledge have a tendency to disappear from the translation to Danish, for example in Frederik Nielsen's translation of Ungaaralak. This suggests that there can be a clear difference between knowledge and understanding. Such a situation would make it desirable to have a tool with a longer range than the length of the harpoon line.

The rifle was most suitable for the autumn sealing, since the autumn seals were fat enough to float on the water when they were killed, while the lean spring seals would be lost without a harpoon line. So at first the rifle could not replace the harpoon, but supplemented it. But in connection with harpoon hunting it gradually replaced the lance, so that a harpooned seal could afterwards be killed with a rifle shot. But in the end the gun replaced the harpoon, and this may be because both the gun bag and shooting-screen could catch the harpoon line and could constitute a real danger.

I have mentioned that the use of the rifle in caribou hunting meant that communal hunts with 'beaters' were abandoned. In ice-hunting too, two methods were abandoned, that is creep-hunting and peep-hunting. In creep-hunting one had to creep up on a seal that had climbed up to bask on the ice, either by widening the breathing-hole or by emerging from a crack in the ice. One imitated the movements of a seal so that the seal would 'believe' that it was another seal, a welcome comrade with which to share the sentry-watch on either side. This would often mean that the seal would turn its back on the hunter (Tape 56VG1). It was therefore important that the seal noticed the hunter so early that it lost interest in him, and then he could cut off its path to the hole in the ice, and stab it with the short ice-hunting harpoon. But when one had to get so close to the seal, there was always a risk that it might get away. It is difficult to guess why peep-hunting was abandoned. It could be difficult to procure the pole for a peep-hunting harpoon shaft, since it had a length of *c.* 10 m. Perhaps only a few hunters used it.

With the new method which was developed in connection with the rifle – *uuttoq* hunting – one did not have to get so close to the seal, and in this case it was important that the seal did not see the hunter. So he took a shooting-screen behind which he walked or crawled towards the seal. Whether the seal thus did not 'see' the hunter is however an unconfirmed issue, since the seal flees if one changes the background by moving to one side. The seal's eyes, which are good under the water, may not be able to perceive a slow perspective change on the ice, but will probably notice a movement out to the side.

But in connection with the sea mammal hunting there is still a use for the harpoon. In beluga and narwhal hunting it is necessary that one first gets the harpoon into the animal before one uses the rifle, for otherwise one risks the animal sinking to the bottom (*cf.* Hansen 1970:333).

It was only after 1930 that a special kind of sealing with a rifle really developed, as hunters began to use it from a motor boat. This development, which took place in the northern part of what was then regarded as South Greenland, is a matter of getting the seal to dive so quickly that it begins to get short of air, and stops; and in the spring it is not killed by the first shot, so that one has to get hold of it and kill it. But often shotguns were also used.

It was quite common for older, experienced hunters to get weak eyesight so that they had difficulty taking aim. In the 1960s such older hunters had new opportunities, on the one hand because eye specialists travelled around and could get such hunters glasses of a suitable strength; and on the other hand, in the same period one could also buy rifles with telescopic sights. Some older but still vigorous hunters were thus activated again.

In the 1930s an attempt was made to introduce a harpoon rifle, but the idea did not really catch on. It was a heavy rifle, perhaps too heavy to have in the kayak. But it was probably a greater problem that it could make such large holes in the skin that the value of the seal skin as a material and as a commodity was greatly reduced.

The use of bought wood

The use of bought wood in the hunting did not mean changes in form. For the skeleton of a kayak, driftwood had been preferred for some time. It was claimed that it was easier to find wood without flaws both for the kayak skeleton and for kayak tools from driftwood than from the shop stocks. But this resistance could not be kept up, since the greater availability of wood that was ready-sawn made access to wood

much easier. But all in all bought wood was also usually fresher than driftwood.

The use of wood for dog sledges did not mean any change in the form of the sledge either in Upernavik, but in the 1960s the young men's sledges grew larger than their fathers'. In Ammassalik a new sledge form appeared in the 1930s (Robbe 1994:225-230).

Net hunting

Net hunting was in fact not totally unknown in the ancient Inuit culture (Mathiassen 1934:96; Gad 1974: 110), but it is unlikely to have had any great importance before the beginning of colonization, if it was known at all to the Greenlanders at that time.

The Upernavik district. It was only later that the hunters began to take an interest in net-hunting in the Upernavik district, and the number of nets grew. In the middle of the 1960s I was unable to find statistics about nets, but the general opinion was that each hunter had *c.* 25 nets, and in that case there were 6000-8000 nets – the figure may sound high, but it is not wholly improbable.

What limited the number of nets a man had was probably the time it takes to check them. Nets, especially those hung out from the coast, should preferably not hang uninspected for more than three days, since otherwise sand-hoppers could destroy the seal skin.

The number of nets a hunter had was determined by how many he could inspect in three days, and in the 1960s there was therefore an increase in the number of nets, and at the same time the season grew a little longer.

Net-hunting and *uuttoq* hunting are the most important sealing types in Upernavik Municipality. It is therefore also important that one can buy ammunition, and then material for the net.

The Ammassalik district. In Ammassalik there has not been as much net-hunting as in Upernavik. Nor was net-making common – at least not in the 1960s – and this may have contributed to the limited interest, for then nets are more expensive to obtain, while the risk of losing a net is greater there than in northern West Greenland.

There were a few people who had hunting as a secondary job who put nets out, and they also had regular catches.

Clothing

In earlier times all clothing was made of skin – seal skin or gut. All this came from the actual hunting. But gradually people made the transition to bought cloth and bought clothes.

At first people bought cloth and made clothes from it. To begin with they bought cloth for outer clothes for the upper body, for example the anorak – for the men with a hood, for the women without a hood. In time the inner clothing too consisted of bought items – first of woollen material that the women sewed, then later of finished woollen underclothes. 'Iceland sweaters' very quickly became common clothing for men.

Gradually trousers too were sewn from cloth. At first it was the men's trousers that were made of cloth or nankeen material. The women wore their skin trousers for a longer time – they were common until around 1930, and after 1950 one could still see older women wearing skin trousers. But the women also changed the cut of the trousers in connection with this change. They acquired woollen trousers, and began using dresses or skirts. But even today, skin trousers and kamiks are a regular item in women's gala dress.

Footwear was the last to change, and this happened especially because it became difficult to obtain skins for kamiks in Central West Greenland. In the 1930s in particular, skin had become so scarce that many people wore rubber wellingtons, in the winter too. In the 1980s kamiks saw a renaissance in many places in Greenland.

At first it was everyday clothing that was made of bought material. Travelling clothes, and not least hunting clothes, were still made of seal skin.

The changes happened first in central and southern West Greenland, but later in the outer districts. In the 1960s one could still see a few older men in Upernavik in sealskin trousers.

In East Greenland too the use of sealskin clothes continued for a long time, but when the change came there the actual transition was quicker than at Upernavik. The last part of the transition from skin to cloth was undoubtedly hastened by the rising prices of seal skins, and the increasing cost of new necessities probably made skin clothing too expensive.

Mikkelsen and Svejstrup estimated that the average home consumption of seal skins for the years from 1898 until 1910 for clothing, tents and hunting equip-

Table 9. Rising consumption of yard goods in Upernavik and Ammassalik. (*Sammendrag* 1946, IV:838-840; BvG:1960,1962).

Dkr.	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1919/20	11,006	4,800
1930/31	26,100	14,400
1938/39	24,400	19,100
1958	216,500	309,400
1960	270,000	432,000

ment was 1181 hooded seal skins, 640 skins of harp seal and 2954 skins of ringed seal (Mikkelsen and Svejstrup 1944:85).

In recent years it has become more common to see even hunters in off-the-peg clothes. It is almost only hunting clothes and parts of the women's gala dress that are still to a great extent made of seal skin.

Unfortunately we do not have a proper statement of how many skins a year were used to renew people's clothing, and how frequently skin clothing was replaced; on the other hand it is possible to follow the development of sales of fabrics. This is shown by the rising consumption in money terms, which is probably the most interesting parameter (Table 9).

Although not specified in more detail, the figures tell a clear story of the change in costume as the population became more and more dependent on being able to buy cloth.

The figures clearly show that in Ammassalik the skin costumes were retained longer – even when we allow for the fact that the population was greater in Ammassalik than in Upernavik. The abrupt rise at the end in Ammassalik also tells us indirectly that people in Ammassalik went over more to buying finished goods, while in Upernavik people to a certain extent preferred to buy cloth. There were thus considerably more people who knitted their own woollen goods in the Upernavik of the 1960s than in Ammassalik (*cf.* Appendix 2).

Dwellings

As far as the winter dwelling is concerned, the hunting districts have continued longer than other places to obtain their own materials of turf and stone for houses and some driftwood for bracing the ceiling. In the twentieth century, though, people began to line the houses inside with bought wood.

In old turf houses the interior was heated with train-oil lamps which were used for lighting, heating and cooking; and as far as these things were concerned all the materials used were obtained from hunting and gathering.

When people began to line the houses inside with wood, they used only turf – without stone – for the walls in the Upernavik district. This was supposed to be warmer. Turf-walled houses that were clad with wood gradually also acquired cookers or stoves for cooking and heating. At first these were fuelled with peat which was gathered in the summer; but they also used coal that was mined at Innerit by the population of Søndre Upernavik.

In the 1960s it became difficult to raise loans for building in the Upernavik settlements, and in this period turf-walled houses were built again, for example in Søndre Upernavik.

In Ammassalik people began to use wood in the houses around 1930, and around 1950 most private houses had turf walls around them. At the end of the 1950s the housing stock was renewed in the district, and many wooden houses were built both in Ammassalik and in the settlements. Some of these houses were the so-called Rosendahl houses, intended to have turf walls on both gables and back. But at Iserteq there was not enough turf for such insulation. In 1938 Høygaard described both pure earth-houses and houses with inside wooden cladding. But the transition was fluid; in some houses only the floor was of wood, and in some this only went as far as the sleeping-platform (Høygaard 1938:83). In other houses the walls too were clad with wood. Before things had come so far, the use of old umiak skins to cover the ceiling was superseded by the use of roofing felt. But roofing felt was rather fragile material that more easily became leaky, so that it would drip into the house interior (*ibid.* p. 85).

Of 73 houses that Høygaard described as occupied in the winter of 1936/37 in Ammassalik district, ten were turf houses without wooden cladding, but 52 had greater or lesser amounts of wooden lining. We must assume that some of the ten houses without wooden cladding must have been communal houses, while it is likely that none of the houses with wooden cladding was a communal house. Høygaard remarks that young married couples with children moved out of the communal house and built themselves a smaller family

house, and then the communal house was shortened (Høygaard 1938:86f).

This increasing use of wood in the houses undoubtedly led to the dissolution of the communal house. In the first place, once one had valuable things in the house, there could be difficulties with such an unstable form of occupancy as the communal house. One did not leave a house where one had valuables. This was also because planks for house cladding were bought by individual fathers of families. But the communal house system had already broken down in West Greenland, and thus also in Upernavik, at some time between 1830 and 1880. In the stories about the Upernavik district settlements in 1814 and around 1830, the houses were clearly occupied by several households at Aappilattoq and Taartoq. In the household censuses of 1834 some houses were occupied by several households. As far as one can see, the occupants were often related to one another (*Befolkningsliste fra Upernavik for 1833-1834*).

But the course of development was not only from communal house to nuclear family house; it was just as much to the 'household house', that is the three-generation house. We can get a sense of this development by looking at the number of occupants per house in the two districts (Table 10).

One cannot simply equate the increasing number of single-family houses with the increasing use of wood in the houses; but to a certain extent the two things went in parallel. One can assume that all houses acquired wooden lining at some time towards the 1950s, and that gut-casing windows were replaced by glass windows around the same time (*cf.* Mikkelsen and Svejstrup 1944:213).

Around 1955 modernization of the houses at Ammassalik began, when the turf houses were replaced by wooden houses, but it was not until after 1960 that all the major settlements had caught up. For a short while there seem to have been no turf houses in use, but at the new pioneering settlements new turf houses were built (*cf.* Underbjerg 1969:36).

In Upernavik the use of interior wooden cladding began rather earlier. In 1918 there were 169 houses in the district, and of these 105 were turf houses with inside wooden cladding (Bryder 1921: 471-507). Most these houses, at least as far up as Tasiusaq, had both a stove and glass windows. But there were still houses with seal-gut windows as late as 1950. Around 1950 too

Table 10. Average number of occupants per house in the Upernavik and Ammassalik districts in 1928-1940. (*Statistisk Protokol, Ministeriet for Grønland).*

	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1928	5.5	19.3
1929	5.4	19.0
1930	6.3	14.0
1931	5.5	14.3
1933	5.3	12.1
1935	5.3	10.4
1936	5.1	11.9
1937	5.2	11.3
1938	5.4	11.4
1940	5.4	8.9

the building of wooden houses began in Upernavik district, but there were still turf houses, even in Upernavik itself (*cf.* Knudsen 1997:181). At settlements where people had little chance of getting a housing loan, they began to build turf houses with inside wooden cladding. In Søndre Upernavik in 1965 there were eight such turf houses, and in 1966 this had become eleven houses.

Almost all the houses in these districts were privately owned (*Statistisk Tabelværk 1969* IX:109-110). Around 1970 most of the houses were built of wood.

It was mainly supported houses – the housing support scheme gave people the possibility of borrowing money – that were built from the 1950s on, and this meant new accumulations of expenses that had been almost unknown before. Now people suddenly had financial obligations that required the payment of regular instalments. Of course there were also other things that had to be paid, and instalments to be paid off, but housing and to some extent new occupational equipment were probably the things that were the greatest burden on people's economy.

In both districts there were also changes in the tents. Before 1920 all tents, as far as information is available, were skin tents. Gradually people started using the canvas tents, at first alongside the skin tents, but later they became more and more dominant. This process of change can be seen in Table 1.

While the skin tents are family tents, the canvas tents could in fact be intended for just a couple of people. This might explain the sudden rise in the number of canvas tents in Ammassalik in the 1950s. But it also



Fig. 29. The village of Søndre Upernavik, 1966. (Photo R. Petersen).

tells us that the hunting trips are unlikely to have decreased in Ammassalik, although they may have done so in Upernavik.

The renewal of the housing stock took place in both districts in formerly almost moneyless societies where the needs were mainly met by products from the actual hunting. The regular instalments that housing renewal required must have been a heavy burden, not only because they multiplied the expenses, but also because incomes from hunting products could vary greatly. This was expressed verbally in Ammassalik in particular.

The process also appears to have been easier in Upernavik. Despite regular minor declines in hunting, the whole period between 1946 and 1966 was typified, as we have seen, by increasing catches, as well as better prices for hunting products. In both areas the innovation of wooden houses meant a palpable increase in the cost of living.

Also as a result of the renewal of housing, the rising population was spread over fewer settlements. Thus the potential hunting areas of the settlements increased. This also required a renewal of the means of transport, and a number of hunters' huts were needed to facilitate the exploitation of the larger area. But this too required means of transport in the summer with greater capacity than the kayak.

Sailing craft

The kayak was still used rather a lot in the two districts, and in 1965/66 people had the general opinion that the number of kayaks was rising in the Upernavik district. According to Gessain it was decreasing in the Ammassalik district (Gessain 1968:255). But in the 1960s the kayak was still in relatively common use in both districts.

On the other hand the umiak had in fact disappeared; at first it was replaced by rowing-boats of wood, and after 1950 also by motor boats (Borchersen 1963:206). But around 1970 there may still have been a few umiaks left in the Ammassalik district.

In 1920 in Upernavik there were 46 umiaks, eight rowing-boats of wood, and no motor boats. In 1944 there were five umiaks, 105 wooden boats and six motor boats in Greenlandic ownership. In 1968 no umiaks, 102 wooden boats and 37 motor boats were owned by hunters (Table 2). Some motor boats certainly replaced the umiak, but others were probably used instead of the kayak. These would have been one-man boats.

In 1920 in the Ammassalik district there were 37 umiaks, one wooden boat and no motor boats. In 1944 there were 24 umiaks, five wooden boats, and we have no information about motor boats – there were probably none, apart from one mentioned in 1938. In 1968 there was one umiak, while there were 48 wooden boats and 16 motor boats (Table 2).

Something that may distort the picture of motor boats is the fact that boats with outboard motors (often smaller than the 20-footers) could not be used in the Upernavik district north of Tussaaq *(Nalunaerutit* 1965:36), while there were no restrictions on

boats with outboard motors in the Ammassalik district. In Iserteq in 1969 there were as many boats with outboard motors as there were true motor boats (Appendix 2). In 1996 there were four motor boats and 20 dinghies with outboard motors at Iserteq (Andersen 1996).

The transition from an umiak to a wooden boat would of course change certain aspects of the hunters' lives, inasmuch as the seasons for hunting trips were changed. The combined umiak and sledge trip in the spring became impossible, and hunters had to defer the hunting trips until the ice broke up. The shared work of re-covering the umiak was replaced by people helping one another to pull boats up on the land in the autumn, and to launch them in the water the next summer. In addition the skins that had formerly been used as umiak skins could now be used for other purposes.

But motor boats brought innovations. To begin with they were used almost like rowing-boats, that is for the family's hunting trips. But it became easier to make the journeys, and one could travel farther in a shorter time. People took advantage of the faster speed and greater carrying capacity to make longer expeditions.

Around 1940, especially around Sisimiut, as we have seen, a method of chasing animals from a motor boat was developed.

This form of hunting is known in both the Upernavik and Ammassalik districts. But in the Upernavik district the restriction has been introduced that there must be no chasing of seals near the actual settlement within a radius of 5 km. This area was reserved for kayak hunters, and the seals must not be frightened away by too much shooting of the kind associated with the chasing *(Nalunaerutit* 1965:36). No such restrictions have been imposed in the Ammassalik district – at least there were none in the 1960s.

In the Upernavik district limits were also set to the amount of motor boat sailing around the seals' haunts by the ice fjords (*ibid.* p. 36). All these limits lie within the fjords and were proposed by the hunters' associations themselves. The motor boats may cast anchor, may be moored, and may lie at anchor so that the hunters can bring the catch back in kayaks. The hunters can then sleep on the motor boats. The sealing grounds that are thus to be protected lie above the stocks of Greenland halibut. These regulations were broken now and then, but none of the known culprits was himself a hunter. When sealing in these areas one tried to disturb the stocks as little as possible, and this regulation was upheld until about 1990 (Mayor Niels Mattaaq, pers. comm.), after which it was rescinded. The district was then making the transition from sealing to Greenland halibut fishing. and the Greenland halibut grounds were below the sealing grounds. It was these fish that the seals had lived on.

No such boundaries were imposed in the Ammassalik district.

The advantage of these trips by motor boat is that they can be made very quickly, and one can return very quickly to the settlement. For the hunter these trips solved the transport problems that had imposed the narrow limits on his catch potential (*cf.* Storå 1973:2). This new possibility of setting up an 'advance headquarters' was presumably one of the strongest cases of the increased efficiency in hunting when the settlement populations were gathered in just a few places. It made it possible to continue to utilize the hunting areas that had been vacated.

We can thus regard the hunters who first procured a motor boat as forward-looking. But we know from southern West Greenland that these hunters were often considered to be miserly people. When a hunter bought a motor boat he committed himself to paying regular instalments – otherwise an almost unknown concept. Now and then it could be difficult for him to meet his obligations; but at the same time it was clear that the motor boat as such was a useful acquisition. Some of the motor boat owners had thus been forced to disregard the old distribution rules in order to meet their payment obligations. This made them rather unpopular in certain circles, and the kayak hunters in particular were also annoyed by the noise from the motor boats, which often frightened off the surfacing seals. This was at any rate what the kayak hunter could observe, and he arrived at the conclusion that the motor boat frightened the seals away from the area. It was quite human for him to draw such a conclusion from his own observation of a very specific situation. The motor boat owner's observation of the seals' reactions to the motor noise was based on a broader view: he could see that seals did not always seem frightened, and that he could in fact get quite close to them as long as the seal noticed the motor boat in time. These two things together polarized attitudes to the motor boat.

Given the negative attitude to the motor boat owners who ignored the others' expectation of a share of the catch it is hardly strange that some hunters were unable to meet their payment obligations. But they attempted to counter this by having several brothers, or brothers and cousins, share in the procurement of the motor boat.

At first the motor boat had no influence on the definition of the 'catcher' of the animal. Each participant caught his own, and the owner of the motor boat could in some cases be left in a less advantageous position, since it was he who had to take the helm. His chances of seeing the hunted seal before the others were therefore reduced. The one who saw the seal first was entitled to the first shot.

After a period of some uncertainty, people went over to a kind of pooling system which had really been designed for communal cod fishing, where the catch was shared out according to the number of participants, but such that the owner of the boat got two shares (*cf.* Rosendahl 1928:85). This rule did not really catch on in cod fishing with the same boat. Each participant marked his cod. But in connection with sealing from motor boats it is said that these rules were mainly observed while the owner was still paying the instalments on the motor boat. These things meant that many motor boat owners very soon took a particular hunter with them, often a relative, who could thus share in exploiting the potential of the motor boat. But it could also be someone to whom one was not related. By having a particular person with one, one could regulate things a little, such that one could distribute a little more sometimes, in order to distribute a little less in other cases.

Motor boats thus had an effect on the observation of the traditional catch distribution rules. It was the old system for sharing out the parts of the catch that was affected most. This created a certain tension that was remembered for a long time.

In the 1970s I was told a story about a situation from around 1920. Three young hunters were lying in wait for hooded seal. All three were a little inexperienced. One of them harpooned a hooded seal which jumped on him and capsized him. Although the other two were a little afraid of the angry seal, they immediately came to the aid of the capsized hunter, frightened the hooded seal away, and righted the man's boat. Once this had been done, they killed the hooded seal for him, which in itself would have entitled them to a share of the catch each. But none of them got a share of the catch. The capsized man and his brother were at that time saving up money for the deposit on a motor boat. There could of course be several reasons for remembering this event, but at all events fifty years later people remembered the man who did not give part of the catch although one could argue there were special reasons to do so.

In general a motor boat owner preferred to live at a place where he could buy fuel and other accessories. But at the same time shopping trips with motor boats became considerably easier than before, and in this way they could also help to stabilize settlements without shops, as happened with the use of motor boats in Naajaat, Nutaarmiut, etc.

During my stay in Upernavik in the middle of the 1960s, the municipality stated that there were in fact no longer any arrears payable on motor boats, apart from a couple of cases that were due to illness. It was not uncommon for hunters, when they could afford it, to want to shorten the instalment period by paying off more than the contract required.

In Ammassalik the picture was a little different: according to information from the municipality's population committee meeting, there were no great arrears either, although it is not always quite clear how the figures are to be understood. That the second-biggest outstanding amount was from Umiivik was undoubtedly due to the fact that in the period from the due date to my stay, there had been no contact with Umiivik. It is also conceivable that the motor boat owner had gone out there to catch up with his various arrears. At least such factors seem to have been an important argument for spending a winter in the marginal district. There was also a large group of arrears at a settlement in the core area, but this was not related to motor boats.

The dog sledge

In Upernavik the sledge is made of the same material and in the same model as before – the North West Greenlandic sledge type – well suited for transport on both ice and land. But in 1965 the young hunters' sledges were generally larger than their fathers'. In addition the young men used a larger dog team. This can be taken as an indication that there were very good hunting conditions in this period.

Table 11. Number of sledge dogs in Upernavik and Ammassalik from 1920 until 1959. (*Statistiske Oplysninger om Grønland* III:565 (1920-1935); *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1959:57 (1944-1959)).

	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1920	931	608
1925	1209	497
1930	1541	592
1935	1476	385
1944	1321	452
1950	1241	466
1959	1838	1134

Table 12. Number of dog sledges in Upernavik and Ammassalik in the period 1920-1959. (*Statistiske Oplysninger om Grønland* III:565 (1920-1935); *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1959:57 (1944-1959)).

	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1920	143	81
1925	198	99
1930	221	103
1935	231	70
1944	207	68
1950	200	82
1959	261	167

As already mentioned, in Ammassalik a new and larger sledge model had been introduced, as well as a new way of harnessing the dogs. In principle the pattern was still fan-shaped, but by giving the dogs traces of different lengths one could in fact drive as if they were in tandem. Since there is deep soft snow in many places the tandem form can make things easier. A very effective braking system was also introduced.

From Iserteq, Hovelsrud-Broda has a calculation of the proportion of meat consumed by humans and dogs, respectively 57% and 33% with 10% wastage (Hovelsrud-Broda 1999:41). This estimate from Iserteq can hardly be applied to the settlements where fish is used a good deal as dog food.

Tables 11 and 12 show the development of the number of dogs and sledges. Since the number of sledges and dogs can be used as a parameter for the prosperity of a hunting society in the dog-sledge districts, the figures around 1935-1950 speak of economically difficult conditions, as also indicated elsewhere.

Heating and lighting

In 1966 in the Upernavik district there was just one train-oil lamp left of the type normally made of soapstone, but it was in fact made of metal. It was in an autumn house at Ikerasak. Autumn houses were used when one had to move into a house. But before the ice-hunting season started, the sea could be so rough at the settlement itself that people moved to a place with calmer waters, and continued with the kayak hunting. This autumn house was used by a family from Søndre Upernavik.

In 1969 there appear to have been no more soapstone lamps in the Ammassalik district. In both districts people had paraffin lamps for lighting in the houses, especially in the permanent settlements, although a few people had electricity, for example at Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn in Upernavik.

The use of paraffin in the houses had previously been prohibited, but the ban was raised during World War II. In other words, train oil for lighting in the houses had passed out of use after 1950. And thus it had also passed out of use for heating and cooking.

In both districts stoves for heating and cooking were introduced in the houses in the wake of the adoption of wood in the house structure and glass windows. To begin with, the fuel used was peat which was cut in the summer, then around 1960 it was almost exclusively coal that was used. But oil furnaces and stoves had also appeared.

All these things meant that people had abandoned the philosophy of procuring everything they needed; now they had to buy what they required. With the emergence of oil furnaces attempts were made to find a train-oil press so that people could again use the blubber. They had begun to throw it away, and this did not look so good. But for some reason this experiment did not lead to production. People therefore became dependent on imports, since the Greenlandic coal-mining at Qullissat had been abandoned. The private coal-quarrying at Innerit also lost its importance.

The final stage of this process was the abandonment of the insulation of the wooden houses with compacted 'crowberry' *(Empetrum nigrum)*. This was replaced by glass wool and rockwool.

New needs for shop goods

In the period when people managed to procure more

or less all their necessities from the produce of the country, the need for variation in the assortment of goods in the shops was also small. But in connection with the rising dependence on bought goods, the need for different shop goods also increased. As larger quantities of the individual goods were required, a need for more of an assortment also arose.

The changes mentioned above also led to new needs and wishes.

The interior wooden cladding in the houses, and the building of wooden houses, meant greater demands for cleanliness in the houses, and toiletry articles also became a necessity in the whole of Greenland, including the hunting districts. In addition the development of new soap types, including soap for washing skins, meant that these were used instead of soda lye, which had itself once ousted the urine tub from the houses.

To begin with houses with inside wooden cladding were furnished like the turf houses, and on the whole like the dwellings in the eastern Inuit area. But gradually the need for wooden tables also arose, and for seating, either chairs or chests that were intended both for sitting on and storing things in – clothing, tools etc.; all things one could still make oneself, but the wishes grew to encompass dressing-tables, shelves and bookcases, plate racks, etc. The use of all these things arose among other reasons because people no longer had to move around with all their furniture.

The wish for reading material arose, and although literature in the Greenlandic language was very limited at that time, the urge to read was very great.

The radio receiver also became a necessity, not only because the radio news was a welcome feature, but also because the radio weather forecasts came to play a role in the everyday life of the hunter. Especially in the isolated East Greenlandic winter settlements the radio – and thus radio telegrams – came to play a major role in communication – although it was still one-way communication.

In the 1960s TV had not really reached the settlements in the two districts, but it later became a very important medium of communication and entertainment.

All these changes meant that the idea of making the things one needed oneself faded into the background, and bought furniture, normally imported furniture, could also be seen in hunting settlements, alongside the self-made furnishings.

All these things meant a great increase in the need for money. In the period between 1945 and 1966 the hunting conditions and the very good prices for hunting products meant that these developments took place very quickly. The most important things people obtained were presumably houses and boats; other things came as extras when they thought they could afford them.

The development of power plants meant that cold storage plants were established in the hunting settlements, so fish and seal meat could be frozen, partly for people's own needs, but also for exports from the district. But there were capacity problems because of the weaknesses of the infrastructure. Purchases often had to be stopped because the storage facilities were full. Most of the production plant was owned by Royal Greenland (the Greenland export company), but there were a few cooperative production plants too.

A very striking change in attitude came once people more or less shelved the idea of making everything themselves. There was still political use of the idea that the hunters utilized the resources of the land, and it was in fact still true of things like food, dog food etc. In this kind of debate some people try to equate the Greenlandic culture with the hunting culture – the modernized hunting culture, that is. But for better or worse the hunting community is part of the larger Greenlandic society.

Earning potential and needs

In the hunting districts, sales of blubber and skins – in Ammassalik, though, almost only skins – had been the hunters' only possibility of earning an income. The trading policy of the Danish state was to try to avoid buying so many skins that the hunters would be short of skins for themselves. One could say that this policy had idealistic motives, but at the same time it was rationally planned so as not to decrease Greenlandic productivity. This trade was based on the existing form of production, which was now mainly channeled into exports. The hunter had to invest in tools and skill, and this investment should not be undermined. The aim could presumably not always be realized effectively. Now and then so much blubber was probably sold that some people would need to have the lamps out for part of the winter, as Ungaaralak said

Table 13. Figures from catch lists and skin purchases in Ammassalik, given two years at a time but staggered. (*Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1954-66; BvG 1954-65).

	Catch of seals	Purchases of skins		%
1954/55-55/56	16,251	1954-55	14,39	88.5
1956/57-57/58	16,195	1956-57	14,011	86.5
1958/59-59/60	18,527	1958-59	16	86.4
1960/61-61/62	19,106	1960-61	14,052	73.5
1962/63-63/64	16,333	1962-63	13,486	82.5
1964/65-65/66	15,701	1964-65	14,183	90.9
1955/56-56/57	16,253	1955-56	13,754	84.6
1957/58-58/59	17,566	1957-58	15,868	90.3
1959/60-60/61	18,119	1959-60	13,11	72.4
1961/62-62/63	18,803	1961-62	16,504	87.8
1963/64-64/65	16,387	1963-64	13,854	84.5

when describing his time at Salliit slightly north of Cape Farewell around 1880 (Ungaaralak 1995:79-82).

In both districts, purchases of skins were fairly slow at first, and rose steadily for some years almost without variations until they reached a certain volume. Then, as already indicated, they began fluctuating up and down with the fluctuations in the actual hunting. We can see this from the skin trading in Upernavik, as we can compare the figures with the catch statistics. The fluctuations of the two kept pace, and the deviations were regular. In the Ammassalik district the possibility of making such comparisons was of shorter duration, and the system was consolidated less. In the 1960s there was a constant lack of information about hunting from two or three places. In this case there was a greater 'discrepancy' between skin purchases and catch lists. After 1960 some places in the marginal district were utilized every year. In these places the catch per inhabitant was considerably larger than in the core area. However, the catches from these outposts were only purchased in the following years. Here again we have the well known factor that a discrepancy could be expected between catch figures and purchases – but no one could say how great a difference was to be expected.

In Table 13 I try to reduce the effect of these differences – which are also due to the use of two different calculation years, the fiscal year and the calendar year, as well as delayed purchases – by taking the figures from registrations two years at a time instead of a cumulative average for two years. The two tables thus show the two years staggered in relation to each other. The difference between the catch list figures and the skin purchases is shown as a percentage of the former.

If we compare these sets of figures with each other and Table 14, we can see that the skin purchases as a percentage of the catches change in the years when the housing instalments change. The number of sold skins was more stable than the percentage, and this suggests that the need for money found a new level.

Around 1961 there was a drop in housing construction and proportionately fewer skin purchases suggest

Table 14. Housing constructed in Ammassalik from 1955 until 1965, and the payments that had to be met. The figures for 1962 and 1964 only cover one half-year. We can see by comparing with Table 13 that in the years when more has to be paid the ratio of skin sales to catches rises. (Greenland Secretariat, Danish National Museum, pers. comm.)

	Houses	Payments, Dkr.
1955	5	–
1956	2	910
1957	1	550
1958	24	1,150
1959	34	1,340
1960	34	29,800
1961	16	–
1962	9	22,600
1963	26	53,000
1964	17	26,700
1965	54	73,300

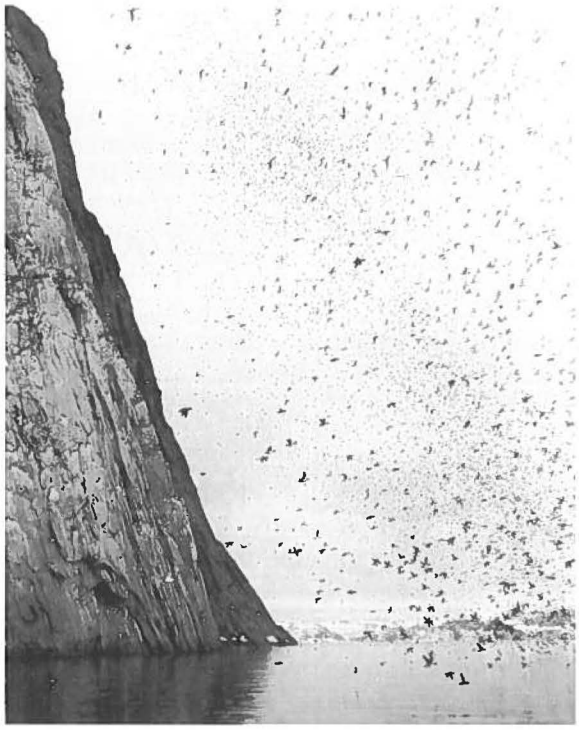

Fig. 30. Guillemots at the bird cliff in Upernavik, 1967. (Photo Keld Hansen).

a building-up of the skin reserves. Increasing house prices from 1965, a rise from DKr 50,000 to DKr 70,000, seem to have been a drain on the skin reserves, since people now had greater financial obligations while at the same time catches were in a period of decline. Skin sales as a percentage of catches rose by over 6%. But despite the manipulations shown above, the figures can only show tendencies. There were places from which there was no information about catches. 69 people spent the winter of 1965/66 at Umiivik, not only the 19 hunters stated in the catch lists; in addition these lists lack 61 people in Kangersuttuaq, 17 people in Kialeeq, and ten in Imaarsivik (*Ministeriet for Grønland J. no.* 1500-02-10).

In 1963 purchases of blubber were discontinued because of decreasing profitability. As compensation the price of a number of hunting products, especially seal skin, was raised (BvG:1965,6,20f). This happened in a good period for hunting, so the discontinuation of blubber purchases did not mean a drop in the income in the hunting districts as a whole. The good hunters did not complain. The more ordinary hunters expressed regrets, but it is not clear whether they did in fact experience a decline in their incomes, or whether they were annoyed because the possibility for a little extra profit had been cut off. But the number of sold skins remained at the same level.

The overall incomes of the hunting districts – including their own consumption of their own catches – are difficult to estimate. On the one hand there was the personal consumption whose size we do not know, on the other hand the true total catch is also unknown. If we knew more about bird catches and fishing, we could use local municipal market prices to estimate the money value of personal consumption. In these years there were experiments with models for estimating the catches of animals that were not sold.

Even if we restrict our considerations to the sealing, the estimate of the meat volume can only be approximate. Some of the meat volume estimates are based on calculations by Rink from more than a century ago. The weight of the seals is affected by changes in the natural conditions (*cf.* Freeman 1967:155), and the natural conditions have changed since Rink's time. The conversion of the meat value on local markets to money value varies from place to place, since the prices of these products are set by negotiation with each municipality (*cf.* Municipal Price List for Upernavik Municipality, 1965). But in addition there were some catches of birds and fish, but much of this material was consumed by the hunters themselves, and only some of it appeared in the trade, so it does not filter through to any of the statistics. One can only guess if one wants to include this kind of yield, unless one is actually at the place and notes it all down, including the catches that are caught and consumed during hunting trips. The edible part of the seal is estimated as 26 kg of meat etc. for ringed seal, 128 kg for harp seal, and 150 kg for hooded seal (Hovelsrud-Broda 1999:42).

The fish found in the district have been mentioned in the description of the natural environment. There are stocks of Greenland halibut at all the inhabited places. Towards 1960 wolf-fish stocks extended north all the way up to Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn; but their northern boundary contracted to the south. As mentioned before, there appears to be a large Arctic shark stock, but it is mainly the Greenland halibut that plays a role and that has been fished in the district's transition to fishing at Upernavik.

At first all fishing – including winter fishing – was

done with a jig. But a little before 1930 people began using a *saarlisaartoq* or 'slider' to fish from the ice (*cf.* Barfod *et al.* 1968:186f,190; Steenholdt 1930:79). In the Upernavik district in the 1960s up to a hundred hooks on a long line were used, but sometimes fewer. The significance of the 'slider' for the hunting economy has presumably never been described. But if we take the hunters' yield as a whole – both what is sold and what is consumed by the family and its dogs, there is no doubt that the slider has made life easier for a number of families in northwestern Greenland.

The hunters' economy – viewed as the society's supply process (Sahlins 1965:225) – could undoubtedly improve its yield if the reserves in the fish stocks could be used to replace the domestic meat consumption; in particular, the meat that is used for dog food could be replaced by fish. This is a genuine possibility, but is limited by the fact that the transport conditions are not good in the good sealing season.[1] It was difficult to transport the frozen meat to the market. The freezing plant which has been discussed for a long time has a number of capacity problems, among other reasons because of the infrastructure and the long period when the stock cannot be emptied. On the face of it, it seems sensible to move the animal species utilized down a step in the food chain. There is no doubt that there is a domestic market for bird game and other hunting products.

The Arctic shark, with its fatty liver, has been hunted earlier, but is today mainly regarded as a kind of vermin that bites through the catch from long lines, and often bites the actual line in two. Shark flesh is dried and used as dog meat.

For an extended period Greenland halibut has been fished in the Upernavik district. For the district as a whole fish purchases, however, were of limited significance. In 1955 the income from fisheries was DKr 28,700, or 14.4% of the whole hunting income. In 1960 fisheries brought in DKr 29,500, corresponding to 6.6% of the total income from hunting and fishing. In 1965 the income from fishing was DKr 16,200, corresponding to 1.6% of the total income from hunting and fishing *Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1956, 1961, 1966).

In the Ammassalik district, apart from char and *ammassak* (capelin) there was also some seasonal sea scorpion fishing with jigs. This catch was not traded. In the 1950s some cod fishing arose, and in 1955 this brought in DKr 21,200, or 23% of the total income from hunting and fishing. This was intensified somewhat over the next few years, and in 1960 it brought in DKr 391,000, or 67.8% of the total income from hunting and fishing. In 1965 fisheries earned DKr 281,000 or 45% of the total income from hunting and fishing. It was therefore discussed whether the Ammassalik district could still be regarded as a hunting district, whereas as late as the 1980s there can be no doubt that Upernavik was still a hunting district. However, only a couple of places, Kuummiit and Kulusuk, can be described as fishing settlements. One can even question this at Kulusuk, where crafts also play a role for the economy. If one disregards these two places plus Tasiilaq, the rest of the settlements must be regarded as making a living from hunting, whether we consider their economy as a supply process or in the narrower sense as a money-earning process.

The total money income from hunting and fishing is most significant for Upernavik Municipality (Table 15).

Considering that more people live in Ammassalik Municipality, Upernavik is better off, not least since it is less isolated than Ammassalik Municipality.

In Upernavik there was a strong growth in sales of hunting products, even after the blubber trade had been discontinued (Table 16).

The need for plant

At the so-called *bopladser* or outer settlements there was no trading place for the hunting products. The hunters had to bring in the seal skins themselves, after scraping and washing and drying, to the *trading post* or to *the colony*, where there would usually be skin and blubber stores, and often also a coopering workshop or barrels to put the blubber in. The prepared skins had to be stored in a dry place.

Table 15. Money earned from sales of hunting and fishing products in Upernavik and Ammassalik from 1955 to 1965. (*Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1956, 1961, 1966).
* Figure from 1956.

Dkr.	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1955	199,500	*166,600
1960	445,300	577,800
1965	947,000	642,200

Table 16. Income from hunting from 1957 until 1965. The figures from 1963 until 1965 include bonuses, in the years when it was paid out, but in fact it belonged to the purchases for the previous year. (*Sammendrag af Grønlands Fangstlister* 1958-1966 (Upernavik 1957-1965 and Ammassalik 1960-1965); BvG 1957, no.6 (Ammassalik 1957-1959)).

Dkr.	Upernavik	Ammassalik
1957	222,800	148,400
1958	289,700	146,200
1959	358,000	201,700
1960	415,800	186,700
1961	470,400	322,300
1962	371,700	244,900
1963	723,200	378,000
1964	1070,000	378,200
1965	930,800	361,200

For fish trading, even at a primitive stage, one needs a good deal more investment. Besides salting-houses there is also a need for somewhere to process the fish, as well as for rewashing and resalting, as well as wages for the workers. One needs sufficient quantities of salt for preservation. Especially at the beginning of salt fish production there were certain investment problems. The size of the salting-house was a problem, because there could be many fish in the good season, while there was no trading in the winter. This may have been because there was less cod fishing in the winter, although there are cod at certain places throughout the winter. Another problem was that the icy season could destroy the products. The salting-houses were not heated. While in the summer trading often had to be stopped because the salting-houses were full, the same houses stood empty in the winter. Of course the investments in fisheries rose with the growth of the fishing industry.

In many places, including the hunting districts, there is some production of stockfish, i.e. dried cod, which does not require so much investment. But the cod stocks seem to have been less sustainable there, and stockfish is an inexpensive product. In the hunting districts purchases of fish for stockfish production are mainly found when the hunting is not profitable.

Much of the investment requirement and the investments had nothing to do with the hunting districts. And it was presumably also in view of this that the Royal Greenland Trading Company announced in the middle of the 1950s that production in Greenland had avoided deficits because of surplus in the hunting sector (*cf.* Christiansen 1957:6-7).

In the hunting sector, in other words, the trading could take place without any major investments; on the other hand the scattered population meant rather high transport costs. Especially in East Greenland, where the field ice can affect the summer traffic considerably – at worst for the whole summer – even the need for solid boat construction raises costs. And one cannot make rigid plans for sailing, since the duration of a trip often cannot be predicted. But according to the plans each place in the core area had to be visited once a week. In the winter the transport vehicles of slightly larger capacity such as motor boats and schooners are not active in the two areas. This means that the meat products cannot be sold out of the settlements, and must be utilized in other ways, e.g. to a great extent as dog food, although dog food could also be obtained from the fish in the area.

The role of the school in the hunting districts

At the beginning of the 1950s, when there was a campaign for more concentrated settlement, the possibility of better education was one of the most powerful incentives available. People would often disregard their own wishes if they were convinced that a certain course of action would benefit the children.

Before that time, and perhaps as late as the 1950s, education appears to have been regarded by the hunters as an evil of whose necessity they were not convinced. During the very poor conditions that were probably felt most in the 1940s, they felt that the traditional cooperation within the family was something they could not dispense with, and at least the older children were supposed to help, while also learning about the conditions of the hunting life. For some reason people had never really regarded these children's participation in the work as a kind of education. Even at the places where a man was employed to teach the use of the kayak and to provide other kinds of introductions to the local hunting conditions, the father's instruction of his child was never really considered part of the educational pattern. It must be said however that education in Greenland, compared with Alaska (Coombs 1972) and to some extent Canada (Sindell and Wintrob 1969), gives much more consideration to the children's environment, background and poten-

tial, although this consideration appears to be declining in practice.

The traditional family solidarity is still a factor that plays a role, and the need for help in the home could thus be used by the head of a family to call home a young member of the household, although he or she was undergoing education, perhaps even in the final stage of an education. The young person in question would almost always break off the education and travel home. This still seems to be common in the hunting districts, but not so much any more in the central local communities.

Despite such factors there is no doubt that in the last couple of decades, many Greenlanders – not only in the central towns and the fishing districts, but also in the hunting districts – have adopted a new attitude to education and training. Although one does not hear independently articulated arguments, one does hear wishes from them that their children should learn something. There was a young Tasiusaq hunter who talked about moving south so that his children could get a better education than they could where he was living (R.P. field note 1966). Some years later he moved to Disko Bay. But the most common statement was that at the settlements people wanted a Danish (or Danish-speaking) teacher. Whether this is because teachers educated at a Danish training college were regarded as better than those trained in Greenland I do not know, but if that was the case it was a simplistic view handed down from earlier times. On the other hand we cannot exclude the possibility that by demanding a Danish teacher people were protesting against the fact that from the age of twelve children had to be sent to a boarding school in the town, whether this notion of keeping the children at the settlement was right or not.

Such wishes for a Danish teacher were especially heard in the Ammassalik district, and several of the settlement schools in fact had Danish-trained teachers. In the 1960s Kuummiit, Kulusuk and Tiileqilaaq had Danish teachers. In Upernavik a Danish teacher came to Kullorsuaq in 1966 (BvG:1966-67,3: 79,84f). In the Upernavik district several settlements also wanted to have a Danish teacher. It is possible that these new signals were a sign that life in the hunting settlements of the 1960s had become easier, and that people thus no longer needed the help of the children so much.

Although not everything was registered, it is very possible that some families with school-age children moved to bigger places in connection with the parents' wish to give their children a chance of a better education. This situation is known for example from Maniitsoq, and was clearly expressed by the local councillor Karl Heilmann in his account of the depopulation of three small places in Maniitsoq Municipality, and by the father of a family who was left by the depopulation of Ikkamiut with his family, but had to move when his grandchild reached school age (Tape 65VG7-B2). But I did not get this kind of concrete information from Upernavik or Ammassalik.

On the other hand the father of a family has been known, despite some attempts to persuade him otherwise, to remain in his settlement although he had a grandchild of school age. Only his household lived at the settlement. But there can hardly be any doubt that the boy in question was given the most relevant training for a hunter, and at the age of 17-18 he was regarded as a great hunter. According to the census lists this settlement was uninhabited.

In Ammassalik the greater utilization of the outer settlements in the 1960s also had the effect that the children at the small places could not get a proper education, but had to be taught by their parents (BvG: 1966-67,3,p.84). This sort of education would have been rather irregular and random. On the other hand there can be little doubt that such places are of great value if more hunters are to be trained.

But one must say that even if one suspects that schools can affect the settlement pattern for families with school-age children, the role of the school in this pattern is almost unknown. There have been a few examples of families refusing to move to a place with a school, while some others actually move away from such a place. But how great a role the school plays in people's moves to or from a place is not known for the hunting districts. The general debate about how the small places were dominated by occupational considerations (*Avangnâmioq* 1948:25,179-81; 1949:17f,175; 1950:120-22,127-29), later faded out. But the outward moves in the 1960s in Ammassalik confirmed the general opinion.

Some forms of socialization

Formalized types of socialization have existed for a long time. Various kinds of clubs and societies have

also found their way to the small settlements. Attempts are made through formalized channels to make non-family socialization more permanent. At the small places the club or society format was used to create a sense of community or to unite people around an idea.

While it is true that at such places events were arranged without formal associations, such as the parties of the young, their excursions etc., thanks to the efforts of voluntary organizers, such repeated events have often led to true formal associations.

In the 1960s at almost all the small places there were *Blue Cross* branches which arranged a series of meetings in the winter. Usually the school building was used for such meetings. Among other associations, at many of these places there were *Peqatigiinniat*, i.e. Christian associations, but there were also some singing societies, although this designation can be ambivalent, since some people use the same name for choral societies and actual choirs.

One difficulty for such associations is often the lack of meeting places apart from the school. For beyond the ordinary lecture and discussion evenings there seems to be a growing need for entertainment evenings of a more formal type.

Otherwise the informal gatherings at the small places are so lively that quite a few people never really get bored in ordinary conditions. In the informal gatherings everyone is active (Olsen 1969), but some people are often quite passive in the formal ones.

Besides the shortage of premises for entertainment, many small places also lack a place where the young can meet, have a dance etc.

There is such a house for example at Tiileqilaaq; but this is a rarity for settlements of that size. The lack of such premises is considered by some people to be one of the reasons why many of the young leave the settlements for the towns (*cf.* Appendix 2:310f.). Some associations only have limited activities, and one reason for this may be that the various local associations, despite some joint board meetings meant to reduce competition for the same people, still come to scatter the forces. They must often compete for the same participants.

But there are other kinds of innovation in the forms of socialization and community spirit, for example the use of a motor boat by several hunters. At the hunting settlements, though, it is usually relatives who sail together. The composition of boat teams could be fairly loose when it was not based on family relationships, and it was often seasonally determined. Such boat crews were often composed of people from different households.

Although this form of solidarity is fairly loose, it has brought a certain order to the catch distribution. At first the members of such a group caught their own animals, but paid a certain charge to the owner of the boat. But in West Greenland, and thus also in Upernavik, this developed into a tendency towards a kind of pooling. Of course one could regard the traditional catch-part rules as a kind of distribution system. But one cannot speak of proper pooling unless people have first put the whole catch together and then redistributed it. Despite the fact that private ownership was also established for the food supplies, there was much that was consumed communally. The actual procurement of the goods was however primarily individual. With pooling in the hunting one is in fact on the path towards a larger, more jointly organized effort to procure goods than was known before (Dahl 1990:149-160). Such pooling is first and foremost associated with joint hunting with many participants.

Certain forms of hunting required a communal effort, and in that connection a distribution system from a shared pool was adopted (*ibid.* p. 154ff).

In the various towns and districts a joint trade union was established for hunters and fishermen. Today the union whose branches in Upernavik and Ammassalik we know as 'hunters' associations' has members in all established local communities, that is in the places permanently inhabited by a population over the years. In Upernavik the local chairmen of the hunters' associations are organized in a 'district' with annual meetings with local branches.

In 1969 the local associations in Ammassalik Municipality still lacked a superstructure. They seemed more or less independent of one another. But at that time the municipality could gather the chairmen for a municipal meeting.

The hunters' associations administrate the use of the hunter's huts. They ensure that the huts are kept in order, and that they have supplies of the most important necessities. They also collect charges for their use.

In 1969 it was said that the hunters' associations in Iserteq and Tiileqilaaq had no activities beyond this (Appendix 2:310).

In Upernavik the hunters' associations participate

through the district in the debate about area protection, and they submit proposals for regulations on hunting or for changes in the regulations. In 1966 they were also interested in a formal separation from the fishermen's associations, partly because of the lack of representation of the hunters in the executive committee of the union and the lack of a spokesman in negotiations with the authorities, and partly because of a fear that the surplus from hunting would be swallowed up by the deficit from fisheries (Appendix 1:245). This wish for separation was dropped later. But one of the hunters' associations' problems seems to be the lack of contacts among the various hunting districts. Attempts have later been made to remedy this.

The cooperative idea

The idea of a cooperative movement in Greenland has been brought up in debate about Greenland since the 1950s, and it was given reasonable or even good support by the authorities. The Royal Greenland Trading Company's local management and directors were particularly helpful. The idea was given a boost when the Greenland Committee of the Danish Cooperative Societies arose and helped to create a basis for the existing cooperative associations. Through collaboration with the Cooperative Societies' consultant for Greenland a number of co-ops were started up in the 1960s at various places, sometimes taking over the Royal Greenland Trading Company shop, in other cases competing with it.

Alongside the co-ops there arose a number of other cooperative associations, almost all food producers, but a few power plants and a housing association also arose as well as some fish production units. Some of the cooperative enterprises are in the settlements, and most of them have later been dissolved again.

While the management of the Royal Greenland Trading Company was in Copenhagen, the cooperative concept enjoyed good support among the leading Greenlandic politicians, and as we have seen it was also well supported by the Royal Greenland Trading Company management. But when the Greenland Home Rule Government took over the operations of the Royal Greenland Trading Company, the relationship with the cooperative societies and outlets was no longer so positive. The co-op outlets got into difficulties, but some of them survived, among other ways by joining forces.

The traditional individual hunting form ought to accord well with the cooperative idea, where one can get a dividend according to one's contribution to the turnover. But for various reasons it was difficult to get a cooperative enterprise started. There was a cooperative society that was started up in the 1960s at Nuussuaq/Kraulshavn in order to establish a cooperative freezing plant. Its problem was due to nature itself, since the winter transport difficulties would create serious capacity problems.

Since then, though, a cooperative freezing plant has been started at Innaarsuit to produce food. This was a cooperative that was operated more or less on a family basis, which may be one of the reasons why it was possible to get it started.

One of the problems was probably that at the beginning it was difficult to meet the authorities' hygiene requirements. Of course it is quite reasonable that the hygienic requirements should be met. The problem was that there were no similar requirements for the private, local meat and fish market. Thus this barrier only affected the establishment of cooperative associations, for it is in fact only in the establishment phase and the first couple of operating years that this problem exists. Since rather a lot of food is sold from the local meat market without controls, one must say that the unorganized meat sales were given preferential treatment. It should be said, though, that in recent years both consumer circles and the municipal authorities have demanded improved hygiene at these local markets. The first cooperative factory for food production, 'Sipeneq' in Sisimiut, started up in fact with an exemption from the hygienic regulations, but in the course of two years it brought conditions into conformity with the rules. Without this flexible arrangement it is not certain that Sipeneq could have started (H.C. Petersen, pers. comm.).

In recent decades the hunters' local communities have grown to sizes that are still small but considerably larger than the small settlements also discussed in this work. This has facilitated various types of cooperation.

In home rule Greenland there has been a special branch of government for settlements and marginal districts, and a policy for development even at the small hunting settlements has channeled a certain amount of investment money to them. Certain harbour conditions, combustion plants, small power

plants etc. have given the small settlements certain possibilities, and presumably a number of new problems.

Notes

1. There seems to be a problem, though, since dogs that had been fed as puppies with seal meat clearly missed it when their food was changed to fish alone. They began to pull better again when they were given seal meat to eat again (Siegstad 1995:227). In the 1990s there was distemper in Thule, and sledge dogs were collected from Disko Bay. And there one saw the opposite story: some sledge dogs began to seem a little poorly until the day someone tried fishing for halibut as dog food, and the dogs got better again after eating it.

Chapter 8

Hunting communities as part of Greenlandic society

The political and organizational framework

The basic organization

In this concluding chapter I will mainly be dealing with a number of familiar factors. I have tried to place the two district communities discussed in the preceding chapters within Greenlandic society as a whole, which developed away from the conditions dealt with here. But I have not specified the nature of the placing of the two regional communities.

Fundamentally, the hunting societies described in the two districts had the same organizational features as the whole of Greenlandic society had in the first couple of decades of the 19th century. Differences in kinship terms used in this work are dialectal, and thus indicate no differences in the relationships. The differences that do exist seem to be due mainly to individual views of the incest prohibitions.

The organizational structure was that of the household, of independent family-based groups, and these were to a great extent self-sufficient in material goods and manpower. The whole Greenlandic economy was based on the community's supply process, considered as the supply process of the households. A typical example was the introduction of sheep-farming in South Greenland, which may well have been presented as a new economic sector, but which was often described then as a way of obtaining for the Greenlandic families the meat that became more difficult to procure with the decline in the sealing. The verbal debate that was going on is reflected for example in an article from 1915 (Jespersen 1915:81).

The division of labour in the household – which was coming to consist mainly of a nuclear family – was still the province of heads of the family, male and female. In the old households consisting of three-generation families, the heads of the family were normally not active supporters, but administrators of the household food provisions. In households consisting of nuclear families alone, the heads of the family were also the actively productive members of the household. The husband obtained raw materials for the family: seals, birds, fish, driftwood, etc. The wife made them usable – apart from the driftwood – and formed them, often with the help of the slightly older children. The further role of the husband as the person who made tools was superseded by his role of obtaining the money necessary to buy them.

Especially in earlier times, these forms of responsibility were associated with individual households; but certain social tasks that had not been associated earlier with the individual households as such, for example spiritual help, midwifery, the leadership of shared tasks, etc., were now performed by trained people who were often fetched from the outside to the local community: the school and church workers, trade and administration people, health care workers.

From around 1860 there was a certain political representation in West Greenland, first through the superintendencies, *misissuisut*, partly with 'ex officio' members, the leading local civil servants, partly with members elected by and from the 'enterprising' hunters of the local community: 'caretakers', *paarsisut*, who were appointed within their local community (*Meddelelser* 1982:5-7). *Paarsisut*, which is today normally used of the *superintendencies as a whole*, really only applies to the elected members. Only men could elect and be elected to the superintendencies, as long as they had received no poor relief (*ibid.* p. 59). But it appears that this loss of eligibility only applied for one year at a time. Some caretakers/superintendents who received poor relief during their activities in this economically difficult period were reinstated, while the hunters who had received assistance in an election year could not be elected (*cf. ibid.* p. 90). There are examples where several local hunters had received poor relief, and the one who had not received such assistance was appointed (*ibid.* p. 59).

The superintendencies are often described simply as political bodies. Through the elected members they

did indeed have the possibility of channeling the wishes of the local community. But in a way the superintendencies were not political bodies if by this one understands institutions with the power to change the conditions of society, and especially with the power to lay down the conditions for the future. The superintendency was an organ of social administration with judicial powers in local matters such as disputes, misappropriations, theft and violent behaviour. In reality it was preferred that they did not engage much in politics (*cf.* the Nuuk superintendency's treatment of common funds etc., Petersen *et al.* 1991:133ff). But it must be emphasized that it was the first form of local leadership above the level of the household, and as such was a historic innovation.

However, certain guidelines were formulated by the superintendency at Sukkertoppen in 1864: "The following was resolved: *that each supporter shall be obliged to support his wife, children, parents, and his brother's widow and children, insofar as they need help. If he supports even more, he will receive a larger encouragement bonus*" (*ibid.* p. 92). Whether this was formulated especially with widows without grown-up sons in mind, or widows without productive brothers to fall back on, is not evident from the text.

In connection with decline in sealing in this century that has already been mentioned several times, and not least in connection with invasions of large shoals of cod, work was done to turn the central West Greenlandic and South Greenlandic hunters into fishermen. It has already been mentioned that the common description of Greenlanders as a people who looked down on fishermen was based on a misunderstanding, even though a number of Greenlanders themselves added to the misunderstanding. It was those who fished for sea-scorpion with jigs who were most often teased about this – presumably not because they fished for sea-scorpion as such, but rather because they could not really make a name as a seal hunter. One must remember that the event that marked a boy's transition from childhood to young manhood was catching his first seal, and what made this young man an adult was proof that he could catch the ordinary hunted animals (Petersen 1974-75:177). The sea-scorpion fisher – the adult one, that is – lacked all this. It was unlikely that he would be able to found and support a family that functioned as an independent household.

In fact the transition to cod fishing, in view of the household's division of labour, was perhaps not as great a matter as one often hears. Many so-called *hunters* actually spent part of the summer cod fishing – for example the period between the *ammassat* fishing and the caribou season. The difference between *hunters* and *fishermen* before 1950 was probably mainly a matter of whether a man, from the Disko Bay southward, had a kayak or not. By contrast, a man without a dog sledge could well consider himself a hunter, but hardly a 'great hunter'.

What was characteristic of the first small-boat fishing was that it was the husband – and sometimes also the older children – who went fishing and brought back the catch, and the wife, the husband and the older children who helped to cut and clean the cod and sell it to the Royal Greenland Trading Company. This division of labour was still not so different from the hunting family's traditional division of labour. People no longer ate as much seal meat, but family meals more often consisted of the fish that were not sold. The fish that were not sold or eaten were then dried for the winter. The traditional values could still be cultivated, but money was needed for clothes and a number of other necessities; on the other hand people had a good deal more money in their hands than before.

The true innovation was presumably the employment of the 'hired hands', that is the day-labourers, usually women, who processed the purchased fish, washed it, salted it and after rewashing and resalting packed it for export. However, the significance of this new way of earning a living was greatly limited by the fact that one could not be sure of getting work every day. But some men without their own boats also applied for this work, and now and then both sexes supplemented their income by loading and unloading the summer supply ships. It became more and more clear that investment in a kayak or a boat had become a necessity if one was not to become dependent on a day labouring job.

Some organizational forms

The settlements in the fishing areas quickly became larger than those in the hunting areas. The fishing areas were at first in the southern 'colony' districts, especially from Sisimiut southward. But even at these places there were some people who had a kayak and

regarded themselves as hunters. Many of these also had a wooden boat, and a few even had a motor boat, which of course had to be utilized most of the time, but not least in the migration seasons of the seals, in the early summer and in the autumn.

In the winter, when the cod purchases stopped, they used the kayak or a one-man dinghy for sealing, bird-catching or less intensive fishing.

But in the Disko Bay too, and farther north, fishing became increasingly important, not least after the *saarlisaartoq* or slider had come into use in long-line fishing from the ice. With this one could put out several long lines from a hole in the ice. Earlier one could in fact only fish with a jig from a hole in the ice.

This meant that many inhabited places, not least the district centres, grew larger than before. In the 1940s some had a population of over 500 inhabitants.

One thing that became clear at such places was that an organizational structure based on equal households could no longer meet various local needs alone.

But there were organs that were placed between different households. Around 1910 the superintendencies were replaced by the *kommuneråd* or municipal boards. The most striking difference between the superintendencies and the municipal boards was that there were no ex officio members in the municipal boards. Their powers were more or less the same. But municipal boards also dealt with paternity cases when children were born out of wedlock, and hearings in connection with minor breaches of the law (Mathæussen 1997:113). The old municipal boards also had social functions, and in the event of minor types of crime, theft etc. they could sentence people to fines or service with other respectable families, often in another settlement.

The municipalities were small: a unit of between one and three small settlements could perhaps elect one member to a municipal board, while the larger settlements could elect several members. Only in 1948 did the Greenlandic women win the right to elect and be elected to public councils. Around 1950 these municipal boards were closed down and replaced by proper municipal councils, such that the size of the municipalities came to correspond to that of the earlier colonial districts. They had rather more wide-ranging powers, for example town planning, local nature protection matters etc. They often set up committees – educational committees, social committees, technical committees, etc. But the staff for such tasks were engaged from central bodies.

The secretary of the municipal council was known as the *kæmner* or treasurer, and was at the same time the local representative of the governor – thus the administrative function was above the political one.

Another kind of community activity: Voluntary organizations

But this does not seem to have met the emerging needs either. The formation of associations around shared interests began, as mentioned in Chapter 7, a little before 1910: Christian associations with social functions, temperance societies, information associations, sports clubs, etc., appeared at one place after another, and thus West Greenlandic society was in fact permeated by small interest groups (Petersen *et al.* 1991: 230f).

In the course of the 1940s a new block arose when people with shared occupational and commercial interests began forming associations. The wage earners and the hunters and fishermen organized more or less at the same time. In the course of the 1950s these 'trade union groups' took the initiative to form country-wide federations, an approach that other organizations also quickly adopted.

In themselves these organizations were undoubtedly an indication that an organizational structure based on independent households with no local superstructure was probably best suited to very small local communities.

As early as around 1950, attempts were made to form political parties. The first initiatives involved setting up local offshoots of the existing Danish party system. But none of these actually proved to be of any importance. They probably lacked an idea that could unite Greenlanders. In the 1960s a party, *Inuit Partiat*, was formed to oppose the imported 'birthplace criterion', which in brief introduced two wage systems, such that people born in Greenland were not to be paid as much as those born outside Greenland. Inuit Partiat had both Greenlandic and Danish members. When it was started up, it was said that its programme catered for the interests of all Greenlanders; but it quickly developed into a mouthpiece of private commerce, and was only able to get some representatives elected in a few political elections. It was not until the

1970s that the enduring parties that affect political life today were formed.

The most important formation related to the theme of this chapter was undoubtedly that of the hunters' and fishermen's organization, which was at first called KNAPP, but later changed its name to KNAPK (the 'K' representing the fact that it was a federation). The first local associations appeared in the 1940s. In the middle of the 1950s the local associations formed a country-wide umbrella organization (Petersen 1989), which was very quickly able to negotiate in the interests of the members over prices and purchasing conditions.

Some focuses in modernization

The modernization of Greenlandic society and Greenlandic production that began in earnest in the 1950s is different from the earlier economic initiatives in that national economic considerations made themselves felt. The new factories had to pay their way, and in that connection regular raw material supplies became an important factor. This meant parallel investments in power plants, water supply on land, corresponding to the modernization of the fishing fleet and fishing methods. But in a sense this approach meant that hunters and fishermen were now locked into the role of raw material suppliers.

The period immediately before modernization

Modernization, the faster process of change that began around 1950, was beyond all doubt a process that was initiated by Greenland's situation during World War II.

There were probably two very important factors that contributed to the interest within Greenland itself. One was the sudden advent of a daily news service. Around 1942 radio was spreading through West Greenland. Some 400 radio receivers were registered in Greenland *(Grønlandsposten* 1944:210), and although this was not so many, they were scattered over many small inhabited places. On that basis a news service was started with a bulletin every day in Greenlandic and Danish, with Kristoffer Lynge and Christian Vibe as editors. People who had a radio receiver had many visitors when the radio news was broadcast. Before that time, though, shipping news could be received. This was a bulletin without comments that could only be received at the district centres.

It was wartime, and besides the Greenlandic news there was also news from the world outside Greenland, not least war news. At the few places where films could be shown there were a number of American films, and in particular the accompanying newsreels also brought the world outside into Greenlandic everyday life. Earlier the news – apart from the shipping news – could be several months in arriving; but now the world was suddenly much closer to Greenland. This will certainly have changed people's thinking radically – even the popular cosmology. Place-names that were formerly only known from the Bible turned out not to be in Heaven; now they had been brought down to the level of the war zones of this world.

Earlier, much of the news was passed on by word of mouth. When someone had stated his opinion or an item of news, it was passed on anonymously. Such news was very difficult to document, and often it became difficult even for the original source to recognize it. But the views of individuals were also spread in this way, and it was a very common view that Greenland would not be able to cope economically if it was separated from Denmark. If the implication of this separation was an independent Greenland, no one said so in so many words, nor was the idea perceived as such, for in people's minds the alternative to colonial status under Denmark was colonial status under another state.

So when Denmark was occupied by Germany there was considerable speculation: on the one hand as to whether Greenland would now be taken over by another colonial power; on the other as to whether Greenland could manage economically in such circumstances, and whether various institutions such as the supply services, the administration, the health service and education could continue. One of the thoughts aired when Denmark was occupied by Germany was that the supply of goods would break down; and some people even said that there would be famine in the country.

It was thus probably an encouraging experience to see that Greenland was still able to export its fish products, and that it could manage economically and administratively thanks to among other things the agreement of the Danish ambassador with the USA, and the exports of cryolite. This, as well as the fact that the administrative decisions were now made more



Fig. 31. The village of Kulusuk, Ammassalik, 1959. (Photo Helge Larsen/Arktisk Institut).

quickly than before, probably helped to change many people's view of the situation.

Reorganization of the transport system meant that goods reached various places (Schultz-Lorentzen 1995), but there were still problems with supplying the outer districts. In Upernavik and East Greenland in particular, materials like wood, nails etc. were in short supply.

During the war the winters in Greenland were relatively mild. In 1943 February, the coldest month of the year, had an average temperature in Nuuk of +0.7°C. This was measured at the Godthaab Teacher Training College, where three daily readings formed part of the geography lessons. The milder weather was fortunate for the fishing districts; but for districts dependent on ice-hunting in the winter it was a further problem.

After the war, when the link with Denmark was re-established, the Greenlanders therefore took a more positive view of the modernization of society. To begin with Denmark was doubtful, but in the course of very few years Denmark too favoured modernization, presumably for quite different reasons.

Modernization begins

Around 1950 there were political innovations. The 60 or so small municipalities were reduced to about 17 municipalities, now just as many as the trading districts, all in West Greenland. North Greenland and East Greenland were kept outside this until 1963, and belonged under the administration in Copenhagen. Municipal boards were replaced in West Greenland around 1950 by municipal councils, who were consulted in connection with the various modernization plans.

The two *landsråd* or provincial councils were merged, as were the two chief administrative officers. During the war the two provincial councils had held joint meetings, which simplified and speeded up the decision-making process a great deal. The provincial council was still mainly an advisory organ, but gained considerably more influence than before, because it was now regarded as the political voice of Greenland.

In connection with the passing of a new constitution in Denmark in 1953 Greenland was given *amt* or county status, and this was formally the end of its colonial status. But the administrative apparatus – and staff – was the same. In connection with the new status, however, Greenland could elect two representatives to the Danish parliament, the Folketing. In 1955 a special ministry for Greenland was established in Copenhagen.

After this there were many modernization initiatives. Well nigh all these ideas were proposed by the Greenlandic provincial council politicians, who were elected individually – without party backgrounds. But there was hardly any political debate in Greenland itself about these issues. The actual planning of such ideas therefore often took place outside Greenland, under the auspices of the Ministry for Greenland, and the implementation of such ideas took the form of expert plans which were now and then very different

from the original political ideas. The former provincial council member Frederik Nielsen said of this in his memoirs: "*When new housing areas were discussed in Nuuk, I was one of those who proposed that the Great Plain should be developed; but I imagined that the houses would be different, not the large blocks of flats*" (Nielsen 1975:18).

Some modernization programmes

It was not least the infrastructure that the technical modernization got to grips with: harbour conditions, radio communications, new roads, production plant, etc. Greenland was now on its way from a society of districts to a larger unity.

Power stations, waterworks, etc. were built.

But the health service, education, social institutions etc, were also given high priority.

Fish production was industrialized by the building of fish factories. Very quickly it became evident that national-economy concepts had made their appearance in Greenland. In connection with the building of factories much consideration was given to their economic viability. One could see this for example from the secondary investments in power plant and waterworks; but there was also a clear focus on a steady supply of raw materials and the regular processing of the fish. The factories were built in places with a well developed fishing tradition, and not too far from the known best fishing grounds.

In the organization of Greenlandic society, great care was taken to concentrate the modernization around the so-called 'open-water towns', where the sea was navigable almost all year round, even in the winter.

In particular the factories were established around the towns of Sisimiut, Maniitsoq, Nuuk and Paamiut. The need for a stable work force meant that the traditional, family-based organization now underwent very radical changes. The local female work force had to be freed from some of the domestic duties. Kindergartens, longer school hours etc. were introduced. Many housewives took eight-hour jobs outside the home, and to some extent the new housing projects motivated the women of the families to earn money through wage-earning work.

As indicated above, the factories were at places with a relatively short period of ice cover, and in some years the sea was navigable throughout the winter. The South Greenlandic towns might be cut off behind the field ice in the early summer. But factories were also built at towns in Disko Bay, for example places with shrimp fishing, although the sea there was only navigable from June until October or November. At other places the salt fish and dried fish production continued. The old egalitarian society was on its way to being affected by centre-periphery problems.

All this also meant the renewal of the fishing fleet, so fjord vessels were supplemented with seagoing ones.

The policy of the planners was clearly based on the expansion of these factory towns. It was the era of the population concentration policy, when the authorities wanted to influence settlement so that it would be concentrated in these places.

One means of exerting such pressure was available in the scheme of granting housing support loans which made it rather difficult to get housing loans outside the favoured places. And so these towns began to grow very rapidly.

In addition migrant workers were employed, especially young people from the outer districts, Upernavik and Ammassalik. They were taken to the factory towns around the start of the season, and lived in barracks during their stay there, and most of them then travelled home after the end of the season. As far as I know, there are few studies of the conditions of these migrant workers, or of what both their home municipalities and they themselves got out of it (*cf.* Sandberg 1975).

In the outer districts too the population grew steadily, and in these years quite a few people, presumably because they were considered to be surplus population, were persuaded to move either to Disko Bay or to the open-water towns. This can in fact also be seen from the census lists for the outer districts; not many people have to move out of a district before it can be seen in the demography. But in contrast to many fishing districts, in the middle of the 1950s the authorities were a little cautious about concentrating the population in the hunting districts. The reduction in the number of very small settlements in this period should probably be viewed in the light of the good hunting conditions beginning in 1946 and lasting twenty years. The sealing had a tendency to improve in these years, and – compared with today – there were in fact good prices for hunting products. The dispersal

tendencies in the hunting population are as a rule weak in good hunting periods. Improvements in the means of transport – especially the growing use of motor boats – also made it possible to exploit the hunting grounds of the abandoned settlements.

The health service

Public health was poor throughout Greenland around 1950. This was due to both poor housing conditions and the spread of tuberculosis. The two things belonged together, and perhaps nutrition conditions were not so good either in large parts of West Greenland.

Attempts were made to solve part of the problem by renewing the housing stock. In the course of the first few decades of the twentieth century houses with wooden cladding and turf insulation around them were replaced, especially in 'the colonies', by wooden houses without turf walls, but with compacted crowberry twigs as insulation. The houses were normally one-family houses, free-standing and built by the occupants themselves. Many people could live in such a house, the interior of which very often consisted of just one room. The insulation was not always as good as it might be. Especially in the older houses it would sometimes be damaged by subsidence. There can be no doubt that many of these houses were conducive to ill health.

So with the beginning of modernization there followed a programme for housing renewal. The models were architect-designed tract houses that were still based on detached family houses. For the insulation modern materials were used, and there were normally several rooms in these houses (*cf.* Grønlands Tekniske Organisation 1972). But the housing of the towns was very soon typified by blocks of flats and row houses.

This renewal of the housing stock, as indicated above, required housing loans, and the houses were either owner-occupier houses or rented houses. In both cases the cost of housing grew rather a lot – also because the price of wood had earlier been kept artificially low. Most new houses were built in the towns.

The second element in the initiatives that were taken to improve health conditions was a reorganization of the health service itself. There was a major campaign against tuberculosis. Many patients were admitted to sanatoria in Denmark; but a large central sanatorium was also built in Nuuk, the *Queen Ingrid Sanatorium*. The Danish Queen Ingrid was a great promoter of the campaign against tuberculosis, which in the course of just a few years reduced the role of tuberculosis from the most common cause of death to the cause of only a negligible number of deaths a year, and the sanatorium was then converted into a central hospital for Greenland.

In addition, the district hospitals were modernized, and in some settlements, for example at Nuussuaq in Upernavik Municipality and at Kuummiit in Ammassalik Municipality, nursing stations were established.

Education and training

Greenlandic schools, which in colonial times had belonged under the Church, were now given their own management separate from the Church. In connection with modernization, attempts were made to make them more effective by greatly increasing the number of teachers. This major process of renewal meant that many teachers were procured from Denmark. The new teachers could not speak Greenlandic, and many pupils could not speak Danish. Language policy goals determined that school was the place where one learned Danish.

In the 1960s the percentage of Greenlandic-speaking teachers was only about a third of the staff, and they were all assigned to teaching in Greenlandic – and religious knowledge. The Danish-speaking teachers, some of them almost complete beginners, were put in charge of the schools. Even the most able Greenlandic catechists were given new superiors whose leadership qualities they sometimes had reasons to question. This situation was intensified by the fact that the catechists often felt they were lowest in the pecking order. In fact the whole situation was a great pity for both parties.

When children started school they were to be taught in Danish, especially in the so-called 'A-classes'. These pupils would only be taught Greenlandic from the third grade on. In the 'B-classes' they were to be taught in Greenlandic, and the result was soon that the teaching in the 'B-classes' was not taken so seriously any more. Many good Greenlandic-speaking teachers discovered that their role was suddenly that of second-class teachers, sometimes with Danish teachers who were near-beginners as their superiors.

In several places it was said that these good teachers – some of them mentioned by name – in fact stopped 'teaching'. They were simply present, and let the children read old literature. This was clearly their reaction to what they felt was a degradation.

This new tendency was given full political support, and even the kindergartens which emerged in the wake of industrialization were primarily to be used to teach the children Danish, because it was discovered that they had problems with Danish when they started school. What happened was that both the school and working mothers had less of a chance to influence the development of the children's language. But politically this was not regarded as a problem.

Many steps were taken to improve the children's Danish skills – for example they would spend periods of a few months at schools in Denmark; often a whole school year was spent this way, not only by the children from the towns in the central part of the country, but also by those from the outer districts and their settlements. A project studying this issue has now been published (Jensen 2001).

Clearly differences very quickly arose among the local school systems. This period was spoken of as the 'Danicization period', but perhaps it would be more appropriate to call it the de-Greenlandicization period. Some all-Greenlandic families deliberately turned their children into Danish-speakers – this is what they were called, although in reality it meant 'non-Greenlandic-speakers' – and in many mixed marriages the children also had Danish as their first language. The Greenlandic language had very low prestige in school and in the workplaces. In the settlements, though, the Greenlandic language still remained very strong.

But in the outer districts the children had language problems, not only with Danish, but also with Greenlandic. The educational material that did appear in Greenlandic, even in this difficult period, was printed in central West Greenlandic, the official Greenlandic language; and the Greenlandic-speaking teachers who reached the outer districts also spoke West Greenlandic. For the school was obliged to teach the children in the official language; but as indicated above, this gave the children in the outer districts problems. This situation meant that the children in the outer districts had twice as much language to 'catch up on' – in both Greenlandic and Danish – from the time they started school until they left primary school; so their share of secondary education was also smaller than at the more central places. In Upernavik, where a West Greenlandic marginal dialect was spoken, the problem was less serious, since the vocabulary was on the whole the same. One could read the texts with one's own pronunciation. But it was more difficult for East Greenlandic children, since the pronunciation as well as rather a lot of common words were different. Some of these problems may also have been due to the fact that many children at such places were not encouraged so much by their parents to go to school. This was not a peculiarly Greenlandic problem (*cf.* Sindell and Wintrob 1969).

The educational reform did however bring better possibilities for new courses of education and training. After primary school one could start on various courses of education. In the 1950s a lower secondary school was started in Nuuk, and this took on some importance as a preparatory course. At least it increased the number of people with some basic academic training. Some of these people went on to other courses: teacher training, upper secondary, nursing courses etc. But most educational courses required that one travelled to Denmark.

In the outer districts with many small settlements the teaching could not have as wide a spectrum as in the towns. This meant that in the towns boarding schools were built, where the settlement children could live and be taught from the age of twelve. It is difficult to tell whether it was a deliberate policy to remove the boys from the settlements at the age when they would normally receive their informal training as a hunter; perhaps the thinking was rather that the hunters too needed school learning. Whatever the intention was, these boarding schools were not able to do much about the educational 'backlog' either.

The alternative was to engage local people in such schools; but when this happened, the people engaged would often lack the relevant training. In one way or another the outer districts had to depend on the options that came from the centres.

But other forms of professional training, not least craft training, were also offered outside the outer districts. The early stages of vocational training were available in many places in the various towns, but further training in these subjects too often took place in Denmark until the 1970s. Smiths, painters, bakers,

midwives, nurses etc. more or less had to travel to Denmark to finish their training with official tests.

In all these areas the outer districts had to take advantage of the educational options that were available in Greenland and Denmark. They could get some of the young people educated or trained, but then as a rule they could not expect those who had been educated to come back to their home towns, far less to their home settlements. This was not a peculiarly Greenlandic problem either (*cf.* Brox 1966; Christie 1974: 37f).

From the middle of the 1970s many higher education courses were established in Greenland itself. Vocational training became possible both in schools and as in-house traineeships, with schools for apprenticeship training etc. The range of possible professional courses was also extended considerably.

The Greenlandic teacher training courses, which the authorities considered closing down in the 1950s, were strengthened in the 1960s. Not least after a relatively lively debate on cultural identity, the Greenlandic Teacher Training College *Ilinniarfissuaq* suddenly experienced a rush of applicants. University preparation courses were also established in Greenland. They recruited their students from all over Greenland, but participation from the outer districts was still less than from central West Greenland.

Political structure

North Greenland and East Greenland, which before modernization had been administered from Denmark, continued outside the Greenlandic municipal structure until 1963. Something that undoubtedly helped to make the transition possible for East Greenland was the opening of Kulusuk Airport for civilian traffic in 1961. The special *district board* which was the representative of the population in these outer districts in fact continued until the beginning of the 1960s. After that these districts too were given proper municipal councils, and now they were incorporated into the general area covered by the country-wide Provincial Council, and could thus have their representatives at the highest political level within Greenland. North Greenlandic participation was also partly facilitated by the Thule Air Base in Pituffik.

In 1975, when the Greenlandic municipalities were granted municipal independence, and could levy their own income taxes, the municipalities of the outer districts could participate on an equal footing with the other municipalities.

But it was clear that municipalities with very different occupational structures would have very different economies, and to reduce such differences the local government equalization system was introduced, where amounts can be transferred from the funds of the prosperous municipalities to those that are less well off.

In 1967 the Provincial Council was given an elected chairman. Before that time the Governor had been its chairman. In 1964 the Danish Folketing had passed a law on the highly controversial birthplace criterion, and in the first Greenlandic election after that one of the young politicians joined the Council. At the next election again, in 1971, there was in fact something of an avalanche, and several young politicians entered the Council – a difference that could be felt then was that the young politicians were able to formulate their own policies. They could themselves use the politico-administrative language which is often denigrated today, but which was then a sorely needed renewal of Greenland political life. Before this the elected members very often relied heavily on the formulations drawn up by the civil servants.

The next year, in 1972, Denmark and Greenland joined the Common Market (then the EEC). In Greenland there was in fact a majority against EEC membership, but given the country's 'county' status the Greenlandic votes were counted with the Danish ones, and this forced membership raised the issue of Greenland having some form of regional self-determination, i.e. home rule. The 1970s was thus the period when home rule in Greenland was prepared, and it was finally introduced on 1st May 1979.

Greenland thus gained a regional parliament and a regional government. Because of special interests and a remote location that made it difficult for a hunting district to represent another hunting district, the outer districts were given their own statutory representation, ensuring that each of them – Thule, Upernavik, Uummannaq, Ittoqqortoormiit and Ammassalik – was represented by a constituency seat, with the possibility of a supplementary seat (under the Danish proportional representation system). The first Home Rule Government also set up a government department for the settlements and outer districts which was to ensure that they were given the proper

consideration in the Home Rule Government's development policy.

Implemented policies and the party system

As already indicated, there were no political parties in Greenland in the first few decades after 1950. The Provincial Council politicians were often elected on the basis of the personal esteem in which they were held, and their eloquence. They were mainly to argue for their own personal political views, but in connection with these views they often referred to their electorates. The Provincial Council politicians were often educated people employed in public service, and almost all of them had their professional superiors in the Ministry for Greenland. The political consequences of this have not yet been analysed.

The material that the Greenlandic politicians had to work with normally came from the information that the civil servants of the Ministry for Greenland had obtained and drawn up. There will be no attempt here to cast aspersions on anyone for deliberate political control through the material that was drawn up, but it was clear that the material did not express attitudes that ran counter to what was generally accepted. If anything is to be regretted here, it is rather the strong reliance of Provincial Council members on the political neutrality and objectivity of the material they were given. This is not to say that the politicians always agreed with the version in the documents. Nevertheless one can only be surprised by the fact that so many matters were decided unanimously, without a trace of any debate until after the measures had been adopted. The Ministry for Greenland more or less persisted with the population concentration policy, and many elected Greenlandic politicians also advocated the same policy. When the Ministry for Greenland eased off on the concentration policy and suggested the expansion of a number of settlements around 1970, the municipal councils in particular, and to some extent the Provincial Council, in fact continued for some time to close down some settlements in central West Greenland (*cf.* Schwerdtfeger 1975:73-125; Gullestrup 1975:38ff). But as indicated above, there was a certain change of course around 1970. The many unanimous decisions may therefore have been made because the documentary material, taken at face value, pointed in a certain direction, and there was no opportunity to debate the problems in public.

It must be said, however, that this policy of closing down settlements was primarily pursued in the fishing districts; in the hunting districts it was known from the political debate of the preceding centuries that an accumulation of population in a hunting settlement affected the hunting. It was the attitude of the old Royal Greenland Trading Company that was revived around 1955, both in Danish and Greenlandic political circles (*cf.* Christiansen 1957), and of course not least in the hunting districts. There were however some exceptions: in Upernavik an elected member is said to have strongly urged the population in a hunting settlement to move away, even though (or because) they had no wish to move away. But later the same elected politician changed his views on this matter.

When the new party system emerged around the middle of the 1970s, the first big parties, not least *Siumut*, were also inclined towards development in the outer districts and in the settlements. Presumably this was one of the reasons why the parties very quickly gained members in most areas of Greenland, and most of the other parties, especially *Atassut* and *Inuit Ataqatigiit*, also gained so many members that they could run for election in all the constituencies.

The party system also reached the outer districts, and thus presumably gave people a sense of participating with the rest of society. The introduction of the party system in the settlements in fact gave rise to a good deal of turbulence, since for some years party affinities broke down old cooperative partnerships (Dahl 1986:187ff). Families were split. On the whole people took the party system very seriously. But as time went on and there were more and more instances of cooperation across party lines, this tension was relieved. Man-to-man talk about the parties, which could at first recall the attitudes of football supporters (*cf. ibid.* p. 185), settled down to a much calmer level.

From 1999 on the Greenland electoral constituencies changed so that the eight subdivisions of the constituency were reduced to one constituency.

This would appear to mean that the outer settlements can no longer expect the amount of specific representation they have previously been able to count on.

Economic conditions of the hunting settlements

The subsistence basis of the settlements is what is now to be discussed. It is still based on hunting and fishing, although other sources of income have made their appearance. It is therefore the income conditions that are dealt with in the following. To analyse the money incomes I have used accounts from 1994 to 1996.

But to be on the safe side I have also looked at the figures from 1993, because I could not always get the figures with direct relevance for the actual settlements, but had to estimate the levels. I therefore had to make the calculation basis a little wider.

Non-hunting-related incomes in the hunting districts

In Chapter 7 we saw the period under discussion end, especially in Ammassalik, such that some hunting areas fell somewhat below the size that was seen as around the subsistence limit for the pure hunting settlement's economy. Clearly other sources of income than hunting and fishing were necessary, both for the whole district and for the hunting settlements themselves.

The figures obtained show that the so-called hunting settlements were not only populated by hunters' families; other social functions were fulfilled by people at the local level.

To avoid misunderstandings I should probably state my own view of subsistence hunting, subsistence fishing etc. These concepts are often used as if they were opposed to commercialized hunting and fishing. Commercialized hunting is regarded as a form of hunting that requires very large investments; but it is not so much the investments themselves that have created the problem in the debate. It is rather the fact that when considerations of profitability prevail, greater importance may be attached to returns on the investment capital than to the continued existence of the animal stocks. Quite a few debaters, including some anthropologists, would however define subsistence hunting as hunting which does not involve money incomes, regardless of whether money circulation in the local community escalates the intensity of the hunting or not. In subsistence hunting too there must be room for improvements in technical efficiency – if for no other reason then because the population is at all events growing.

It seems likely that the maintenance of the concept of 'subsistence', understood as the maintenance of traditional values, would in this connection leave the settlement population close to a life of poverty (*cf.* Hovelsrud-Broda 1997:24), not least in Ammassalik, and to a certain extent in Upernavik.

But the ideological side of 'subsistence' understood as a way of living and thinking is known from the Greenlandic debate, where hunters (that is hunters with rather modernized technology) claim to be the real bearers of the Greenlandic culture (Knudsen 1995:7). This idea is familiar from the statements of some Greenlanders, and has been used by anthropologists. Some of these notions have however been subjected to critical treatment (*cf.* Fienup-Riordan 1986, Nuttall 1992, Chance 1987, Freeman 1995, Dahl 1989).

The perception of 'subsistence' as a form of production presumably also involves an ideology as indicated above. It is perceived as production for consumption (Chance 1987; Freeman 1995; Dahl 1989). This definition presumably entails that better utilization can only be achieved when there is much wastage to begin with, which it would then be possible to utilize, or else production could be increased through expansion.

In the earlier debate there is a discrepancy between the opposition between the two concepts used in the debate – subsistence and commercial hunting – and reality, where a hunting economy wholly without money is a dead historical concept in Greenland: what we have is a subsistence economy with some money in circulation which stabilizes the distribution system without opposing sustainable utilization – unlike commercialized hunting, where the consideration of the investments can take priority over environmental considerations.

It is thus in fact a mixture of production for consumption and a partial money economy (Hovelsrud-Broda 1997:23) that characterizes the Greenlandic hunting life throughout the period discussed here. One almost wants to ask whether subsistence hunting according to the narrow definition has existed anywhere in Greenland in the past century.

In the discussion in Chapter 3 it was established

that the dominant form of property ownership in the traditional Greenlandic hunting society was private ownership. The often-confusing meat-gift concept has been described in this work as a kind of voluntary insurance – in its form it was a gift, the nature of which the giver alone could decide. That everyone who could do so gave such meat gifts, and that there was no balance between the given and the received, does not alter this. The two most important factors are 1) that everyone who can contribute does contribute, and they alone make the decision to give – both who is to have particular shares and when; and 2) that those who could not support themselves were ensured a share.

One might object that there were constraints on what one could give to different people. In particular there were certain magical-religious and customary notions, for example that elderly family members were to have special pieces of the catch as meat gifts, and the same was true of meat gifts given to boys and girls; and one might claim that this made the statement that only the owner could decide on the issue of giving nonsense. But presumably completely free distribution was not possible anywhere. The more or less magical ideas of course imposed certain constraints on who was to have what as a gift. But this does not alter the fact that the issue of whether the people in question were to have meat gifts at all was decided by the owner of the pieces from which the gift was given. In principle it recalls the situation where a private owner of a house is not permitted to build just anywhere, or to do exactly what he wants with the house. But it is still a privately owned house. Unlike the situation to be described next, it should be made clear here that the pieces so distributed created a general, not a balanced distribution.

Nevertheless there was some balanced exchange of goods. The very fact that in a local community there were households with hunters, and outside these households there were often some fishermen, created the possibility of balanced exchange. People did not sell fish so much to get fresh meat, for one could expect fresh meat anyway from the general meat-gift distribution. It was more usual for example to exchange fish for skins, which were not distributed in the same way. One could also exchange plant food one had gathered for skins, thongs, etc., things which people outside the hunting households had difficulty in getting for themselves.

The most common objects of balanced exchange were probably still labour services against material goods. This could involve not only skin items but also dried meat etc., so that a few people without a hunting supporter could manage for themselves and build up their own winter provisions (*cf.* Rasmussen 1921-25:II,287). In an original Greenlandic text which is about the last part of the precolonial period, it is clear that a mother and daughter could gather enough winter provisions thanks to the payment the daughter received for sewing for others (Lynge 1978:280). This is described in some detail as taking place in a house which has been identified archaeologically (Gulløv 1997:364ff), and the description directly contradicts the common view that exchanges of services in the traditional Greenlandic society were for the most part informal and general; but the very common general exchanges do not alter the fact that certain forms of services had to be rendered as balanced exchanges.

A few services did come under the concept of generalized reciprocity. These were services that all households needed and which required quick action – for example the covering of boats. All the households participated in this.

But balanced exchange is most evident when non-material benefits form part of the exchange. This includes things like midwifery, shaman services, help with the use of magic words, transfers of magical formulae and other kinds of services, for example the telling of legends. In these cases the person who received the help was unable to pay in the same 'coin' but had to pay with material goods. In other words, there was an exchange of goods and services, and the recipients of these goods – material as well as non-material – paid with what they had to give. At the beginning of the mission in East Greenland it was several times pointed out by the missionaries that one had to pay for the services of shamans – while those of the Christian minister were 'free'. This was interpreted to mean that a shaman exploited people. But help from a shaman was – like all other specialized knowledge – something one had to pay to get. And in any case, the annual salary of the missionary in East Greenland, for example, corresponded to 60 polar bear skins, which the East Greenlanders had to help to pay (Ingerslev 1975:50).

The same was of course the case when people from different resource areas met and engaged in

barter. This was a balanced exchange, and each sold or paid what he or she had. But if the other party was also to have added value from the trade, the payment should preferably take the form of something that the other party could not obtain so easily for himself.

It was in principle this process that continued in the Greenlandic settlements and towns. One bought a service and paid with what one had. Today in the towns, it is in fact easiest for most people to pay with money, and this does not really alter the principle (Petersen 1989:88). If people did not pay with what they had, the exchanges would cease.

Along with Finn Kapel and Ejnar Lemche I have attempted to give another definition of the concept of subsistence hunting. This is viewed in terms of 'local consumption', defined by three elements: *(a) consumption where the participants in the hunting share in the yield, for example the meat; (b) consumption where fellow settlers can also share in the yield, for example the meat; and (c) consumption where people outside the hunters' settlement can share in the yield if they have family and/or cultural relationships with the hunting group*. After this attempt to define 'local consumption', 'subsistence hunting' is defined as *hunting for the purposes of 'local consumption' as defined above* (Petersen 1989:86). This definition too allows for money exchanges among those who benefit from the hunting; but the money exchanges should not control the hunting activities, they should satisfy cultural and social relations.

The following is neither an analysis of production nor an analysis of the conditions of life, but simply an evaluation of whether the hunting settlements in 1990s are worse off or better off than before. A proper attempt at an analysis would require a visit to the places and more comprehensive statistical material.

Aspects of the economy of the settlements in the 1990s

The population base

The total hunting area, which was discussed in Chapter 6, remains unchanged in the 1990s. As indicated there, its utilization has taken on a different character, since fishing investments have come to mean a different use of the area, and a different distribution of incomes, and have thus also led to changes in the regulations governing the hunting.

Table 17. Populations in the period 1993-1996 in Upernavik and Ammassalik Municipalities, showing the figures for each whole municipality, then the population of the settlements. (*Grønland* 1992-93:381, 1994:394; GSK 1996b:15).

	1993	1994	1995	1996
Upernavik (whole municipality)	2593	2660	2727	2794
Settlements	1549	1563	1625	1663
Ammassalik (whole municipality)	2931	2924	2969	2966
Settlements	1339	1363	1325	1282

Since we are to look at a number of factors in the period 1993-96 – although we do not have all the figures for this period – we must also look at the distribution of the population in the two municipalities, that is the population of each whole municipality, as well as the part of the population which lives in the settlements (Table 17). I do this among other reasons because the towns in the two districts are not discussed as such. They are not characterized by the hunting economy; they are service centres.

Table 17 shows that the settlement population still makes up the majority of the population in Upernavik Municipality, *c.* 59.5% around 1996. The settlement population in Ammassalik in 1993 was 45.7% of the population of the municipality, and fell further to 43.1% in 1996.

With this population Upernavik's hunting area per person was 3.38 km² for the whole municipality in 1996; for the part relevant to the settlements, the hunting area was 5.83 km² per inhabitant. The latter thus still remained above the 'magic' figure.

For the Ammassalik core area things would look black if the occupational basis in 1996 was hunting (and fishing) alone. For the whole municipality the hunting area per person was 1.27 km², and for the settlements alone it was 2.93 km² per person. The latter figure looks a little more reasonable, but is in fact well below the 'magic' figure. It goes without saying that the population of Ammassalik would be unable to live from hunting and fishing alone. Hunting and fishing are treated quite deliberately in this work as a unity, because hunting in these districts forms a strong element in the perception of people's status (*cf.* Larsen

Table 18. Estimated payments of old age pensions in Upernavik and Ammassalik Municipalities. The settlements are treated as one unit here. The sources are the municipal accounts and the distribution is calculated in accordance with the statement of the age groups in GSK 1996a. I found no information on settlement-specific payments of old age pensions for 1995 and 1996.

	Upernavik		Ammassalik	
Dkr.	Town	Settlements	Town	Settlements
1994	5,154,346	7,446,234	5,414,792	6,654,039

1991), although much of the income comes from other sources.

Social benefits

In the twentieth century society took over the individual households' support of the elderly (Petersen 1993). This did not immediately abolish the leadership structure of the households, and thus it did not abolish the tradition that the oldest members of the family were given meat and other food by the family; nor did it abolish the hunter generation's use of the experience of the elderly.

It is true that the renewal of the housing stock after 1950 changed some aspects of the 'master-of-the-house' concept, since the person who signed the loan contract for a new house was considered the master of the house, for example by the authorities, but in fact also by the family itself.

Old age pensions and similar benefits came to play a role, for in many cases they were the family's only regular income, and there is no doubt that this income in fact formed part of the families' economic strategy. This presumably helped to maintain the position of the older generation within the family.

The statements of this income are however at first estimates (Table 18). The level is stated for the municipality as a whole, and by reviewing demographic information one can arrive at a statement of approximate figures for the town and the settlements separately. Although I have later obtained specific figures from one of the municipalities, I retain this calculation basis for both. The uncertainty I felt about the lack of information on personal bonuses proved to be less important than expected, *c.* DKr 300,000 at the 14 million level.

The distribution key for old age pensions between town and settlement is in fact from 1995, but is used here to distribute those entitled to pensions in 1994. In 1995 there were 68 people of pensionable age in Upernavik town, and 100 in all the settlements. The municipality's old people's home is in the town (*cf.* GSK 1997:Table 2,3). In Ammassalik in the same year there were 66 pensioners in the town, and 86 in the settlements. Since in Ammassalik Municipality more than half the population of the municipality lives in the town, and the municipality's old people's home is also in the town, it may seem surprising that so many old people still live in the settlements, but this probably only confirms what has already been suggested – that the families prefer to keep the elderly at home. In addition it appears to be the younger people who move to the towns.

In both municipalities I disregard whether the pensioners are single or married couples, or whether there are supplementary allowances of various kinds. The figures shown may not be 100% correct, but the level must be right for the settlements as a whole, although the differences mentioned must also vary from settlement to settlement.

The distribution of old age pensions in the town and at the settlements is shown according to the same calculation method as for 1994.

On request I was given the following figures by the municipality for the settlements' social benefits.

Settlements, Upernavik, 1993 and 1994

(DKr)	1993+1994	Annual Average
Old age pension:	14,877,091	7,438,545
Early retirement pensions:	5,831,000	2,915,500
Regulated assistance:	585,007	292,700
Total	21,293,098	10,546,745

The municipality's housing support in Upernavik totalled DKr 82,981. Regulated assistance was paid in accordance with Greenlandic social legislation.

Some rebates are not really social benefits, but should be seen in the context of reimbursements from the Home Rule Government to the municipality in connection with houses built by owners, dog teams, housing expenses and settlement supplies, amounting to DKr 2,151,704. These figures are not included in the estimates.

Settlements, Ammassalik, 1994

Job creation scheme wages	566,470
Old age pension (estimated)	6,654,039
Regulated and public assistance	7,220,607
Total	14,441,116

Old age pensions for the settlements are estimated according to principles for Table 18. Regulated assistance is granted in cases of unemployment, childbirth and similar situations where people cannot earn money (*cf.* Circular 1986).

Early retirement pensions for 1994 in Ammassalik Municipality were stated as a total of DKr 12,068,831. It is difficult to estimate the share of the hunting settlements in these figures. There are no statements of the amount of support at the settlements, or of the number of support recipients.

Wage incomes

In earlier times the Royal Greenland Trading Company, the church and educational system, and the health service, had employees with wage incomes in the settlements, but the catechist's and midwife's salaries were small, and had little significance for the local economy. For a long time the catechist could supplement his pay by hunting and fishing – and this in fact still has an effect today. The midwife's husband was in most cases a hunter. The trading post manager's pay was not so much either, but he often had the possibility of making an extra income. There were normally no other wage-earners at the settlements before the Home Rule Government began to give the settlements the possibility of development.

With the Home Rule Government's development plans for the settlements other wage-earning possibilities arose: power plants, technical workshops, water supply units, etc. were assigned to the settlements, and this meant new wage-earning potential at the settlement level. Now the settlement earnings did not only come from hunting and fishing, and both wage-earning and social incomes came to play a role in the settlement economy. These wage incomes for local service functions vary greatly from year to year.

The treatment of these incomes will on the one hand apply to the two municipalities as a whole, and as a supplement the share of the settlements as a whole will be stated separately. In some cases it will be possible to discuss the situation at individual settlements.

It is rather tempting to go further and look at the investments that changed many aspects of life in the settlements. The building of roads, harbours, heliports etc. shows that the settlements have been given a place in modern Greenland. These things also increased the money incomes and costs of the settlement people. But this chapter is concerned with the question of comparisons with hunting areas, so I have kept to the areas that can explain how settlements with hunting areas that were too small could continue to exist.

In both municipalities other sources of income have arisen. Around 1990 Upernavik was transformed more or less into a fishing society, where a cold storage plant made purchases of Greenland halibut possible. But in areas where the products cannot be transported away in the winter, there will presumably always be capacity problems. Attempts have been made to improve this situation by letting freezer ships 'freeze in' at one of the settlements in the municipality. But there are still capacity problems. These problems have often led to a suspension of purchases until stocks were emptied.

That is one important problem. The other main problem, as already indicated, is the tendency for such settlements to be seen primarily as suppliers of raw materials, such that further processing is done away from the outermost districts. The problem with this form of economic activity is that the settlement people must try to create income from the exploitation of the animal resources in purely quantitative terms – that is, in this economic structure they can only increase the returns by increasing the amount of hunting. By keeping the value-adding through further processing outside the settlements, one exerts pressure on the settlement population to overexploit the resources. This kind of thinking is hardly compatible with sustainable utilization in the primary occupations, and in particular with the sustainable utilization of the mammal resources. If one is to avoid overexploitation one must make it possible to set up qualitative production and further processing as close to the localities as possible. In other words, some of the semi-finished products should be able to return for further processing. If one is to avoid repeating the capacity problems, one must make an effort to ensure that the quality of the processed products comes up to professional standards, and that they do not require too much space.

Wages paid in the settlements

Some of the wages paid to local settlement people can be seen directly from the accounts, as well as fees paid to the settlement council members, while others were stated for the municipality as a whole, and must be calculated on the basis of the staff categories. The midwife's pay was indirectly stated in an article about the health service (*Sermitsiaq* 1998), and the level of the pay of trading staff was indicated by comparisons with others.

But for the moment we can set up the following categories.

Upernavik Municipality in 1994, settlements. Fees and per diem allowances for municipal council, committee chairmen, professional fees for settlement councils, pay related to service activities, technical settlement services, snow clearance, power supply and education, all forms of wage income in the settlements, fees to firemen in the settlements, and settlement teachers' pay share with the same percentage as in 1993, as well as estimated pay for midwives and trading staff: DKr 17,892,874.

These figures come primarily from the municipality's accounts and from the Greenland Bureau of Statistics. The teachers' pay was stated for the municipality as a whole, and is calculated here as 40:28, and the subject-teachers' pay in the same way as 20:14 on the basis of a report on education which lists the school staff at each place. I could obtain no information about the pay of health service and trading staff. But in the information about midwife costs it was stated that the pay could be estimated as DKr 22,500 a month per midwife (Sermitsiaq 1998). We should assume there were eight midwives at the settlement level. I have myself estimated the trading staff at DKr 600,000 per settlement with a trading station. There are six such places in Upernavik Municipality.

Ammassalik Municipality in 1994, settlements. Wages and fees for settlement council members, technical repairs, snow clearance, cleaning, pest management, municipal enterprises, fire service, education, power supply, water supply, sanitation and chimney-sweeping, home care workers and institution workers' pay, estimated pay of midwives and trading staff: DKr 17,071,281.

The distribution of some of these incomes between town and settlement is in fact impossible to assess, because it does not seem to correspond to the population distribution. Nor do the payroll costs of the fire service correspond to the number of houses. It is thus quite clear that if any firemen are permanently on call the number is very small; probably the figures only concern actual firefighting jobs. This might explain the great differences between 1993 and 1994.

The figures show that the settlements in Ammassalik Municipality have other important sources of income, since the taxable income basis from the settlements, including trading income (see below), is stated to be DKr 44,063,219 in 1994.

It is thus not the full picture we get, but when we look at some of the examples of different incomes, the overall income statements seem reasonable, especially in Upernavik, while it is much more difficult to give an account of large parts of the income in Ammassalik, where we lack any statement of the incomes from the considerable amount of craft work and the exploitation of tourism, which is in fact more extensive than in large parts of the west coast. This probably shows that the hunting economy is better covered by the statistics than is the case with other forms of production, and this may explain why it is considerably easier to see the distribution between wage incomes and trading incomes in Upernavik Municipality.

Catch sales

We have seen the level of social incomes and wage incomes in the Upernavik and Ammassalik settlements. But let us now look at income from catch sales measured in money terms. In this case there is less fluctuation from year to year than in wages and social incomes.

But first it must be noted that a number of fish species such as Greenland halibut, char, capelin, lumpfish, rose-fish etc. are not purchased in these two municipalities, or only purchased at a couple of settlements. Ocean catfish is purchased at Søndre Upernavik, and cod at Kuummiit. These places thus lack many of the possibilities from which the southern West Greenlandic settlements benefit. First we can look at Upernavik.

Upernavik. To look at incomes from catch sales in Upernavik we have figures from 1995 and 1996 (Table 19). Total purchases of various raw materials in all

settlements in Upernavik Municipality plus Home Rule Government subsidy amounted to DKr 30,098,470 (GSK 1996a:138). This is the income from all purchases in 1995.

What is missing here as an 'income' element is a calculation of the part of the catch consumed by the families themselves or given to family and friends. At settlements with *c.* 15-20 inhabitants one must assume that everyone gets a share of this meat distribution, but at settlements with more than 100 inhabitants and with a more heterogeneous population mix than before, one must assume that everyone can still benefit from the meat distribution, inasmuch as various hunting households share the meat among themselves, but probably in more random ways than earlier. Some households have to buy their own meat.

Various studies are now in progress with calculations of this yield, partly using hunting licences as the basis, and this should improve our evaluation of the total yield at the settlements. Incomes from catch sales, which amounted in the preceding year to *c.* DKr 30,000,000 for the settlements, were rather lower the next year.

It can be seen from the figures that 1995 was a better year for the settlements as a whole, while there was progress in 1996 for a few settlements such as Nuussuaq, Tasiusaq and Kullorsuaq. It should however be added that some information is missing for Innaarsuit.

These figures show purchases at the official trading places, and thus do not express the total 'income' from such catches. The part of the catch that is used in ordinary household consumption is not included, either the household's own consumption of its own catch, or the gifts of meat and fish that are still given even though their role as insurance has lost much of its importance inasmuch as other insurance systems have been introduced. One could in fact estimate the money value of these in terms of the municipally fixed prices of locally sold meat and fish, but the problem is that there exist no reliable statistics for the actual catches of fish and birds. Caribou hunting plays no role in the two municipalities.

In 1996 in the Upernavik Municipality settlements, hunting and fishing products were sold for DKr 18,309,952. Of the total, the hunting products accounted for 29.86%, and the fishing products for 70.14% (GSK 1997). Fishing had thus clearly outstripped hunting in importance as an occupational basis.

Table 19. Total catch purchases, Upernavik. Purchases from settlements without a shop were made at the nearest place. These figures are given without the Home Rule Government's subsidy of *c.* DKr 3 million. (GSK 1997:29,30,45). * Figure from 1995, since it was missing from the statement for 1996.

Dkr.	1995	1996
Søndre Upernavik	1,949,686	835,565
Kangersuatsiaq	2,187,478	1,492,236
Aappilattoq	5,342,683	2,553,186
Tasiusaq	5,105,138	8,876,058
Nuussuaq	2,878,513	1,934,319
Kullorsuaq	4,493,927	5,112,925
Innaarsuit	4,786,283	366,319
Naajaat/Tussaaq/Nutaarmiut	3,354,520	*3,354,520
Total	27,431,328	24,524,872

Ammassalik. In Ammassalik Municipality the income from such sales was considerably lower in 1996 for all the settlements, totalling (minus subsidies) DKr 5,271,079 (Table 20). Subsidies granted in the settlements that year amounted to DKr 1,009,000, amounting to a total sales income of DKr 6,280,081. This was a rather small figure.

In 1996 in Ammassalik Municipality there were catch sales amounting to DKr 5,306,530. Of this, 83.25% was income from hunting, and 16.75% from fishing. These figures seem odd, but there is only one

Table 20. Official purchases at the normal trading places in Ammassalik Municipality. The small places without a shop, and the wintering places in the outer district do not have their own trading, and they are included in the figures for the nearest settlement with a shop. Subsidies are not included here. (GSK 1997:29,30,45). * Figure from 1995, since the figure for 1996 is missing.

Dkr.	1995	1996
Iserteq	1,240,977	1,296,236
Tiileqilaaq	594,384	569,423
Ikkatteq	113,098	*113,098
Kulusuk	531,272	505,371
Kuummiut	1,146,160	1,568,747
Sermiligaaq	1,645,188	1,367,393
Total	5,271,188	5,420,268

Table 21. Social incomes, wages and incomes from catch sales in the settlements in 1994 (GSK 1996a:Table 4.6.3; 1997:Table 6.2). * Wage incomes include figures from wage payments as well as estimated incomes of health service and trading staff. ** The catch sale figures are from 1995 and 1996. The subsidies are calculated at DKr 3 million. *** The catch sale figures are from 1995 and 1996. The subsidies for both years are estimated as *c.* DKr 1 million.

Upernavik	(DKr)
Social or old age pension	10,666,290
Various wage incomes	*17,892,874
Incomes from catch sales	**27,524,872
	56,084,036

Ammassalik	(DKr)
Social benefits	14,441,116
Various wage incomes	*17,071,281
Incomes from catch sales	***6,419,628
	37,932,025

proper fish trading post at Kuummiut, and other settlements' share of the trading declines with increasing remoteness. There are some purchases from Kuummiut itself and Sermiligaaq, which lies 50-60 km away measured by sledge route. But there are hardly any sales from Iserteq, which lies 130 km away (GSK 1997; Andersen 1997).

As can be seen from Tables 19 and 20, sales of hunting products were considerably higher in Upernavik than in Ammassalik Municipality. The populations were roughly the same in the two municipalities – a little larger in Ammassalik than in Upernavik.

It may seem a little surprising that purchases at Nuussuaq in Upernavik Municipality, and at Tiileqilaaq in Ammassalik Municipality, are not higher when one looks at their total hunting areas. Why this is must at present remain an open question.

In Ammassalik there are many things that indicate other sources of income: for example at Kulusuk purchases amounted to DKr 1,146,160, while the taxable income amounted to DKr 14,390,481. Besides the various wages paid there is a very high volume of arts and crafts production in Kulusuk. In addition Kulusuk is one of the places that are visited by many tourists, most of whom come from or via Iceland.

For 1994 the taxable income for the Upernavik settlements was stated as DKr 61,552,000, and for 1995 as DKr 62,998,339. For 1994 the taxable income for the Ammassalik settlements was stated as DKr 44,449,000, and for 1995 as DKr 44,063,219.

The taxable income does not fully express the total incomes; tax allowances from gross income are not included, since I had no specific information about these. But despite these shortcomings the differences are not disturbing, so the social benefits, wages and income from catch sales must play an important role in the economy.

Evaluation of the figures

If we attempt to convert money incomes outside hunting and compare them with the incomes from hunting, we can get some idea of whether the settlement people are coping better or worse than before.

A comparison with the standard of living in the towns is difficult, because in earlier times too the hunters' situation was based on a frugal lifestyle, and it is also difficult to evaluate how much of the catch was consumed by the hunting families. In this case I do not distinguish between the fishing families and the true hunting families. Although I use the prices for sales of hunting products that apply internally within the municipality, it is not certain that we can thus ascertain the economic value of the hunting products for the families which are both producers and consumers. It is not certain that the hunters would buy the meat if they had to pay for it, or if they could not get it as a by-product of the hunting.

Although the figures used here are not exhaustive, they show clearly that the hunting settlements have other sources to draw on, partly by selling their products, partly by benefiting from other options in society, both wages for services and social incomes.

Around 1970, when the utility value of hunting and income from hunting products were almost the only things that the settlements had to live on, 5 km^2 of hunting area per inhabitant was what could be regarded as the acceptable lower limit.

But comparisons are difficult, and the picture that would emerge might perhaps tell us something about levels, but would be inadequate, partly because not all hunting products were registered, partly because not all incomes were or are registered in the official tables. Nevertheless the figures we obtain recall the figures from the catch lists – their fluctuations in level tell us

of periods of boom and decline. But it is presumably appropriate to use them; at all events one can sense that there are also absolute units such as 5 km² of hunting area per inhabitant, which do not tell us that certain areas within the total hunting area can be shared by two neighbouring settlements.

Even if the figures used here cannot be regarded as absolute, they are at a level that makes it reasonable to link them with one another. This level shows clearly that the Greenlandic hunting societies have gained a number of other sources of income than those they had in the historical part of this work. The part of the incomes that comes from hunting and fishing is still very well documented, and in the same way the regular wage incomes are on the whole also documented, inasmuch as they are paid through the municipality. Certain figures come from 1994, and others from 1995 and 1996, but as long as there is nothing surprising about the levels they seem, taken together, to tell us something about the economic status of the settlements.

But the social benefits are more difficult to put into concrete figures – especially in the case of Ammassalik – although the level can be stated, especially of old age pensions, while other social benefits cannot immediately be calculated when the number of early retirement and disablement pensioners is not stated in the accounts such that the number of recipients and the rates for the individual recipients can be seen from the same accounts. In addition there are differences in the catch sale incomes for Upernavik, inasmuch as the two consecutive reports include a subsidy that makes a difference of some DKr 3 million.

It is also evident from the distribution of taxable income that the freer types of income such as local sales of hunting and fishing products, arts and crafts, casual work etc., make up an important part of the income basis. This can be seen most clearly from Kulusuk (see p. 176), which benefits much more from tourism than the other settlements discussed here.

Thus we lack a clear basis for comparisons that can tell us whether the settlement populations of the two municipalities are better off today than they were twenty years ago. While it is true that the settlement people's incomes have increased significantly, their expenditure has also been increased by the cost of electricity and various other facilities.

All the same I have tried to form an opinion, not least since what can reasonably be considered the hunting area per inhabitant is no longer sufficient in Ammassalik Municipality, while on the whole it remains viable in Upernavik Municipality. In this calculation the two central towns have been disregarded, since as mentioned before they cannot be considered as actual hunting settlements, but are service centres.

Table 22. Conversion factor for catch sale incomes from the two municipalities with price index 100 in 1971 and 596.6 in 1995. (*Grønland* 1975:73, 1991:411, 1995:456).

Dkr.	1971	Value in 1995
Upernavik Municipality	705,000	4,206,030
Ammassalik Municipality	690,000	4,116,540

The comparison is made in two areas: the state of the Greenlandic economy is compared with the figure for 1970 so we can compare the purchasing power of the money incomes available. The greatest weakness of this comparison is the unknown quantity of meat and fish that was consumed locally by people and dogs. I can attempt a calculation of the amount of meat that can be inferred from the catch list statements. It may be difficult to find out how much fish was used as dog food etc. In the pure hunting society which used seal meat as dog food, Hovelsrud-Broda calculated in 1994 that humans consumed 57% and the dogs 33% of the edible parts of the seal (Hovelsrud-Broda 1999:41). But in other years the dogs' percentage was a little higher (52:39).

The other area to look at is how high a percentage of the local income comes from hunting and fishing.

The incomes in 1971 from sales of the fishing and hunting products are shown in Table 22.

As can be seen from the conversion of the incomes in 1971 in accordance with the consumer price index for 1995, the purchasing power of the incomes from catch sales in 1971 is rather less than in 1995. The 1971 catch sales include both towns in the calculation, but their role was less important. It is probably more significant that the settlement population today has to spend a good deal more money on necessities, since the purchasing power of the *krone* in 1995 was almost one sixth of its purchasing power in 1971.

By contrast, other sources of income were very limited. The local consumption value of the hunting and fishing products is still an unknown factor. It can

be estimated in terms of certain computed units, for example how much meat there would have been in the various seal species, but the recent hunting tables, especially in East Greenland, are so uncertain that it would be difficult to believe in the estimated quantity.

I therefore prefer to calculate with more or less unchanged living conditions, if these incomes plus wage incomes for the trading manager, catechist and midwife corresponded to about one sixth of the incomes in 1995. Of course it is one thing to compare the situation of the settlements today with their situation in 1971; but for the settlement people of today the comparison between their situation today and the living conditions in the towns today is perhaps more interesting.

But to this it can be said that income tax had not been introduced in 1971, and that both in 1971 and 1995 the prices were uniform in Greenland, that is the goods in fact cost the same wherever in Greenland one bought them. In addition, sales of arts and crafts in certain places, e.g. in Kulusuk, had already been built up before 1971.

An attempt will therefore also be made to include the calculation of taxable income in the comparative material.

In 1975 the taxable income could be calculated roughly from the tax rate and the tax revenues in the two municipalities. In Upernavik the tax rate was 15%, and the tax revenue was DKr 1,695,000. (*Grønland* 1977:108), and the taxable income was DKr 11,300,000 (*Grønland* 1979:107). In Ammassalik Municipality the tax rate was 18%, the revenue could be calculated as DKr 2,045,000 (*Grønland* 1977:108), and the taxable income was DKr 11,361,000 for the whole municipality (*Grønland* 1979:107). But it is still not possible to calculate the total income from these figures, and even less to calculate it on the basis of the settlements. The tax allowance for that year was DKr 20,000 for single people, and DKr 30,000 for a couple (*Grønland* 1977:68). In addition there were 20,000 people in the whole of Greenland who had earnings under the lower limit of taxable income (*Grønland* 1976:68). There are no guidelines for the distribution of single and non-single taxpayers over the individual municipalities, and the distribution of people with incomes under the taxable minimum over the individual municipalities. Knowing that the incomes from hunting and fishing in Upernavik amounted to 31% of the tax basis, and to 11.1% in Ammassalik Municipality, therefore serves no useful purpose in connection with the settlements. But in 1975 the incomes from hunting and fishing already only represented something between 10% and 30% of earnings in the municipality. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that the incomes from hunting and fishing in 1971 represented similar percentages of total earnings if one could calculate a taxable income in 1971, which for natural reasons cannot be calculated on the basis of the material used. The picture where the incomes from hunting and fishing in Upernavik amount to three times the percentage of presumed total income in Ammassalik is not surprising.

If we convert taxable income in Upernavik and Ammassalik from 1975 price index into 1995 index, with an index of 100 in 1975, in 1995 we get an index figure of 384.9, and Upernavik's taxable income in 1975 of DKr 11,300,000 then corresponds to DKr 44,036,100 in 1995 and Ammassalik's DKr 11,361,000 to DKr 44,273,817 in 1995.

The converted taxable incomes in Upernavik apply to the whole municipality, which in 1975 had 2045 inhabitants, and the converted Dkr 44 million can be compared to the DKr 62,998,339 earned by the 1625 inhabitants of the settlement in 1995.

In the same way Ammassalik's converted DKr 4.25 million in 1995 index was earned in the whole municipality in 1975 by a population of 2503, while in 1995 DKr 44,449,000 was earned by 1325 inhabitants in the Ammassalik settlements in 1995.

In 1995 the population in the settlements amounted to 17% of the total population of Greenland. Their taxable incomes turn out to make up 7.9% of the taxable income of the whole of Greenland. If we apply the same percentage to Upernavik and Ammassalik, the settlements' percentage of the taxable incomes, converted to 1995 price index, corresponds in Upernavik to DKr 3,478,850 for the settlement population of 1205 in 1975, and Ammassalik's corresponds to DKr 3,497,630 for a settlement population of 1535 in 1975. Thus a comparison with the situation in 1975 is perhaps less relevant than one with the situation in the towns in 1995. But it does appear that the economy of the settlements is rather better than in 1975.

If old age pensions and other social benefits are included as part of the subsistence basis, it is because we must allow for the fact that these incomes do exist, inasmuch as the local communities are part of a larger

society. It is presumably because of this, and because of wage-earners with a limited but stable income, that one can say that such settlements seem to be thriving better than when they lived from hunting alone, and this situation has also persisted although the technology has changed and become dependent on imported hunting and transport equipment.

But this membership of a larger society will inevitably also mean that these people will be able to share in society's other possibilities: education, job training, improvements in health, and presumably also in the infrastructure. Anything else would leave them outside influence as citizens, and in the end would in fact only be interpreted as a kind of imperialism or 'reservation' policy.

On the other hand the settlements of the outer districts may experience their membership of Greenlandic society as a placing on the periphery. They can point to other values in life, but they can hardly fail to feel that their situation entails harsher conditions than the town life.

The hunting culture should preferably also develop – if it is still to be a culture. But that would require an increase in the value of the catch, combined with other possibilities, probably especially the development of new quality goods made from local materials. Without this it would in the long run be impossible to create stable relationships with the resources.

Final remarks

In this historically oriented description the reader may sometimes have sensed that I have certain ideas about the future of the hunting settlements. It might be thought that I view the future of the settlements in a rather negative light, and there is some truth to this if one thinks that the settlement culture should be preserved in the traditional sense, as a traditional lifestyle, and with traditional economic and social planning. If 'traditionalism' is perceived this way, then it is true that the future seems rather dark to me.

For the 'traditional' hunting culture has adapted to its new surroundings, and it would be wrong to preserve it as it is today without the possibility of development. This – viewed from the outside – would be an attempt to keep a population in increasing poverty.

The economic framework has already changed the philosophy from almost total utilization of the catch to the role of raw material supplier, where the need for further incomes – understood in terms of both goods in kind and money – must become more pressing, while further processing and value-adding takes place outside the hunting areas.

I am thus suggesting a need for change in the economic basis of the settlements – the creation of new kinds of production. Some of the price that has to be paid for this may well be the creation of a population element that is on its way to becoming alienated from nature. This suggests too that a process of change would encounter problems. The understanding of the traditional hunter cannot fail to change. This is at least the view expressed by a number of the young girls at the hunting settlements. All other things being equal this could lead to further migration of women from the settlements. Perhaps traditional economic thinking should also look for new ideas that could be exploited in societies which on the face of it seem to function best as small communities.

Sometimes one should probably remain an optimist against one's better judgement.

But since the last chapter concerns the transition from a hunting society to a fishing society in the 1990s, the end of 1996 is perhaps a little too early to say anything, since the effects of the transition have not really been fully felt yet.

I would therefore like to conclude by taking an example from a traveller who visited the Upernavik northern district in 1999.

There had been some striking changes. The climate had become milder, and the edge of the ice sheet had withdrawn some kilometres, revealing that a number of nunataks that had earlier appeared to be peninsulas were in fact islands. The sea ice had become somewhat thinner, but the most striking change was the transition to Greenland halibut fishing. This had increased earnings greatly, although there had been some investments in housing and in transport vehicles and other equipment.

Two export firms had invested in factories, and had plans to expand. The limitations of the infrastructure still meant that the cold storage units were often over-full. Then the men had to go out sealing again.

The municipality of course had to change its by-laws. It has been mentioned that the sealing fields had been opened up to motor boats and boats with outboard motors, as that was where the fishing grounds lay, and winter transport by snow scooter had to be legalized.

But one of the exciting discoveries one made was that this transition was accepted by most people, both those at the settlements and the municipal politicians.

There is some optimism to be observed here – at the local level too.

Appendix 1

Information from a number of people on hunting conditions etc. from Upernavik Municipality

Introduction

The material from Upernavik Municipality was gathered partly from available statistical material that has either been published or has formed the basis for published tables over the years. In addition a couple of texts published in Greenlandic have been translated and used. Finally, there is some material that was gathered from conversations with the local population. It is these interview texts that are presented in this appendix.

Sometimes there are confrontations between the statistical material gathered and the Greenlanders' own views of their community and occupation. This kind of confrontation will show which items of information confirm or support one another, which supplement one another, and which correct or disprove one another.

Both the statistical material and the translations of the texts are presented here in as raw a form as possible. I have however translated the Greenlandic texts and added certain highly specific figures together. Some figures were specific to single households or to single species or species groups. These were added together among other reasons because the way of dividing up the species has changed a few times. In the first catch lists only "seals" are indicated, besides foxes. Later came the grouping into large and small seals, and further specification followed in later years, when each species was indicated separately.

The original texts for this material are from tape recordings in Greenlandic, so quite naturally not everyone is able to check the material. But for those who can, I have made it possible by citing the number of the tape recording, which consists of a year (the first two digits), the letters VG or ØG (West Greenland and East Greenland respectively), and the number of the reel, Track 1 or 2 (A-B), as well as the number of the recording on the same side. '65VG7A3' thus means that the recording is among the tapes recorded in 1965 in West Greenland, in Reel 7, Track 1 (A), as Recording No. 3 on this side. The tape recordings, which I made myself, can be found, up to and including the recordings from 1966 (66VG...) in the Ethnographic Collection of the National, Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen, while the recordings from 1969 are at Ilisimatusarfik, Nuuk.

When the texts are presented in as raw and unedited a form as possible, there will be much material which appears to fall outside the subject of the work, but which nevertheless contains information of value. It would be strange if one took this information out of its context and the background of the statements. One would thus lose something important, that is the possibility of evaluating the statements in terms of their context.

I have however made a selection. This information did not come from direct interviews, as is in fact clear from the apparently unplanned sequence. It emerged from much more informal conversations, in fact often monologues by the informant, where in many cases I used particular questions or comments to guide the conversation back to the subject about which I wanted information. In themselves these questions usually had no significance for the form of the information, but it happened many times that the informant made personal remarks addressed to me, or else said yes to my question and then continued with his account.

In most cases I have not recorded my questions, or yeses or noes from the informant, writing down the informant's account instead. I have also skipped some personal remarks about people who were not present, since some of them were sensitive; and a few times I have left out information if it was a repetition of earlier information without including anything new. Otherwise I included questions and personal remarks in the following cases:

- If the question led to a break in the sequence of the information.
- If the information could only be seen as the reply to a question.
- If the informant answered my question with a 'yes', and then continued with his or her account; for in such a case one has no basis for assessing whether the informant had noticed/understood the question.
- If the personal remarks included information of value.
- If a repetition of earlier remarks included new information which either supplemented the totality of the information, or supplemented the information already given with new evaluation material.

My questions are shown in italics.

The references in the notes are to the bibliography of the main work. The place-names included here are those that are missing from the appendix maps. It has unfortunately not been possible to obtain all the data for the people mentioned, especially in Ammassalik, since I had a very limited time to inspect the parish register, which was confidential material. I have found some people's year of birth, but did not get as far as their death dates. I had the same problem with Upernavik.

Clearly, the selection of the information to be included must to a certain extent be the result of a subjective assessment. It is possible that in some cases I have omitted something that should have been included. But in the cases where I myself was in doubt, I included the information. Apart from the above-mentioned limitations, the informants' information has been included in its entirety, insofar as it comes from tape recordings. The information that comes from diary notes, on the other hand, is brief summaries of conversations which were not tape-recorded.

Even if I would like to present this information almost unprocessed, it still mentions a number of people, places and matters that were known only locally. So that the reader can get more out of these, I have used notes which have been separated from the informants' information. There are a number of Greenlandic words in the texts. These words were either used as terms by others, or else they are used to indicate that the concept has to be defined in more detail if it is not to be understood incorrectly. Otherwise I do not think these texts should pose any great problems.

It is my own view that the material on which one bases a study should be presented in as unedited a form as possible, because in the first place this gives the reader the chance to assess the work, and secondly, edited material can often primarily only be used for the work with which one is in progress. Unedited material can often be put together in another way, and can be used more easily for other purposes than those of the collector. If one does not permit one's research to be determined by what is fashionable, it would be odd if one were to use the same material again for exactly the same purpose.

Finally I must admit that the language in these texts is not polished in any way. There are several reasons for this. One of the most important ones is that with a more polished version of the English text one would no longer be able to speak of an English translation; it would be an English retelling. This would necessitate not only an extra check on the conformity of the Greenlandic to the English text, but also deliberations on whether one can permit hidden deviations from the original. Such an evaluation would be too great a task, so I prefer to avoid further editing.

Nikolaj Aronsen, Søndre Upernavik[1] (66VG4A)

Is it known here when people moved to Søndre Upernavik?

What year people came to Søndre Upernavik, I don't know. Now the place has been inhabited for several generations. But I have heard a number of things said about the time when people moved to Søndre Upernavik, although I don't know which year this happened in. I've heard stories that people knew about Søndre Upernavik before anyone moved here, because people on hunting trips came over this way in both summer and winter. These were people from Kangersuatsiaq, and as I said they came in the winter too to hunt *uuttut* [basking seals] around here. But in the summer they just set up camp somewhere nearby, when they were to sail south in umiaks to the fjords

Umiiarfiup Sullua, Amitsoq and Millorfik to hunt caribou. From my childhood I can still remember that on the coast below the present coalhouse there were several tent rings, which were said to belong to the people who used to spend the night there. But then people [apparently got the urge to settle here]. That was when there was plenty of hunting game. One hears about people who drove on dog sledges in the spring, and when they came over Ipiutannguaq – the small tongue of land behind the peninsula that is now inhabited – they could see the ice, which was covered with one group of *uuttut* beside another.

Among those who settled the place, I've heard for example about Sukasik[84]. He was my great grandfather. It was said that he was the first to move here. After he moved the population grew, and now several generations have lived here. They talked about how the landscape looked in the winter and in the spring at the time when people moved here. We call the mountain to the west here Kingittoq, and in front of Kingittoq at that time you could see the patches that the caribou had shovelled clean of snow, as well as a number of caribou. But once people had come to live here, things changed, and not all years were equally good. Just like in other places, there had been harsh winters.

At the time when people moved to the place, I think the use of the gun had already started. It's said that Sukasik already had a gun, which he used for caribou hunting. But at that time the gun was not used from a kayak[2]. Then they put more trust in the actual kayak equipment for hunting seal, beluga, narwhal and walrus, and it was always a harpoon you used for them. There was talk about how good they were at using the harpoon. It was said that a seal only had to lift its head above the water surface for you to harpoon it. We can't do that today. So at first they used the gun for caribou hunting and for hunting from the ice, but not from a kayak. They didn't really dare use the gun from there because of the recoil. There was a story about two old men who agreed with each other who would be the first to try to shoot a gun from a kayak. The shooter's companion was to hold on to the shooter's kayak, and it was said that they were very proud that they didn't capsize.[2] But later people really started using the gun from a kayak; but even after that time there was a long time when they had more confidence in the harpoon for sealing from a kayak. When I was young, it was only beginners in a kayak, and old men who only fished from a kayak, who didn't have kayak equipment. The old men fished near the beach. I can remember hunters, including several great hunters, who lived from kayak hunting, and paddled out in a kayak in all kinds of weather. At that time one couldn't see a hunter who didn't have a kayak suit. They didn't use the kayak suit in the summer when it was calm. But towards the winter the hunters couldn't set out without the kayak suit, and they had everything that was needed for kayak hunting. In my childhood I didn't see anyone practice a kayak roll. It's possible that some hunters could do that trick, but didn't want to show off in front of others – you hear that sort of thing now and then. It wasn't such a long time ago that people began openly practicing kayak rolls here. It was at the time when Jens Olsen was the catechist here – that was before he became a church minister. He could do a bit of everything, and when he was here, he practiced kayak rolling and paddling. When the young people saw him, they also wanted to practice on the water. I've seen them many times.

At that time when people mainly used the harpoon, they hunted harp seal and beluga; but the narwhal was not caught very much here, since they quickly swam on, and did not spend any time in the region. But a good deal of beluga were caught, especially in the spring, when they had been frightened by killer whale and swam near the land. At that time you could also catch beluga in nets, sea nets. I myself put out nets at Nuuk there, and that got you a catch you could feel. When I myself made nets for the beluga, I gave them a length of 115 stitches, and 12 or 12 1/2 stitches in depth.

Is the lance with a finger rest used here?

I haven't seen any lance with a finger rest. It is said that lances with finger rests were once used a lot, but this probably didn't produce as long a throw as when one used a throwing board. I have not seen it myself, but I have seen harpoons with wings, and with throwing boards, which have a claw-shaped back end. People relied a lot on the harpoon, just as we relied on the gun for *uuttoq* hunting, because the gun is practical for this kind of hunting. In the same way they relied on the harpoon, because it was practical for kayak hunting. That's why one could see a hunter pushing off from the beach stopping a little off the beach to examine whether the harpoon and its knobs were in order.

When straightening[3] the harpoon you change something about the contact between the front bone knob and the throwing board, since it is the shape of this that is the deciding factor. At the bone edging of the throwing board the connection between the hole and the bone knob must be in order. If the contact between the back end of the throwing board and the harpoon is not in order, the throw will be wrong, and a harpoon that tends to turn to any of the sides can only be straightened by adjusting the contact of the throwing board with it.

Throwing boards for the winged harpoon, which has long since passed out of use, but was still used in my childhood, had a claw-shaped extension (*qaquiseq*) between the wings of the harpoon, and this fitted in the depression on the back edging of the harpoon. This back edging, as well as the claw of the throwing board, was made of caribou antler. Opposite the front end of the throwing board two bone knobs were placed, one in front of the other, with a space of about 4 cm between them, and there were similar holes on the throwing board. There had to be a lot of power in the flight of the winged harpoon. I haven't used it much.

At this place I haven't seen anyone who had a knob harpoon and a winged harpoon at the same time, but the lance was used as the other tool on the kayak. In my youth you couldn't do without the harpoon and the lance, because we used the lance to kill the harpooned seals and walruses. For we didn't use the gun in such situations. But now in fact you no longer hear about hunters who use both the harpoon and the lance, although kayak hunting is still practiced. For summer seals, which are lean and tend to sink to the bottom, only shotguns are used now. This means you shoot the seal to prevent it sinking to the bottom. First you shoot it with a shotgun, and then you harpoon it when it surfaces again. So you still can't do without the harpoon.

I've heard about the bladder dart, but I haven't seen it myself.

For the skin of harpoon bladders we use skins of young harp seals, which are not as old as the *aataat* (adults), and which we call *angajullersuit,* as well as the skins of adult ringed seals; we prepare the skin as a water skin.[4] I've seen something called *miningersat* – skin that was laid in hot water while fresh. You removed the top layer of the grain side, but not the whole grain side. This became very beautiful skin, not quite white skin, but very beautiful light skin that was used for the harpoon bladder.

I've seen an old man, the father of Aron Grim, who had a harpoon bladder foot, a *paaguaq*.[5] But he was an old man, and he was the only one I've seen with a harpoon bladder foot of caribou antler, that had been made for a bone angle. Today people use two wooden feet to attach the harpoon bladder.

Here a curved harpoon bladder is not used. When you want to take a harpoon bladder skin from a seal, you take it as a 'tube' cut from the tail. Then you cut the tail and back flippers away at the back and at the front you also cut around the ears. Here people don't want to use a harpoon bladder, which is difficult to see, especially when you're hunting beluga. A dark harpoon bladder is always easier to see in the water.

For a harpoon line you use the skins of young bearded seals one year old; we call them *torsut* – 'the thick-haired'. Here the harpoon line is often seven fathoms [lengths of the outstretched arms] long.

Do you know anything about the sammiaq [a small ice-hunting harpoon]?

I don't know anything about the *sammiaq* [but a young man from the same place has heard of it – RP].

I can't say anything about peep-hunting: I've never seen it. Although I have had it explained to me, it isn't clear to me.

Here people engage in smooth-ice hunting – *nipparneq* – when the ice is smooth and frozen; but it isn't a method that is used very much. Although the hunters like it, there's a very short period with snow-free smooth ice. You listen for the breathing of the seal, and you put dog-skin or the like under your kamiks – skin with thick fur – and you can also use a piece of an Iceland sweater. This muffles the footsteps. With such a *tuteriaq* you carefully approach the breathing-hole and shoot the seal. In this case too you only use a gun in our days. Smooth-ice hunting can easily by done by a single man. But *nipparneq* is not used after a snowfall. On the whole we don't do breathing-hole hunting after a snowfall.

When I wait for seals at the ice-edge, I do it like the old hunters I had seen in my youth; to lure the seal I imitate the scream of the seal (*qarluisaarneq*), as well as the scratching on the ice (*sikorpalaarneq*). I've heard that some other hunters used another method at the ice-edge; they went on to the ice, and then went

noisily to the ice-edge to lure curious seals out. But you can successfully use ordinary seal-calls from the ice-edge. You have to be patient when you're waiting at the ice-edge. You can even lure the seal back, if you've shot at it without hitting it. Even if it swims out, you should continue with the seal-calls; for sometimes the seal comes back. When you're hunting at ice-holes you use the same methods as at the ice-edge.

Hereabouts ice-holes are formed in the early winter, very soon after the new ice. But that's during the short winter days, and it can be annoying to have to leave a good place because the light disappears.

The weather conditions are of great importance to all kinds of hunting. When the snow on the ice has crystallized and the weather is *iminnartoq* (inversion) – when the sound carries well out through the air – all the seals disappear down their holes before you can get within shooting distance. You can't get a catch in that kind of weather.

But even with crystallized snow you can have a good chance of a catch if the weather is not *iminnartoq*. During the *uuttut* season the sound waves carry best in the morning, and then you wait a little before you go out hunting.

I've seen many *uuttut amisuuttut*, that is *uuttut* that have come up out of the same hole; but I know only one method if you want to catch more than one. For all the seals jump down in the hole if they hear a gunshot. But it has happened to me that I caught both seals as *amisuuttut,* and it isn't so difficult either, especially if they are lying with their heads facing each other. You shoot one seal through the head so that the bullet continues and hits the ice in front of the other one. When the bits of ice jump up in front of it, it pulls away from the hole, and then it's easy to catch.

We start on the *uuttoq* hunting here when the harsh cold is over, and that can for example be in February. As soon as the cold is easing off, the seals come up on the ice.[6] Hereabouts the ice is not terribly thick, without actually being thin. When the sun gains power, the seals come up on the ice.

In earlier times they went caribou hunting too in the winter, and they caught a lot of caribou. They gave up the winter caribou hunting when the protection laws came into force.[7] But there aren't so many caribou any more. There are supposed to be a few caribou left; but there's no real caribou hunting any more. It was especially after the surveyors had mapped the interior part of the country that the caribou disappeared. I think there are still a few people who go caribou hunting; but they catch at most a couple each summer.

There are still a few who go caribou hunting, especially from Kangersuatsiaq, for example David Kristensen's sons, Johannes and his brother. The eldest of them said to me that it'll soon be all over with the caribou so far north. All the caribou he had seen in recent years were bucks, and for a long time he had not seen cows, and the caribou will presumably die out when there are none to bear calves. That's what he told me. [It should be added that in the other caribou areas too people mainly caught bucks and young bucks, because the caribou cows stayed farther inland. This may also be the case in the municipality's caribou area]. In that area at Sullua and Amitsoq, where people from here went caribou hunting, people also come from Illorsuit at Uummannaq. I have myself taken part in caribou hunting in the caribou area. We didn't spend any time in the hinterland, since we camped on the coast and went hunting from there. We went home after a successful hunt without drying anything first.

There are barrage systems for caribou hunting – *talorsuit*[8] – inland from the coast, east of Qajartoriarsuaq. But I believe only an arrow had been found at Paakitsoq. *Talorsuit* consist of small walls of stone.

Hunting experiences (66VG4B1)

One spring we went on a hunting trip on the southern side of Qeqertaq – Skalø. On this kind of hunting trip we only had the tent with us to live in. There were four of us hunters down there, and we caught quite a lot. Time passed, and the sun was already warm: but we had come in there in June, while the sea was still ice-covered.

One morning, when I woke up at about 3-4 o'clock, my companions had already gone off hunting. I took the kayak on the sledge, and followed after them. When I came to the ice-edge, I followed it south, and after a while I saw bearded seal basking on an ice-floe. I stopped the dogs, got into my kayak and paddled towards one, and caught it immediately.

It was still early in the morning; but when I had taken it in to the ice, and had flensed it, I though first that I would take it home; but since I had the habit of never driving away from my companions in a desolate place without first making sure everything was all right, after the flensing I fortunately drove farther

south. For none of my companions had taken their kayaks to the place they were going, a place north of Sigguk – Svartenhuk – where the ice-edge was a good way out. The distance from the ice-edge was considerable from the place where we had camped south of Qeqertaq.

As I said I drove south, in the finest weather. I drove a long way without seeing them, but when I looked from an iceberg a little north of Sigguk I discovered their dogs out at the ice-edge, and there wasn't an ice-floe as far as the eye could see out there. But it turned out that there were ice-floes that had frozen fast to the ice-edge during the night. The hunters had discovered a bearded seal outside the ice-floes, and had risked going out on them. As soon as they had killed it the ice-floe had broken loose and the current carried them out, and none of them had a kayak. As I said, I noticed their dogs. When I drove closer and looked again from an iceberg, I was sure that only the dogs were waiting at the ice-edge. When I looked out again, at last I noticed three men on an ice-floe farther out. When I reached the dogs, I unhitched the kayak. Then I was not as experienced as I am now, and I didn't given a thought to taking crossbeams from the sledges so that the men could help by using them as paddles. They could tie them to their harpoons and use them as paddle blades. I took ropes with me to tow them and spent a lot of time paddling out to them. When I got there I could see that they were on a very small ice-floe. It also turned out that this ice-floe would not have kept them afloat for the rest of the morning. Two of the hunters were older than me, but when I got out to them, I scolded them for their rashness. I knew well enough the trouble I was going to have. I took them in tow while they tried to paddle forward with their shooting screens, which they had tied to the ice-pick. Of course this didn't help much, since the ice-floe was heavy.

It wasn't ten o'clock yet when we started paddling in; but by noon we had got no farther in. It was still a long way to the sledges, but now I paddled to the sledges to get some crossbeams. When I came back they were tied to the ice-pick and now we took turns to tow and paddle with the crossbars. Now we got closer to the ice-edge, but by that time the current had taken us some way to the south. Then we realized that the ice-floe could not carry us much longer. In the end things went so far that we were wading to the knees. When the towing rope was pulled a bit too hard the front of the ice-floe was pulled down, so that the ice-floe was about to tip over. Then we had to shout to the man to slacken the pulling. At the most critical moment we came across a single ice-floe – in fact the only one we saw on our way – and at last we got on to the new ice-floe, and started off again. We paddled and paddled in, while clouds were forming that indicated a rising wind. It was not until past midnight that we got to the ice-edge, only to discover that the ice on this stretch wouldn't carry us, and we had to pull our ice-floe a very long stretch north before we could get on to firm ice and go to the dogs.

From there we drove home as the morning was breaking. We were completely exhausted. In the spring when the sun got warm, it would often be very warm on the southern side of Qeqertaq, and the ice got bad on this stretch. So the trip home wasn't without drama either, since the ice was cut through by eddies. It was only towards morning that we got to Qeqertaq. You may know one of those who was saved that time, for he now lives in Maniitsoq, and is called Mathias Karlsen. Now he is the only one of the three who is still alive. The other two are dead now: one was my elder brother, and the other one was Peter Josvasen's father.

That was one of the two dramatic experiences I have had. I'll tell you about the other scary experience I have had too.

The second experience during a sledge journey (66VH4B2)

After I began to hunt, I was several times exposed to dangerous experiences of various kinds. That sort of thing is part of the hunters' life. But I would like to tell you about one experience.

It was in March. I went off from there on the dog-sledge. At that time I had unusually good dogs. My leader was a rather big dog that I valued a lot, because it was a strong dog. I drove off on the other side of Tukingasoq,[9] and a little outside the island I saw a bearded seal that had crept up on the ice. I began to hunt it and caught it. But I was worried about a change in the weather. To be on the safe side I cut a hole by its nose and tied it to the root of the dog traces, so it would lie below the sledge.

I started off with it on tow up over the quite high crossing we call Tukingasup Itillia. There were two

very steep stretches. Just before I came to the pass, the wind came and whipped the snow into an unbroken fog. At first I thought I would drag the seal all the way home the same way. But I stopped at a place where there was shelter. There I flensed it, and I regretted that a lot afterwards. Then I drove home.

On the north side of Tukingasog there were often strong gusts of wind, even when it was not blowing so hard in other places. The gusts of wind suddenly came down from the higher terrain of the island. The ice at the place we call Umerlup Alanngua[10] was often broken up when the wind blew this way. It's a frightening place, and no one who went adrift there had much chance of survival.

Now I am 67, and this stretch is my most common sledge route; but I've never seen an iceberg aground there, although the current takes many icebergs that way. The sea is too deep. At any rate it's a stretch where you have to be on your guard, not least because the ice there is often cut by current eddies at Taleruata Nuua.[11]

I was a bit afraid of this stretch, among other things because I had a heavy load. But I was not afraid of losing my bearings. I could drive along Tukingasoq, and could then drive in the direction of Kingatak. Without much difficulty I got over to Kingatak. When I came to Talerua, I had to follow the coast to Umerlua if the ice held. But when I got to Talerua, I couldn't find out whether the ice was still there or if it had gone. There the wind was pressed together into a very high wind. I hesitated there in some uncertainty, but stopped the dogs and looked more closely at it. First I got the impression that the ice would hold. But it turned out to be a crevasse that the snowdrift had covered so it was invisible, and I had turned around just a step away from it. I went to the dogs, turned them round and now I drove against the wind. When I got to the place where I had turned, all my dogs fell in the crevasse. I had to try to pull the sledge backwards – I had to keep a grip on the uprights, since it was impossible to sit down. While I was trying, I discovered that my lead dog was trying to climb up on the ice on the other side of the crevasse. And it got up too, and I got the other dogs to follow it. When they had all got up, I sat on the sledge and was pulled across the crevasse. Now I was on the ice that had a tendency to break loose, and drove the rather long stretch to a place where the ice foot had to be good. On the stretch just opposite Umerlua there was no ice foot, and it was not very good to follow the coast there. So I drove on without sighting land, and at long last I got to the ice foot, still before the ice loosened up there.

It was with great relief that I made land. There was only a couple of metres of visibility. From there I could get on to firm ice that could withstand the wind, and from there I knew the way well enough not to make any mistakes.

Calming down, I stopped and ordered the load before I drove on. I was not to know that I should have driven right away. When everything was all right, I gave the starting signal to the dogs, and got on the sledge. I had just driven off from there without hearing anything. There must have been a lot of noise, but in the howling of the storm I could hear nothing else, so I didn't hear the avalanche that was on its way towards me. Suddenly I heard myself shouting. It was my only reaction at first, and then I felt how I was flung away. Both myself and the dogs were flung from the ice foot down on to the ice. What I felt was most like the feeling you get when you're stopped by an obstacle during a fast descent. My upper arm felt as if it was cast in lead.

I discovered that I couldn't move a thing, and there I lay in a strange, sudden silence. Even when I tried to shake my head, I couldn't move it the least bit. I lay stuck with bent legs on my right side, but with my left arm uppermost. It turned out later that one of my temples stuck out above the snow. It was as if I was cast in lead. But gradually I was able to glimpse light around my left eye: then I tried again to move my head, and when I kept trying, I could feel how I could move it a little. By trying again and again, at last I got my head out. I was lucky that I was lying so close to the surface. Although I got my head free, I still couldn't move my arms. I still had the whip in my hand, but when I tried to let go of it I couldn't even do that. When I kept trying, I also got my left arm free at last, and with my fingers I could dig my way to my legs. When at last I got free, I was completely exhausted. Earlier, I hadn't known much about tiredness. It was only when I dug my right arm free that I made some progress with the work. I was in a lot of pain around the shoulder.

When at last I got free, I couldn't see the dogs or the sledge. I knew the dogs well enough to know that they would not run home without me. I was sure that



Fig. 32. The village of Nuussuaq, 1967. (Photo Keld Hansen).

the traces were broken, and that the dogs were close by. I tried to call them, but they didn't come. When they didn't come either after I had called them again, I realized that they lay under the snow. There I stood without a sledge and without my dogs. That was one of the worst experiences I have ever had.

I walked around a bit, and felt that something bit me on the foot. That winter I had two lead bitches that were sisters. It was one of them. Its nose was free, but it couldn't move. When I got it up, I was considerably encouraged; but I discovered that its trace was broken. When it came up, I saw another dog below it. I pulled it up, but it looked as if it was dead. I looked for other dogs, and found my lead dog, which lay with its head downward. It was dead. I gave up looking any more, and was very depressed to see that the dogs that just before had helped me so well now lay helpless or dead under the snow. Now I only had two dogs, and the road home was very long to think about, exhausted as I was. But I tied the traces of the two dogs together and walked home from there. I also had to take a long detour around eddy-cut ice. I tried to get the dogs to run home alone, knowing well they would never run away from me. I thought that I had got them to run home. But soon afterwards something dark came out of the snowdrifts. It was the two dogs that came back to me. I sent them home twice; but when they came back the second time, I gave up trying, and after a slow hike they came home with me.

The next day people went to the place where the accident had happened. Deep down they found my sledge and four dogs dead.

In the best sledging season I was left without a dog team. Besides the two bitches I had two pups that were too small to pull a sledge. So I had to drive with the two bitches hitched, and after a while I could also hitch the two pups to the sledge. Right up to the spring I only had four dogs.

Those were my worst two experiences during hunting.

1st August 1966

Nikolaj Aronsen, Søndre Upernavik

Bendt Frederiksen, Nuussuaq / Kraulshavn (66VG 3A)

The informant, the son of the next informant, Mathias Frederiksen, was a great hunter at the place. He later became a member of the Greenland Provincial Council from 1975, and later from 1979 of the Greenland Home Rule Parliament, of which he was Chairman in 1991-1995.

Last winter we got quite a few more seals than the previous winter, which was however a very bad winter. Up towards the spring in particular the hunting was poor, much poorer than the previous year. But this year the spring was just as good as in the other years. When the *uuttut* were about most you couldn't man-

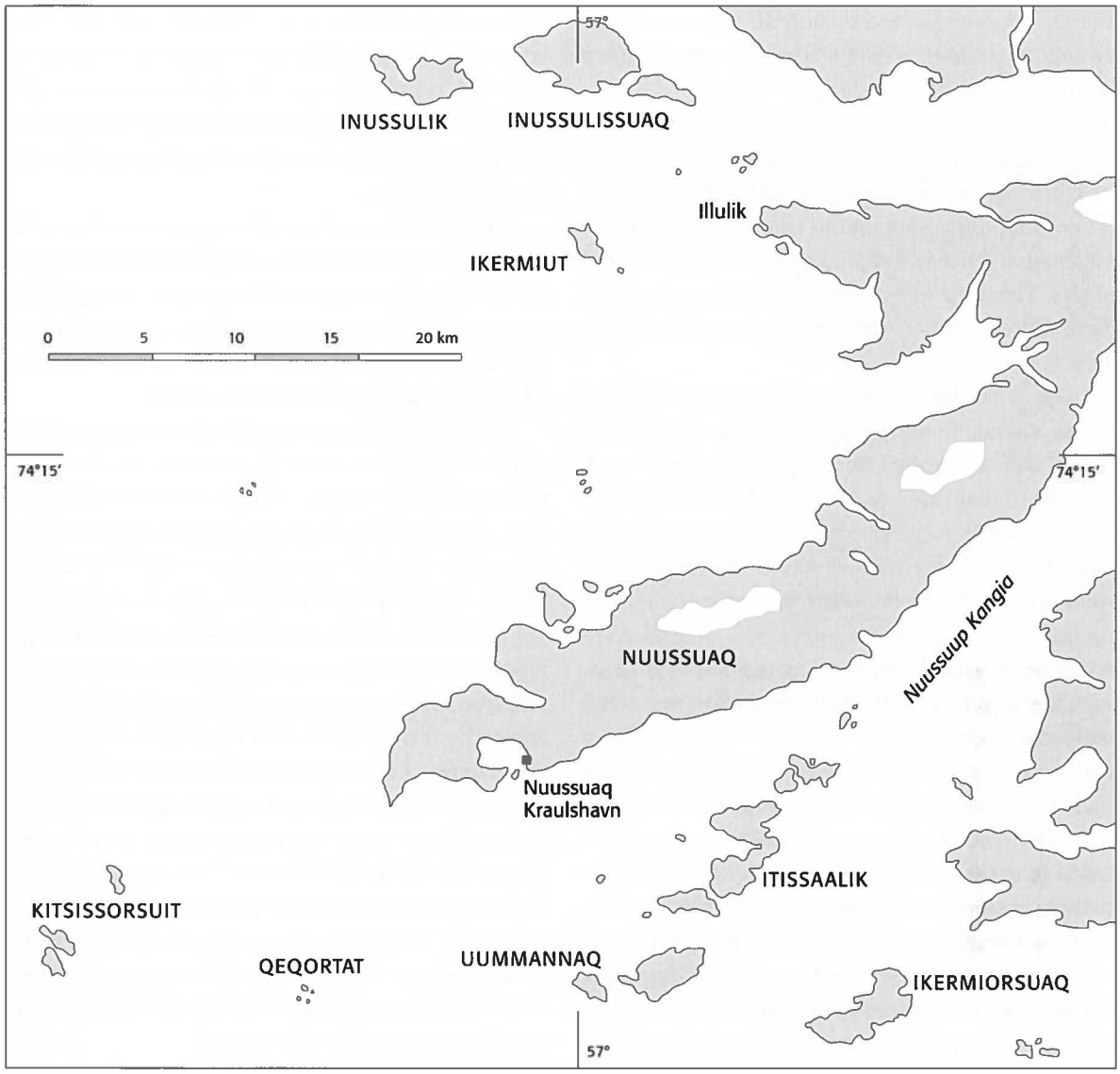

Fig. 33. Nuussuaq with Kraulshavn.

age to kill all the seals that were within reach. We got the sledge fully loaded while there were still seals nearby.

The ice lies for a very long time here in the spring. For example this spring we had ice until a little after 20th June, and this year the ice broke up later than last winter. Around 20th June we normally get the dogs to pull the motor boats out to the ice-edge and get them into the water this way. But this year we didn't get the motor boat into the water until 1st July. The motor boat is usually beached from October until around 20th June. We only use the motor boat as transport to good hunting-grounds, from which the actual hunting is done with the kayak. In the good sealing period in the summer we go to a camp or another good place. So we sail a good deal in the summer, and a few days ago we were also at a hunting place. When we take the motor boat in the summer to a hunting place, we also live on board the boat while we stay there. In good weather we travel around and we may stay away for a week's time.

In the summer there are ringed seals around here, as well as harp seals and hooded seals. First we have the ringed seals, and around the end of July the young harp seals come.[12] Sometimes they come shortly after 10th July. But this summer there are not many of them.

And the hooded seals are about from August until the autumn, sometimes as late as October. Once I saw a hooded seal that was caught in November.

In the summer most seals are caught from the kayak; but shortly after the ice breaks up, while there are still ice-floes, we chase seals with the motor boat. We do that in the autumn too when there is a lot of wind and rough seas, and thus unpleasant weather for kayaks. The seals are chased outside the 5 km limit (from the settlement), within which you mustn't chase them.

This 5 km limit is the limit from all inhabited places, and within it you mustn't shoot at seals from a motor boat. You mustn't sail around after seals either, especially if there are kayaks about. But you can shoot birds. But when you chase beluga or narwhal from a motor boat there are no such limits. That is probably because we live at such a small place that this kind of hunting benefits the whole population. When we see beluga or narwhal during a sailing trip, we try to drive them in towards the settlement. Then when they swim along the coast, some of them can be caught from land. So people think it is all right that there are no limits to chasing beluga and narwhal. Such rules are adopted by the municipal council after a recommendation from the hunters. Limits have also been set for motor boat sailing on the way to the seal haunts at the glaciers. You have to anchor the motor boat while you're still some way from the ice. The limits for motor boat sailing were marked in 1964 with wooden poles which were painted white so you can see them better in the summer. This way even those who are not familiar with the area can see them and work out that they are not to be infringed.

Hereabouts there are beluga in October, but in the spring there are beluga and narwhal out at the ice-edge. Here there are no narwhal in the summer. To catch them we must go north to the areas north of Kullorsuaq. In the autumn, during the beluga season, we can find them anywhere. There are no fixed places for beluga hunting. I myself have not heard of anyone who has harpooned a beluga or narwhal without having shot it first. We once harpooned a beluga without having shot it. But the harpoon point broke. As the material for the harpoon point we use narwhal tusk.

For sealing in the winter we mainly use nets. When there are cracks in the ice, you hunt seal with a gun, and in recent years people have begun to hunt them at the breathing-holes. From the end of October when ice has appeared in fjords and bays, we begin to put out nets from the coast. In January when the light begins to come back, we also put out nets from icebergs, and we continue with net hunting until the *uuttut* come in March.

Hereabouts there's no minimum distance between the nets, because there has been no agreement on this. At the icebergs in particular nets can hang closely together. The distance is only enough so they don't get tangled up with one another. In general there's a very friendly tone among the inhabitants here.

There are netting places off the coast where 'right of use' is respected. But if the man who 'has' this netting place has not hung his nets there fourteen days after the ice cover comes, anyone can hang his nets there. Here there are no 'inheritance rules' for netting places, and this may be because very few of the original inhabitants stayed here. We who came later to the place undoubtedly put out our nets at places that were once used by the original inhabitants. But they are not known by their successors. It happens that when the ice is new a hunter puts out his nets at a place he knows has been used by us. This happens when he knows that for some reason we cannot come to the place. But first he informs us: "You should just say when you want to put your nets out, then I'll get mine pulled up." This helps to ensure that no disagreements arise about the netting places. Here there is no one who can reserve a new suitable place for himself without putting his net out right away.[13]

We use a mirror a lot for hunting in the spring, and all sledge drivers always have a mirror with them.[14]

When I began hunting, breathing-hole hunting was only rarely used. I have only caught two seals at the breathing-holes. Breathing-hole hunting is done on snow-free and snow-covered ice. But after some *inughuit* (people from Thule) wintered here, the hunters from here gradually learned the breathing-hole hunting technique of the *inughuit* on snow-covered ice. Breathing-hole hunting is done with dogs; you get the dog to sniff out a breathing-hole, and you wait for the seal at the breathing-hole you have found. Another man walks around or drives around in a sledge, around the breathing-hole. Sometimes a hunter is put off at a breathing-hole, and his companion drives on as far away as a seal could swim in one go.

Then he stops the dogs and walks around noisily himself making whiplash sounds etc. This is said to make the seal go to the breathing-hole.

When there is smooth ice, you listen for the seal. But here we have a very short period with smooth ice in the autumn, since the snowfall comes right after the ice cover. Here people don't use a foot-muffler.[15] I haven't heard of anyone from here who has tried *aarneq* (stalking).[16] Once, though, I got very close to a seal that remained behind when the others jumped into the hole. It was lying with its back to me, and when I went forward without muffling my steps it obviously thought that it was the noise from the other seals. Only when I got quite close did it get suspicious and looked back, and then escaped itself.

In the autumn smooth-ice hunting is done, as I said, for a very short period, and the net hunting begins. As long as net hunting gets good results, we inspect the nets every day, and as soon as they begin to produce poorer results we try breathing-hole hunting. Net hunting is done until about the end of March. When the light gets stronger, and net hunting as a result gets poorer, we try breathing-hole hunting on snow-covered ice, until the *uuttoq* hunting can begin. Now we only use nylon nets. I got a nylon net as early as 1960, when they could be bought farther south. It was not until a couple of years later that they could be bought here, and then our fellow settlers went over to those. Nylon nets are stronger than nets of twine. The thickest nets can be used for several years, but the thinnest can't manage so much, especially those nets that have caught many seals – the knots burst. Nets of nylon catch much more than nets of twine. When you have most nets out, you have some 30-40 nets out at the same time. Now I don't have as many nets as others, since my hands can't manage the ice-pick work as well as before. Within the last year or two we have used the smooth nylon to make the net body longer, and since this doesn't freeze to the ice, it lessens the time spent on ice-pick work a great deal, which is a great advantage for us. You furnish the ends with *ammut* – hauling-pieces – beforehand, and you only have to make the middle hole bigger.

The *uuttoq* hunting is done with the aid of the shooting-screen.[17] I think the *uuttoq* hunting is more of one kind here than in other places. The *uuttoq* hunting is best done when it is overcast, so that the mountain-tops are invisible – then the sounds are not carried as easily through the air. In fact it also helps a lot in the *uuttoq* hunting that they now furnish Enfield rifles – and other rifles – with telescopic sights, perhaps with a telescopic sight that suits the rifle. But the telescopic sight can easily be adjusted so that it comes to suit the rifle. Now we are getting used to them. Some people had difficulties with the telescopic sight, and gave it up again. You have to adjust the 'circle' in the sight very accurately to get uniform results. It's particularly good for those whose eyesight isn't so good. Without a telescopic sight I shot off many misses, so it was a great help for me to get a telescopic sight. Rifles with telescopic sights are only used on the ice during *uuttoq* hunting. They aren't used from a kayak. But I've heard that some people use a saloon rifle with telescopic sights from a kayak. The rather larger guns are not suited for use in a kayak when there are telescopic sights. Here there are quite rough seas at particular times of year; but during such a period we hunt farther in behind the islands and are not bothered by the sea.

In breathing-hole hunting you listen for when the seal comes up in the breathing-hole, and you shoot at it when it breathes in. But as I said I have only caught a total of two seals at the breathing-holes, and I don't know much about breathing-hole hunting. But last year a man from here caught four seals on the same day at the breathing-holes. Since my dogs cannot be used to sniff out breathing-holes, I don't go breathing-hole hunting. The *uuttoq* hunting takes place from the time when the seals come up on the ice until when the ice breaks up. But in June it can become difficult to get close to *uuttut* when the ice is snow-free, and the noise carries easily through the warm, clear air. At that time the sealing is done from the ice-edge. Hunting at the ice-edge is done like hunting at the ice-holes. There you wait for belugas and seals. You try to lure the animals to you by imitating the seals' calls and scratching on the ice with the ice-pick. We don't do much hunting from ice-floes. When we sail in the motor boat, on the other hand, we sail to big ice-floes that drift south with the current, and we look for *uuttut* there. At the ice-holes too we use lure-calls and scratching with the ice-pick.

The walrus come now and then. A few years ago – I can't remember the year – over 20 walrus were caught swimming south around Nuussuaq. That was in December-January. In recent years the waters around us have been ice-free until January, so the wal-

rus swim on without staying around here. Incidentally walruses shot in ice-holes will rarely stay afloat. When they swim south, you shoot them first and harpoon them afterwards. But sometimes you harpoon them without have shot them first. Once I got my hand in the line when I harpooned a walrus, while I was holding the harpoon line firmly with the other hand. My hand swelled up rather seriously. The walrus set its back flippers against the ice and sometimes I could see its back flippers.

Among the seals the hooded seal is said to be the most aggressive. I haven't experienced it myself. It's especially when it's been wounded that it attacks.

Among seabirds we benefit most from guillemots and eiders. In the autumn in particular we get the benefit of the eiders when they have got their young out and can be hunted, and the guillemot from the spring and throughout the summer until they fly south. When the guillemots have eggs we take a trip to Apparsuit at Cape Shackleton. We also go to Kippaku.[18] But we don't go egg-gathering much any more, since we don't have anyone to sell them to. If we gather more than we can use, the rest will just rot away. But there are plenty of eggs down there. But here we gather eiderdown, and it wasn't more than a few days ago we last gathered eiderdown on Qeqertat and Kitsissorsuit – the Duck Islands. Hereabouts there are also small eider islands where we gather down. But the day before yesterday we only gathered a little, because we were disturbed by a southern wind. Once we also went to the region north of Kullorsuaq for eiderdown, although that was quite a distance from here.

Can you sell anything other than seal skins here?

It is said that it used to be possible to sell seabirds, which had to be taken down to a cold store in Upernavik; but no one uses that possibility, since the KGH's boats only come here sporadically, and since we are always on hunting trips in the summer. It's true that an announcement is sent here when the motor boat is on it way, but the weekly scheduled route doesn't come this far,[19] so we have no fixed weekdays we can count on for this. For the south the bird-catching has meant an extra income. Here you can only earn on seal skins. At one point there was talk about a deep-freeze plant here, but I've heard that has been given up. Maybe the hunters could organize that sort of thing if they could get the 'counter-cyclical equalization reserve' for themselves. It's as if the authorities don't realize the earning potential that could actually be established here. In the spring, when the seals crawl up on the ice, people are always coming on hunting trips up here, and there's a surplus of meat that can't really be utilized, because you can't take it away in good condition. After all, people from here hunt rather a lot themselves, and would also benefit from such a deep-freeze plant. In southern Greenland people could also get meat that is better and cheaper than tinned meat.

Here the kayak is covered with seal skin which is painted over with white paint; but in recent years some people have covered their kayaks with canvas. It's said that it isn't colder with canvas than with seal skin, and it's said to be more resistant to thin ice than seal skin. But I haven't tried it myself. The white paint is presumably meant to camouflage the kayak between the bits of ice. There's always some ice in the water here.

Here the shooting screen is placed along the front of the line rack, and another one right up at the prow. I myself have a kayak suit, and there are also other who have a kayak suit. In the autumn when I start to use the kayak suit, I also use *qaqorsoqqut* – white overalls with a hood and upper body. In the summer we use the 'half-skin' kayak cape, except when there are rough seas. There are some hunters here who sometimes try kayak rolling. It happens every summer. Here we don't really have anyone to teach the art of kayaking. There are a couple of ways to right oneself by rolling that we only know through hearsay – things like getting up with your hands alone. In fact I've seen Manasse Mathæussen[20] demonstrate this trick.

There are no left-handed kayak paddlers here. But some of those I know – for example Angaaraq in Kullorsuaq, who unfortunately now suffers from kayak sickness – are left-handed. His kayak tools are organized like those of a right-handed person, but like a mirror-image. But he is right-handed when driving a sledge, because he uses the whip just as well with both hands. During sledging he holds the whip with his right hand.

Can it be difficult for a left-handed sledge driver when the others are right-handed?

It seems to work out quite well. A couple of years ago I had a bad hand – the right one. It didn't give me those kind of problems; but when your best whip hand is the right hand, it's easier to make the wrong

whiplashes with the left. But most people here, especially the older ones, control their dogs with shouts, and probably don't have such problems.

Here attacks by dogs are very rare, and there are only a few savage dogs. After we came here, there was only the threat of a dog attack once. It was my own dogs, and we had to put them all down. Now I have very peaceful dogs that don't even attack other dogs. The oldest in my dog team is about ten years old, and is still pulling. I only start to train the dogs to pull when they are adults.

Here polar bears are caught now and then – especially in former times, when there was more solid ice far out at sea, and last winter two polar bears were caught. I can't say with any certainty whether anyone trains their dogs especially for polar bear hunting, since each hunter trains his dogs in his own way. It's only when the dogs face a polar bear that you can see it in them. I helped to kill eight polar bears. Even dogs that are not trained for bear hunting are said to be excellent if they have the urge. The first time I came across a polar bear, my dogs did very well, although it was the first time they came across a polar bear too. Later of course they took it more in their stride.

Of which animals are catch-shares given?

Of narwhal and beluga. It's more or less only those. In the cases of hooded seal and bearded seal, catch-shares are only given voluntarily by the hunter. Narwhal and beluga shares are first and foremost given to those who participated in the hunt. The first share is given to the one who is first to get his weapon into the animal after it has been shot. Catch-shares are not often given from hooded seal and bearded seal.

Meat gifts are mainly given from the 'catcher's' share. Nowadays not as many meat gifts are given as before. It mainly happens if someone has caught a large, not very common animal. Catch-shares are not actually given from a polar bear, but polar bears are shared equally by all the participants in the hunt, even those who did not take part in the actual kill.

There are some fox stocks here, but we usually see them when there is rabies among them.

There are some fish – a little ocean catfish and a little Greenland halibut. But farther south, about 30-40 km from here, there is a large halibut stock. They are fat fish. We fish for them from ice the with a long line and slider. In the summer you can't easily use the long line because of all the drifting icebergs. When we came here in 1955, they were already using the slider. It's only when we think there will be a shortage of dog food that we put out the long line. Here they use long lines with only a few hooks compared with those used to the south. We only use the fish for dog food, but it is not as good dog food as seal meat. I don't really know whether it can be felt in the pulling of the dogs, but the dogs get skinny if you go from seal meat to fish, even when they eat their fill. This happens especially when they've had frozen fish. But they'll eat it as willingly as seal meat. But the first time I tried to feed my dogs with fish, they wouldn't really eat it; they only started on it the second time. There are big dogs here, although there are also smaller dogs. It is also said that the pups fed on seal meat grow slower than those fed on fish. Maybe seal meat is too strong.

At the places where there is fishing they feed the pups on fish. The dogs eat a larger part of the catch than the people. Especially in the winter, when we have visitors, we may use 4-5 seals a day for dog food. There are in fact considerably more dogs than people. There are about a hundred inhabitants here, but many dogs as well. Right here alone we have more than twenty dogs. When you go on a trip from here, you use at least five or six dogs. When I am not prevented by the conditions I'll often have ten or eleven dogs hitched. Especially if you have to bring something heavy on the sledge, it's best to have over ten dogs. The more that pull, the less they are likely to get skinny, despite all the bother.

Here there are no places on the land routes where you unhitch the dogs from the sledge, for there is no really difficult terrain around Nuussuaq. I haven't seen anyone unhitch their dogs that way myself.

24 July 1966

Bendt Frederiksen, Nuussuaq / Kraulshavn

Mathias Frederiksen, Nuussuaq / Kraulshavn (66VG2B2)

The informant was the catechist in Nuussuaq. He was born in Søndre Upernavik in 1913. He became a catechist in 1933, and worked in various places, including Saqqaq, and later in Kullorsuaq, and from 1955 in Nuussuaq.

When I was a child in Søndre Upernavik, I lived with the great hunter Paalu. He was very fond of me and



Fig. 34. Bendt Frederiksen and his father, the catechist Mathias, with wifes and children, Nuussuaq, 1967. (Photo Keld Hansen).

wanted me to do well. One day, when I went out with him to his long line, he said to me: "Now I'll show you how I train my dogs. Go up ahead with my dogs!" So I did that along with his dogs.

When we had walked some way, the dogs suddenly turned back. The ice was solid enough, I knew that. But Paalu looked as if he had fallen through the ice, so that only his head was visible. He had gone behind a snowdrift and pretended he had fallen in the water. The dogs ran to him, and the lead dog bit the back of his fur and pulled him up out of the snowdrift. When I came to them, he said to me: "You see, we often walk on dangerous ice, so we train our dogs that way." I have never forgotten that. I went to the catechist college; that was supposed to last four years, but because of difficult travelling conditions I was not at home for about two years, and I finished the school in 1933. I became a wage-earner, so I didn't do much with my travelling skills; but since I still had several unpleasant travelling experiences in connection with wind, bad ice, dogs running away, I ended up thinking seriously about this childhood event. I decided I wanted to benefit from it.

When I got my own dogs, I tried to get to know them well, each and every one of them. I tried to win their love and devotion. They were clever animals, you know, and once they had helped me out of trouble several times I knew that I had got dogs that were devoted to me. Only after that was I able to train them to help me up if I was unlucky enough to fall through the ice.

I did it like this.

When I went for a walk, I took my lead dog, which became very devoted to me. To win the dog's devotion I never punished it. But when it had done a good thing I patted it or stroked its hairs with my hand. The dogs were very fond of that. My lead dog did this many times: in the wind washing was often blown down during the night. When I came out in the morning and could see the lead dog sitting down like a bitch with pups, it would often be sitting holding on to a bit of washing that had been blown down. It even guarded meat that had fallen down in the same way. And then I often got it to look for things that had been blown away. When we were away from the settlement with the dogs, we showed them how they should act.

But as I said I went for walks with my lead dog. When I said "Stop!", it stopped, and while it was stand-

ing still, I walked away a bit. When I came to a bump I pretended I fell down behind it, and called it. When it came to me, I turned my anorak towards it. It bit into it and when I said to it "Pull me up! Pull me up!" it dragged me a little away from the place. Then when I got up, I stroked its hair. Before a year had passed, it followed me everywhere there could possibly be danger. I let it keep its incisors. If ever I were to fall through the ice during *uuttoq* hunting, it could either work itself loose from the traces or if not it could cut the dog trace with its teeth and come to help me. Once the lead dog had been trained that way, I could count on similar help from almost all my dogs. I've told our foster-son that if ever he falls through the ice where the dogs can't see him, he should call the dogs with a particular signal. It happened that he fell through the ice one day, while I was at a meeting – I lived in Kullorsuaq at that time – and even before he called them some of my dogs came to him and pulled him up. He is still going strong today.

I am not a good sledge-driver, since I don't get daily training, and I can't tell you anything new either. But I have practiced what I've learned, and once it led to an amusing event.

One day a young man drove out *uuttoq* hunting with my dogs. The ice was bad at the place. When he came home, he said that he had shot a bearded seal, which managed to fall into the water through its breathing-hole, and the current had taken it a little away from the hole. He gave up, since the ice was dangerous. When it froze shortly afterward, we let him try to get the seal. He went to the hole with my lead dog, which dragged its whole trace after it. It had been loosened at the *pitu*.[21] He got hold of the seal, and he was almost disappointed when he didn't fall in the water.

I assume that the hunters' dogs can help their masters in the same way. [People are often not happy about talking about special training if it is connected with a special signal – RP]. It was known that my dogs could pull me up, so the other dog teams can probably do the same. When I went with hunters on a sledge journey, their dogs seemed more clever and attentive than mine when we had come to an uninhabited place. They kept a close eye on what their master did. When he had hunted hidden behind an iceberg, and came back, they had to sniff at him. If he smelled of exertion and was out of breath, they seemed expectant.

The dog is an intelligent animal, and with good treatment can be taught to be a good helper. So you can't do without it in a hunting district.

Once you had taught the dogs to pull you up out of the water, you only needed a signal to use if you were going into the water and the dogs couldn't see you.

During ordinary *uuttoq* hunting we sneak forward to the seal, so the dogs can see us, and we also keep an eye on them. First we walk upright towards the seal, and then we crawl forward towards it, and get ready to shoot when we are close to the seal. At this point when we look at the dogs, they have already got up, but stand still, ready to run forward. If we were to fall through, they would certainly come by themselves, without us calling them. So we leave the dogs during *uuttoq* hunting so that they are ready to run forward.

When we drive over bad ice, we give a special signal to the dogs. In addition the dogs can tell the thickness of the ice by sniffing at it, and they can thus distinguish between ice that will or won't carry you. If a man has got his foot stuck through such ice the dogs will follow all his movements until he has got back to the sledge.

Cutting the canine teeth[22] has no effect on the dog's ability to cut the trace over with its teeth in an emergency, since it is with the incisor that it cuts the trace. But trimming the canine teeth is not entirely a good thing, because a dog that has lost the effective part of the canine tooth ages perceptibly. An old dog gets worn-out teeth, and a dog that has lost the effective part of the canine tooth gets early signs of age, for example it looks lean and skinny. Since you don't want to use such a dog for pulling, you have to replace it early, although they could probably be used for a considerably longer time if they kept their canine teeth.

After all you have a dog team here to benefit from it, and the whole of the dog training is also about making the dog a useful animal, which can even be used as a rescuer in an emergency. They are trained so that in a difficult situation they can get through water. The dog can in fact save us and our family members. Breeding up a pup is also worth a lot of money.

When the dogs can sense that there is thin ice, they sniff around and run from one side to the other. This way they can find a safer path where both the dogs themselves and the sledge can get across. In these cases the man is best advised to leave the speed to the dogs. To give the dogs a better chance to find

their way through unsafe ice, we now give two dogs longer traces than the others. When an empty sledge falls through ice, the dogs don't try to get it up with a jerk, for if they tried that, they would risk falling through themselves. They pull the sledge up very slowly.

When the sledge gets on to unsafe ice, the dogs spread out in a fan.

When for some reason you need more speed, the lead dog gets the other dogs to work harder by biting those that won't do their bit. A well-trained lead dog also teaches other dogs how to pull.

You can have a lead dog that bites and is vicious; but it is not always the owner who makes the dog savage. Sometimes people try to teach the dog to survive, for example by throwing it in the water, so that it learns to crawl up by itself. But this way you can make the dog vicious. Maybe the dog's predatory nature shows itself this way.

Driving over pressure ice can be done in various ways. I do it as follows. When I want to get my dogs used to driving over the pressure ice, I first take very few dogs with me in the team, and with the whip I keep them close together. With a wide fan shape you risk that a trace hanging loose will be caught on bumps, so the dog could be pulled backwards and mutilated. Once you've got them used to that, the dogs run closely together when you encounter pressure ice. You often have to force young dogs that aren't used to pulling in to the other dogs with the whips so that nothing will happen to them. Dogs that are used to pulling have no difficulties of that kind on uneven ice, and they pull all the time, so that the trace doesn't catch on bumps.

Once I went with among others two great hunters, Esajas Pjettursson[23] and Jonathan Nielsen[24] on the way down to Nussuaq to a meeting. Along the way the ice cracked and loosened. When we turned in towards land, the icebergs began to move up and down through the ice because of rough water under the ice. While driving in towards land I kept as close as possible to the two great hunters. As a general rule, on journeys one often has to get across cracks up to about 3 m wide. I do it like this with my dogs. I have an *ilimasaarut* – a secret signal. When you've given that signal,[25] the dog knows that it will be rewarded with extra food and it makes an extra effort accordingly. We have a signal, *ingerlasaarut,* that only helps you to get up more speed. There are many different signals between different hunters.

I can illustrate the importance of *ingerlasaarut* with the following story. Once there was a Danish lady who urged a hunter with the following words: "May I hear your *ilimasaarut*?" The hunter just smiled, but would not let the signal be heard. I therefore had to explain to the Danish lady: "If he gave the signal to his dogs while you are out, the dogs would turn on you if they cannot see a strange dog close by." She got very frightened; but that can be the result of misusing an *ilimasaarut.*

Back to the story. We drove towards land, and when we got close to places where the ice could be cut through by eddies, I shouted: "Watch out, there can be eddy-cut ice around here." Then we discovered a crack in the ice a good 3.5 m wide, if not a little more; but the two hunters got across all right, so I too had to see about getting over. When we got close to the crack in the ice, I gave my dogs an *ingerlasaarut*, and I pulled the sledge forward with their traces. When we were close to the crack, I suddenly let go of the traces, so that the dogs had slack traces, and they jumped all together and got across well. The sledge came out on the water, but was immediately pulled up on the ice. Other sledges were behind us, and they had to follow the ice crack a long way round until they could get across. They couldn't manage it where we got over. Just before the ice crack you have to pull the dog traces shorter, and let them loose when the dogs are about to jump across. Dogs that have heard the speed signal run very fast, you see, so they can jump over a very wide crack. Of course some of them may fall in the water. Oddly enough we would scold one that did that as an idle dog.

Around here there are two long land routes,[26] mainly used a lot by the hunters in the winter and in the spring. There are a couple of unpleasant stretches, especially in the spring when the snow melts, or else when the snow cover is thin. But the hunters are hardy people, so they carry on driving across the two places. It must be rather hard, since they usually have to pass the two stretches with a fully loaded sledge. There is in fact enough trouble with an empty sledge. But that doesn't bother them.

I myself don't experience much of that kind of trouble. I strength-train my dogs from puppies. When I put them in the team, I always make sure they have

something to get their backs into – fill the sledge with shark meat, or with freshwater ice. When the pups grow up, they become very strong dogs. What they have difficulty managing with is deep snow. In a situation like that we have to get out the skis and walk ahead, and we have to put the most long-legged dog in front of the others. In a case like that we poor fellows get tired long before the hunters.

Do you know anything about the castration of sledge dogs?

No. I haven't heard of any castration from Greenland?[27]. Every hunter always runs the risk of losing almost all his dogs in broken ice etc., so it's important to have good breeding dogs.

The dogs age quickly with hard work. Especially when they have to run a lot hitched to the sledge, they get short of breath within just a few years. The best pulling animals get short of breath earlier than other dogs.

In earlier times there was breathing-hole hunting here, but with little yield. But in 1965-66 a few *inughuit* wintered here, and when the local hunters had joined in their breathing-hole hunting, as you might expect they got a taste for it, since the yield was fine. It was done on new ice. Before that they had gone breathing-hole hunting on snow-covered ice; but now people train their dogs so that they can sniff out a breathing-hole. When they have found a breathing-hole, their master prevents them from sniffing directly at the breathing-hole, takes out his gun and gets his dogs to run. The well trained dogs run a suitable distance away and stop. The man is ready to shoot if nothing gets in the way. When he has fired his cartridge the dogs run back to him. That's the new method.

24 July 1966

Mathias Frederiksen, Nuussuaq

Vilhelm Grim, Aappilattoq (66VG14B)

The informant was born in Søndre Upernavik in 1900, where he lived until 1930. That year he moved to Aappilattoq. Since then he has lived there, and has held several offices.

I was born in Søndre Upernavik in 1900. I moved here in 1930. Aappilattoq had been an excellent place for sealing and beluga hunting. But at one time there were

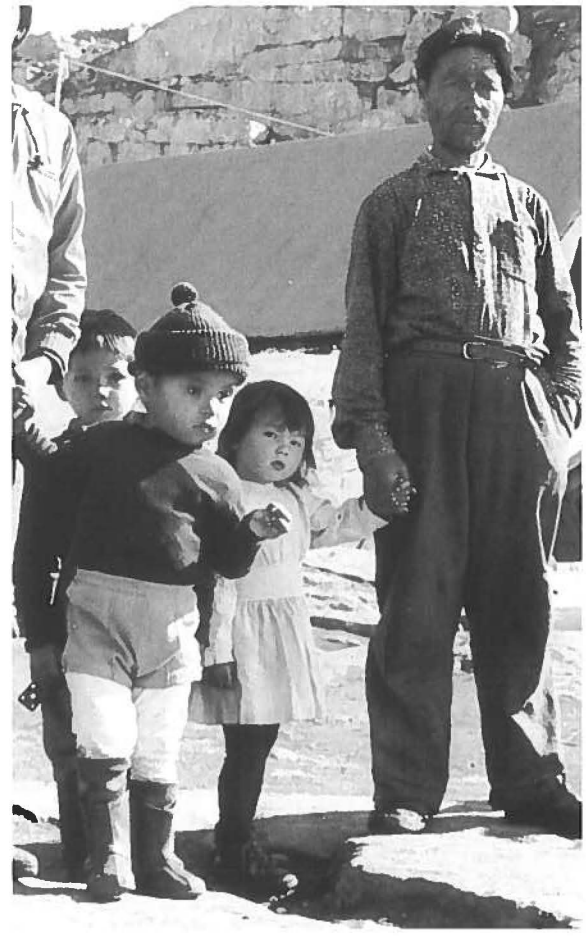

Fig. 35. Vilhelm Grim, Aappilattoq, 1966. (Photo R. Petersen).

hardly any hunters.[28] When I came here in 1930, I began to go hunting from here, although I didn't know the local hunting conditions. I wasn't used to all the ice that drifted around here and could stop the kayak hunting for many days, not least in July. But in the autumn we didn't have the dangerous, drifting ice, and had excellent waters for the kayak trips.

When I moved to Aappilattoq – it was while Hendrik Olsen[29] was the trading post manager there – there were very few hunters at the place, but as chance would have it the following winter we got *sassat,*[30] whales trapped in an ice hole. That was on Boxing Day. It happened just south of this place, no more than 3-4 km from here, although there was open water just north of us. There were narwhal in the ice-hole. We got 18-19 narwhals, no more. From that time things began to look up for Aappilattoq, although only slowly.

In 1930 my family were the only people who had moved here. Several years passed, then Martin Han-

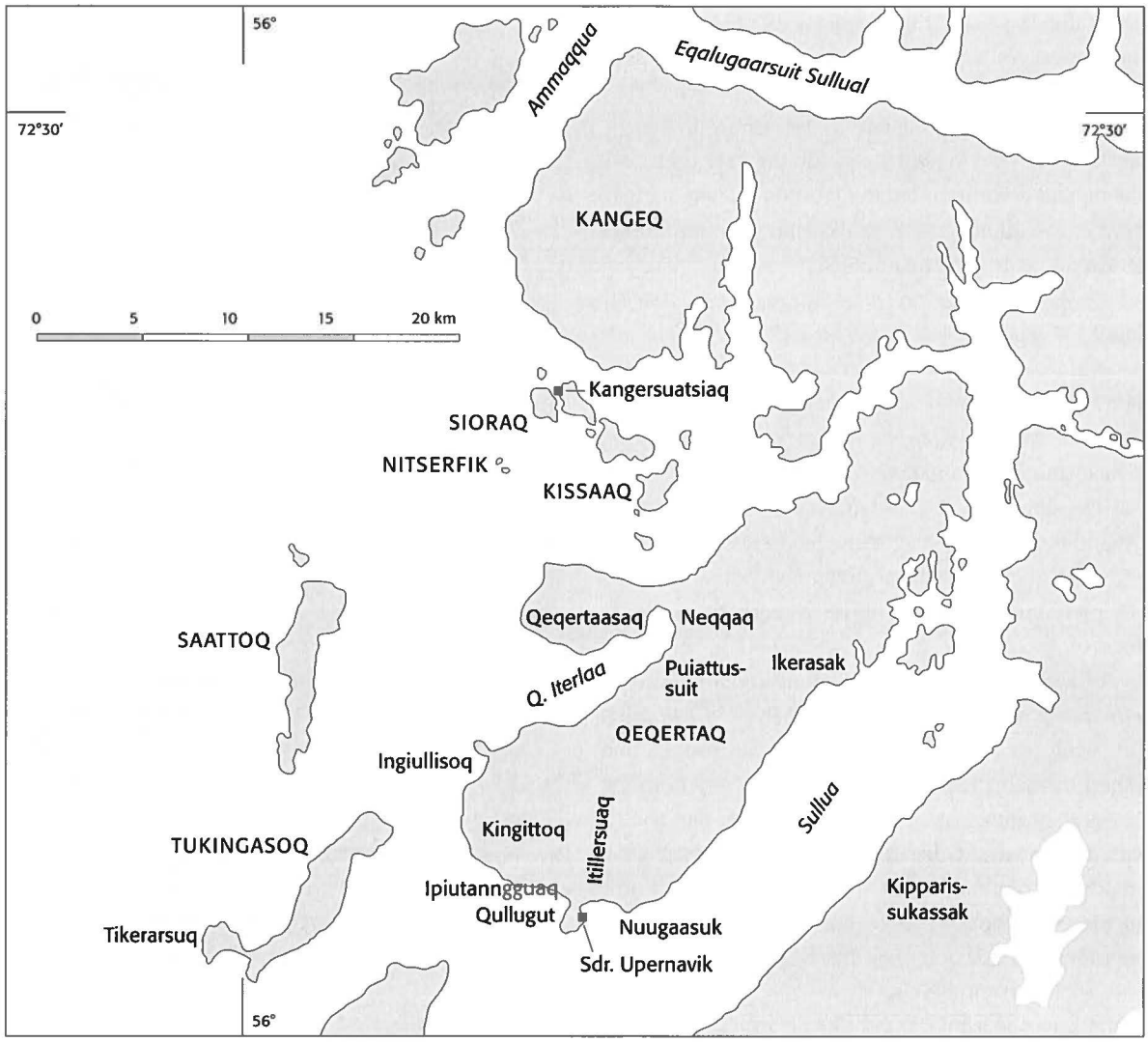

Fig. 36. The area north of Søndre Upernavik.

sen came here. I think it was in 1935 – he died a few years ago. We both had several children who became hunters, and that increased the catches at Aappilattoq. Now I myself have stopped hunting. But the improvement in Aappilattoq, from 1930 until now, has been huge – especially when it comes to fishing. And especially because last year, in 1964, a cold storage plant was built in Upernavik, which accepts birds and Greenland halibut, there will be fine earning potential in the years ahead. So I have hopes that things will be even better for Aappilattoq after my death. After all, now I am an old man. Aappilattoq actually has excellent hunting potential; but the hunting is hampered a lot by all that drift ice.

There are very large Greenland halibut stocks. They are just here in front of the settlement. You sailed right over the place. [We came with a motor boat from Upernavik – RP]. From there the whole stretch southward is rich in Greenland halibut, and there are even bigger stocks a little farther up the fjord. Last year a lot of halibut were fished at Saattut, an island you sailed past. I don't know how many tons were fished there. I haven't asked either. Along the north side of the island there are similar stocks of large Greenland halibut.

The Greenland halibut fishing is done in deeper waters than where the big icebergs over there come through. We use a little over three twines [balls of twine?] for the Greenland halibut. [The depth marked on the map is 300-360 m, and according to Hendrik Olsen (1964) 1200 m a little farther north – RP].

Is the slider (saarlisaartoq) used for the Greenland halibut?

We use nothing else. For that we use a sheet of tin of the same kind as those used for chimney corners, maybe a bit thicker. It has to be a flexible sheet. It is bent along each side. You use a sinker (*ujaraa*) at the front end. The sheet is this long [*c.* 70 cm shown with the hands – RP], and can easily draw a line with 75 hooks or more after it, especially if the sinker is big. You send it from a hole [in the ice] out into the water with all the hooks, and when it has all been fed out, you use another stone as an anchor at the back end.

You feed out the whole length of the body [line] and then you send out an extra line with the stone anchor down to a good depth. When the anchor has reached a good way down, at first you stop feeding out more line. You wait then until the slider itself has reached the bottom, and for a while you hold the anchor of the foreline still until the line with the body, with the hooks, gets tight, and then you slowly lower the anchor. When the anchor has reached the bottom, you lift it about two fathoms up from the bottom. At least that's how I did it, when I myself fished for Greenland halibut, because over a longer time the line straightened out and would otherwise lie slack. I never got the line tangled.

When I still fished for Greenland halibut, I sent the line with the hooks down without the stone anchor. But for the back end of the body I made a loop for a toggle. The loop was attached at the stone anchor, which I would lower afterwards. The sliding motion of the loop was stopped by a piece of wood that was attached behind the hooks. When there was no more long line, I didn't immediately lower the long line, so I would avoid the line lying slack. I passed the anchor line through the loop, and put on a toggle or a hook that held the long line close to the anchor. Then I would lower the stone anchor. If it was big enough the long line was tightened while the anchor was still going down.

In recent years this method has not been used. But I myself never got the line tangled. When I sent the line down, and could feel that the slider reached the bottom, I let it lie for a while, and in the meantime did what had to be done on the ice, and only then sent the line with the anchor down, but as I said about two fathoms from the bottom. Although I caught a lot of Greenland halibut, the line never got tangled, because the anchor held the line tight. I have recommended the method to my children. But they wouldn't use it; for the method takes a long time, and some of them wanted to use several long lines at once. But it is an excellent method.

It's very easy to control the slider when you've sent it out under the ice, especially if the sinker is at the front end. It can also be used even if you don't use any stones.

But when my arm got weaker, I couldn't cope with the bother of slider fishing so well any more. In recent years the slider fishermen often get the fish tangled in the line, because they use a stone that is too small.

The actual trading of the products only began when a cold storage unit was installed in Upernavik. In the years before that very small amounts of fish were traded in Upernavik, mainly to the hospital and to the Danes in Upernavik. So it was a very limited amount that was sold. But after the cold storage unit had been built you could more or less sell Greenland halibut constantly.

Most of the seals we have in the autumn are ringed seals. I was a hunter in the time of the motor boats, and especially before the time of the outboard motors, and I caught many seals in the autumn. I suppose I was the one who rushed around the most. But in recent years, since they have started using the small motor boats, no more seals come in the many small fjords that used to be favoured by the seals. All that chasing is harmful now. I myself was a hunter who used the soundless boats, and I'm not used to all the noisy craft around me during the hunt. Now people are chasing the animals from motor boats in my former hunting grounds, and I don't go there any more.

I got a kayak when I was eight years old, and since then I have always had a kayak. I still use the kayak. I still go hunting, and although my eyes aren't what they used to be I can still hit what I shoot at. But a couple of years ago I got a pair of glasses that suit me and so I can hunt better again. As long as I have my strength, I will probably still use the kayak a little.

Here breathing-hole hunting is not done. There are too many ice-holes in the area. But at Søndre Upernavik it was used a lot, since the ice was still good and solid; but perhaps it can still be used.

But the *uuttoq* hunting[31] is done a lot, and it is the

most important source of income besides the fishing, that is, it's net hunting and *uuttoq* hunting that are most important in Aappilattoq.

Already in October people start putting out the nets in the fjords in our area. They put the nets out in the fjords, but also at the icebergs; but at ice-holes they don't normally put out nets.

However, it can be done with a single net now and then. Hereabouts you won't find a breathing-hole that the seal itself has made, apart from the holes that *uuttut* have dug through solid ice. But here there is open water, even in the winter, because of the strong current. If you could look into the fjord, you would be able to see how many icebergs are sailing there. When there is an offshore wind, they get very far out, and then you can't find any breathing-hole [when there is open water]. When we start to catch *uuttut* at the beginning of March, we can go on into April, and when the ice gets bad at the beginning of May, we give up the *uuttoq* hunting. The current from the ice fjord breaks up the ice early.

The fjord produces a lot of ice. It has no real name; but we call it Uummannap Kangerlua. In this part *maniitsut* are formed – icebergs consisting of bits of ice frozen together. In the northern part the icebergs fall down when they are formed. This becomes calved ice, which disappears in the water, and appears again some way out. [Icebergs are also formed when the glacier extends so far down in the water that they break off because of buoyancy – RP].

Which different kinds of iceberg do you have names for?

Maniitsorsuit – 'the big irregular ones' – are huge icebergs that consist of smaller pieces frozen together. We have great respect for them. When they begin to calve, they go on until they have fallen apart in small pieces. So we get rowing-boats and motor boats to safety somewhere else when *maniitsut* come close to the settlement. Some way up the fjord there is now a *maniitsoq* which is however not very big. They are easily moved by the wind, and as soon as there is a north wind, they are blown in to this place; but when the wind calms down they come out of the fjord. But when they come close to the small islands out here, they are attracted by the strong current between them. Since the small sounds are not deep enough, they stay there between the islands. But it is usually the big smooth *ilulissat* ('smooth icebergs') that stay there and are carried back and forth by the tides. That way they can in the end get out of the sounds, and come out of the fjord with the tide. Now I have lived her for 35 years, so by now I have learned the movements of the icebergs.

The outgoing current in the fjord is so strong that it keeps moving outward even in rising waters. Formerly the fjord was called *Pulateriaq*, 'the laborious approach fjord'. I have seen that in old books about the settlement. It was only towards the end of the 19th century that people began to call it *Ikeq* [*ikeq* is the ordinary name for the outermost part of a fjord, and this part divides the archipelago in two separate parts].

There are no guillemot cliffs in the Aappilattoq area. The closest are the Upernavik bird cliffs, and then the Kuuk bird cliffs lie to the north. However there are a few guillemots at Kingittuarsuk near Kingittoq.

A number of small islands within the Aappilattoq area are breeding-grounds for eider ducks, but also on a small scale.

Before I moved here the hunters from here and from the north, for example from Tussaaq, had sailed by umiak to Eqalugaarsuit – the 'Char Fjord' – to go caribou hunting.[32] That is rather a long way, if you want to row all the way with an umiak. There were many great hunters who went caribou hunting with an umiak to Eqalugaarsuit. They are now all dead. Some of them even came from the area north of Tasiusaq. It is also said that there are char stocks at Eqalugaarsuit.[33] But it is mainly people from Upernavik and Kangersuatsiaq who go to Eqalugaarsuit to catch char. I have also heard that before I was born people from Søndre Upernavik went caribou hunting with an umiak. First they went to Tasiusap Ilua – the innermost part of Umiiarfiup Sullua. They paddled around Kangaarsuk. It is said that they caught incredible numbers of caribou. Even during my childhood people caught lots. I went caribou hunting myself when I became a hunter, had got married and got an umiak. That was southward towards Amitsoq etc.

Do you know a place called Narsaarsuk?[34]

[The question arises because Rink (1857) spoke of Narsaarsuk as a place where people caught caribou, even in the winter.]

I know the whole area around Søndre Upernavik. But there isn't any place called Narsaarsuk. Nor is

there anywhere around Aappilattoq either that is called Narsaarsuk. What most resembles the name is Narsaq south of Søndre Upernavik; but from that place there is no caribou hunting. I went with my father on his caribou hunts and thus learned the place names in the area.

Now Qassersuaq[35] has been depopulated. I can't remember which year that happened; but it happened during my youth. It isn't very far from here. The hunting potential at Qassersuaq is a lot like the situation here. There were lots of Greenland halibut. Formerly people went from here to Qassersuaq to fish for Greenland halibut. I have heard old people say that. They could fish just north of Aappilattoq, and they could catch big fish there. But when the hunting got bad, they went up to Qassersuaq to fish from there. The old people from here have told me various things, especially Nikolaj, Birte's[36] uncle, who was himself from Søndre Upernavik and brought seal meat, because at that time there was not so much seal meat at Aappilattoq. But now people lack nothing in the winter. Now the population has grown, and there are more people who constantly go fishing, even in the winter.

The ice at Qassersuaq is much more solid than at Aappilattoq. True, I haven't tried to go hunting from there; but in recent years I have driven with a sledge over the area, and I know it from that. There are lots of Greenland halibut up there, and the area is still used from here.

The population at Aappilattoq has grown considerably. When I arrived here the population....I can't say exactly, but it was hardly more than 50. At that time, the municipal board and the trading post manager were in charge of the census – now it is the catechists who are in charge. I myself was a member of the municipal board in 1938, and also had something to do with it. All the same I can't say how many there were when I moved here. It was only in 1953 that I gave up the work in the municipal board at my own wish. I myself grew up at a place where not many families lived; but I really wanted to help with the municipal work as long as I could. But in time I got tired of all the bother that the work involved, and for such small compensation. And it was also a great deal of trouble for anyone who wanted to be a good hunter.

Since after I had moved here I no longer had my umiak, I got myself a wooden rowing-boat. I often went on hunting trips, and had a lot of benefit from those craft. After all I also had many children. You can see some of them here; but some are not here. We also had an orphaned foster-daughter who is now a big girl. So now, when I no longer have a boat, I have stopped going on hunting trips; but I teach the children how to use the kayak. That is a task I can manage, and which I would like to keep on with as long as I can.

13 July 1965
Vilhelm Grim, Aappilattoq

Peter Hansen, Kullorsuaq (66VG2A3-B1)

The informant was born at Aappilattoq, where he grew up. He moved in 1948 to Kullorsuaq, when his mother became the midwife there. He has lived there since.

It was great hunters who were the first to move to Kullorsuaq. After a couple of years at Nuussuaq they moved to Qaarusulik, which was inhabited before Kullorsuaq. It was only from there that Vittorsuaq, Luutivik and Karl Simonsen moved to Kullorsuaq, cf. p. 232.

One could say that there was much more game in the first period. There was no one to disturb it then. But now the hunting here is still excellent, because there are many hunters. Now there are also very young ones who have a code number[37] as skin suppliers. There are a total of over 50 code numbers at the place. The code numbers are used to calculate bonus payments. My son here is one of the skin suppliers. His code number is not the last here. His number is 51. He hunts a little too.

We have ringed seals in both summer and winter. Here we don't see so much of the young harp seal.[38] It sometimes happens that some hunters come home without a catch. But this happens rarely, although it sometimes happens on a hunting trip, where you could once expect to catch several seals. In October one sees harp seals here at the hunting grounds. All kinds of large game animals are caught here, but at different seasons.

At the end of July and in August the narwhal come. Now you have come just a little too early. A little later you would be able to eat your fill of *mattak*. But they disappear south some time before the ice cover.

But people also hunt beluga in the time we call *ukiassaq* (late summer or early autumn). Narwhal hunting is done inside Kullorsuaq and north of it. Within this area the narwhal is caught at Nunatarsuaq and Qeqertarsuaq. There they hunt narwhal from a kayak. Many narwhal were caught there, and people still hunt a little there. But now that people have motor boats, they sail north to places with bigger stocks, to Tuttulikassak and Niaqorsuaq. In this place people don't use rifles [that is, for the first wound, which determines who is considered the catcher of the animal – RP] for narwhal. They are always harpooned.[39] Yesterday in fact I paddled in to a narwhal to harpoon it, but it got away from me, since it was alarmed. But I couldn't use the gun first. You harpoon it first, and use the rifle afterwards. If you use the rifle first, and you are not very quick with the harpoon, you can't expect to get hold of it [it will sink to the bottom – RP]. For narwhal we usually use the ordinary harpoon head that we also use for seals. The harpoon head is made of caribou antler or from a tusk. But we also use steel as material, in this case a head intended for narwhal hunting made from saloon rifle metal. Here it is difficult to get hold of caribou antler, and now in fact you can only get tusks from narwhal. It has now become a little too valuable for us to cut it up. Harpoon heads of metal are over 10 cm long. But even a small harpoon head will stay in the animal if it has been made properly. Harpoon heads of metal have no barbs, but they do have a double spur at the back. Here we don't use single-spurred harpoon heads because they aren't suitable for narwhal hunting.

The walrus can appear in the spring at the ice-edge. In the winter it is very rare for the walrus to appear. The ice cover comes here before the walrus come. After the first new ice, it's true there are walrus in the waters outside here; but at that time we are busy with net hunting. That produces more of a yield. It's only when someone is looking for excitement that they hunt walrus at this time. But walrus meat isn't to be sniffed at either.

There are also narwhal in the spring. They come in large numbers to the ice-edge.

In the winter the sealing is done as net hunting and breathing-hole hunting. A few hunters hunt seals at the breathing-holes where someone, or for example dogs, will walk around the place. Here this method is used a great deal. From here they hunt many seals with nets; but they also catch many with breathing-hole hunting. In the wintertime some people go off every day breathing-hole hunting, and almost every day they come home with a catch. Sometimes a hunter gets several seals in one day. Those who have well trained dogs go out alone breathing-hole hunting, and let the dogs themselves run around the place. That is what they call *maanneq,* which we call *allusiorneq* here. When the dogs are well trained, they stop when the man leaves them; but they run to him when he has fired his gun.

Here the *kapuut* – ice-hunting harpoon – is not used; but they take an ice-pick for the ice, and the rifle for the seal. The gun we call either a walrus gun or an Enfield. Those hunters who most often hunt seal at a breathing-hole say that they have caught most seals without wounding them. They only have to make sure not to fire across the hole. The shot has to be so powerful that it knocks the seal's head backwards, so it is crushed against the wall of the hole. I myself have caught a seal that had no wound in the head. When I got it up, I thought at first that I had shot it straight across the head; but it turned out that there was no wound on it; but it was bleeding from both ears. They say that Enfield bullets with nickel points are unsuitable for breathing-hole hunting, because the point bursts when it hits the animal. Some people are very good breathing-hole hunters. It isn't unusual for several people to join in breathing-hole hunting, at least there are two when someone has to run around the breathing-hole. Then the second man drives around in the sledge. For it can be tiring when you are on foot. We have a lot of benefit from our dogs.

We use *akit*[40] on the sledge if we have to take the kayak on the sledge. But we only take skis when the ice is bad. Normally we have good ice cover here. Often we use the skis when there is deep snow on the ice. For it can be very tiresome wading through the snow. But in such cases with deep snow it is good to use an Enfield rifle for *uuttut*. You can't always get very close to the seal easily. Especially if they are older seals you have to be very careful with the hunting.

In breathing-hole hunting you don't use breathing-hole indicators; but you listen for when the seal comes up in the breathing-hole. When you are to shoot, you calculate with the phases of the seal's breathing. They say there is least chance of missing if you shoot just as the breathing ends. For just before the breath-

ing-in is about to begin, the seal comes a little higher up in the hole. Ejnar (?) Jensen taught me that and said that he had not missed since he learned it. His explanation fits very well; and since he is older than I am, I think he's right. There is a very small opening in some breathing-holes, but others have a bigger hole.

The hunters who have dogs that can sniff out breathing-holes catch many seals at the breathing-holes, and they have no hard times, even if they don't use nets. For example Frederik and Rasmus here do that.

Some people use a *tuteriaq* – a foot muffler[41] – but not everyone. Some of them just stand still at the breathing-hole. The ice around here is so thick that a *tuteriaq* is not necessary. You can manage by standing still. Most people from here don't use a *tuteriaq* for breathing-hole hunting.

There is also a good deal of hunting from the ice-edge and ice-holes. When we can see a seal some way out from the ice-edge, we lure it to us by scratching on the ice with the ice-pick and imitating its cry. The seal is very curious, so it has to take a closer look at the source of the noise. It is also quite evident that the seal is lured by a burning primus stove at the ice-edge. The nature of the primus apparently works on them like scratching the ice, so they come up quite close by, sometimes no farther away than you can reach them with the whip. But if you hunt at the ice-edge with Jonathan Nielsen here, you won't catch anything yourself, for you can't compete with him as far as speed goes. Once he has got into position with his saloon rifle, he gets the seal as soon as it appears. He is a great hunter; but in recent years his eyes have got bad, so he uses glasses.

[Jonathan Nielsen]: It isn't very good to use glasses to hunt in the winter. But since 1959 – I think it was – I haven't caught a seal without using glasses. They were really my father's glasses, which he used when he was shooting. Without them I couldn't see the seals, and one of the glasses even broke, and I couldn't go to the doctor: it's true that I go hunting, but now and then the seal gets away from me because of my eyes. For example it was raining yesterday while I was out in a kayak, so I only caught one seal. But now the doctor has promised me that he'll try to find a pair of glasses that suit my eyes.

[Peter Hansen]: It isn't because he's my brother-in-law I say it; but when I settled here he was one of the finest great hunters, if not the best. My family moved here when my mother, who was a midwife, was transferred here. I myself moved here in 1949. I got married in 1950 to Jonathan Nielsen's youngest sister. After that time I preferred to live in Kullorsuaq. One winter I lived at Appilattoq, but in the spring it got too unpleasant for me with all the rotten ice down there, so I hurried back here. Here, it's true, there is also a current from the inland ice, but it's no match for the current around Aappilattoq.

There's a regulation that no one must move and live north of us in the municipality.

Knud Rasmussen's old midway station house 'Bjørneborg' is now at Qaarusulik, and is used as a hunters' house. The hunters go there, and they hunt from there throughout the spring. There is also another hunters' house at Qaarusulik, with sloping walls and two rooms. The hunters' huts with sloping walls have now been given to the hunters' association, which manages them. But the last hunters' houses in 'box shape' belong to the municipality, which hires them out to the hunters' association members. A hunter pays a charge of 25 *øre* during the day for using one. The use of the hunters' associations' own hunting huts costs a charge of 25 *øre* during the day. The municipality has set its rates for its huts accordingly. The square ['box-shaped'] hunters' huts are well insulated.

There is such a house at Uingasoq, and another at Inussulik. They are used against payment. I haven't seen the house at Uingasoq. The cabins with sloping walls have no insulation.

Here bearded seal are also caught, almost all year round, and sometimes people catch a bearded seal in a net.

Here we use nets made of nylon. It was a great improvement when we went over to nets made of nylon. Nylon nets are very strong, and they catch things more easily than twine nets, probably because the twine nets are ragged. When the light gets stronger, the hunting with twine nets gets poorer: the hunting is good with nylon nets, even when the light has grown strong.

Here we hang nets out from the coast, at ice-holes and by icebergs. Not everyone who hangs nets out from the coast has fixed netting places at the coast. I suppose one could say that they have 'owners'. But if we come to a place that is suitable as a netting place

we hang our nets there, if there are no nets there already. I don't know whether you can reserve a suitable netting place without immediately hanging out your net. We don't do that. [It is said that at Nutaarmiut one can reserve a suitable netting place by standing a piece of ice on end. Within three days you must hang your net out at the place – RP]. We don't know that custom.

If you come to a place where there is already a net hanging, you can decide for yourself what distance from the net you want to hang your own net out. If the distance is big enough so that the two nets won't get tangled up in each other, it is all right. It's especially at icebergs that people observe this distance. When the nets can't get tangled with each other, they don't get in one another's way either. I myself have used a net at Aappilattoq on Inussulik. In the outer bay the distance is just enough so two nets won't get entangled. The seals didn't seem to come to nets, especially at the icebergs, by swimming along the wall, but they came from below. It was not unusual for the midmost net to catch something. So the distance between the nets was not a problem for me.

Here polar bears are caught every winter. The polar bear hunts take place both north of us and west of us. I myself am not a polar bear hunter, and I haven't caught a single polar bear. The polar bear hunters train their dogs for the hunting; but whether it's a very special kind of training I don't know at all. It is very rare that one hears of a polar bear that gets away from a hunter – even those who haven't been out bear hunting before can be quite sure of catching it. For the dogs have the urge in them to fight with a polar bear. Here people have very fine sledge dogs.

A few years ago a polar bear came here and was caught, without anyone using the dogs. [A polar bear that comes close to the houses is called *tikeraaq,* 'a visitor' – RP]. And in fact we were almost as fast as the dogs. It was a very amusing event. There was moonlight that evening, when the polar bear came ashore below the houses, and when the word got around we ran out in a hurry without much outside clothing on. I was asleep at this time, and when I was woken up, I first had to go over to the outhouse, because I had my kayak in there, and the gun under the kayak deck. It was a repeater, for six cartridges. While someone got my kamiks ready I got dressed. I had taken my clothes off because I was going to sleep. I had a pair of canvas trousers that I put on. They were very tight, so I didn't put on 'undertrousers'. But I had put on three woolen sweaters one over another, and an anorak outermost. Finally I put on my kamiks and then ran out. I was one of the last who arrived, and I wasn't involved in the beginning of the hunt. Shortly after I got there it was killed. When I came home, I said: "I just managed to fire two shots; but when they said I should stop, I gave up shooting any more." But afterwards when I looked in the magazine, I discovered that there was only one cartridge left out of six. I hadn't noticed at all that I had fired five shots.

When we who were out there at the place were to return home, I did feel that I was cold about the legs. When we had brought it in and began to flense it down by the house of the trading post manager, I began to sweat in my upper body, and only then discovered that I had four layers of clothes on my upper body, but only a pair of canvas trousers on my legs.

In the spring when the *uuttut* are about, the sledges are constantly driving north. The *uuttoq* hunting is done with a gun and shooting screen.

On the kayak you place the shooting screen[42] along the front of the line rack;[43] but you can also have one on the prow. People paint most kayaks here with white paint so they don't look too different from the ice.

Hunting bladders are not curved here.[44] People use rather big hunting bladders; but when you have blown them up you press the back in. Hunting bladders are greased with train-oil. The treatment of hunting equipment has not changed here since the earlier generations. For *paaguat*[45] you use *isigassat,* so that the bladder will not blow away too easily. Here it is almost impossible to get caribou antler. In fact you could find caribou antler on the ground if you looked on the land, but these are very old ones. Here it is only Jonathan Nielsen who has *paaguaq* made of caribou antler. He got it from his son-in-law.

Here the knob harpoon is used, there are no winged harpoons.[46] We call the knob harpoon *naaligaq*. People here have half-forgotten how the winged harpoon is made. But the knob harpoon on the other hand is an excellent tool.

We can't do without the throwing board either. On the other hand we don't use the big lance, since the gun is used to bring down the animal. It is rare to see walrus here; but one hunts it according to the circumstances. Sometimes people prefer to harpoon it first,

but in other cases they shoot it first. Since I have been here, only two walruses have been caught in open water.

Here people don't bother too much if some of the animal's blood runs out into the sea during flensing; but no one throws offal in the sea. When we flense a seal we give what we don't need ourselves to the dogs. We have many dogs to feed. But tins are thrown out into the sea. Yesterday I said to other men that I don't like to see tins being thrown out in the sea. Yesterday, while I was out hunting, there was a tin out on the water (with remains of the contents) to the windward side of the hunting ground. A seal that appeared while I was there was on the leeward side of it and disappeared down into the water again every time it came up. It could smell the contents of the tin. For the seals come up right in front of the settlement. If you looked over the water with binoculars you would undoubtedly see at least one seal.

We don't sink the seal's whiskers here, and other similar customs have been forgotten.[47] We know well enough about that sort of thing from the stories, but now we go in for giving anything we don't use ourselves to the dogs. That sort of thing may have helped to ensure that such customs were forgotten.

Not all seal skins are sold to the KGH here. Some are used for clothes. One should probably assume that people from other places also come up here and sell the skins here. But the population here themselves sell over 3000 skins a year. In 1956 the sealing was probably rather poorer than in 1960; but this year (1966) we'll probably go higher than the figures from 1960. But even in 1965, when the hunting was poorer than before, the incomes from skin sales still rose. This year is good for the small seals, and you get more for their skins. Sometimes you catch young hooded seals ('bluebacks'). The hooded seal season is just beginning. That is a seal that is much sought-after and quite a few are caught.

There are foxes; but no one seriously hunts foxes. After people started using the big fox traps the hunting declined. You're not allowed to use the small traps. The foxes don't harm the bird colonies around here, because in fact we only have fulmar cliffs. We shoot some fulmar, just to taste other meat than seal meat.

At Kullorsuaq there are good Greenland halibut stocks, and there are some catfish. We use long lines for Greenland halibut, and catch big fat fish. The Greenland halibut around here are so fat that the Upernavik people on visits can't really use them for dog food. The dogs get full up too quick, and won't eat any more. Our fish are fatter than the Greenland halibut down at Aappilattoq.

23 July 1966

Peter Hansen, Kullorsuaq



Fig. 37. Pele Juliussen, Søndre Upernavik, 1965. (Photo R. Petersen).

Pele Juliussen, Søndre Upernavik (65VG13A6)

Caribou hunting in the old days. The settlement Sioraq The whole country this side of Søndre Upernavik used to be a caribou hunting area. Before the fog came you could see how big a stretch of land is in there. There were always caribou in there in the winter, in the spring, and in the summer. We call that point there Qullungut. When you came here, you probably noticed a buoy marking a bank. That is at Qullungut.

In my childhood when I began to go around on my own I saw that people put a lot of kayaks out there at Qullungut. There were lots of animals to hunt.

Originally this island was uninhabited. People only lived at Kangersuatsiaq, on Sioraq, while the

trading post manager and catechist lived in Kangersuatsiaq itself.

People from Kangersuatsiaq went caribou hunting to the south, and after a short stay here they continued south to stay in the caribou area. There they dried the caribou meat so that it was easier to transport. They slept on the mountain, and only when a lot of meat had been dried did they bring it down to the coast. When they went back from down there, it was only the caribou's tongue and *sungaq* that were not dried. We call the gut tallow that is boiled into lumps *sungaq*. Some of this is oblong pieces of 25-35 cm, which we call *amitsuajaaq*. We call the round pieces *niaquusat*. There was lots of that kind. You strung the boiled pieces of tallow together and wrapped them in caribou skin. You kept it for the autumn period without hunting as lamp fuel. You only started on the trip home when the dry sand surfaces began to flow out at high tide. You can get very large surfaces in a calm sea. They filled up the twelve-skin umiaks covered with bearded seal skin all the way. They must have been big umiaks, for I thought that the seven-skin umiaks, which I myself have seen, were big. They loaded an umiak like that until it was full. If there was some wind, they had to put ashore. When they came here[48] to the pebble beach below where the present-day shop is, they put up their tents. And on the beach down there, there were many breeding eider ducks. They got a lot of hunting done.

Only when they came here did they go hunting on the slopes up there, so they could come home with fresh caribou meat. They also gathered eggs for the winter.

From there they went on to Kangersuatsiaq, but before they came to Sioraq, they first had to land at Qimatulivik,[49] which was separated from Sioraq by a narrow sound. When you round the point, you see a steep slope full of screes. That's called Qimatulivik. There they put their winter provisions, and then they came to Sioraq bringing meat gifts for those who were home.

That's how it happened, and only when they thought that they were far enough into the autumn did they fetch their eggs.

At that time they lived in communal houses, and only when the time without hunting had come did they begin to live on their provisions. When they cut *sungaq* in two parts, and the innermost part was reddish, they put it aside as fuel. They knocked the oil out of the piece, as you do with frozen blubber. And there was not a whole piece left. Once it was in the lamp the oil would flow. They had *qulliit oqallit* – lamps with partitions – of soapstone. Behind the wick edge there was a partition with a hole at the foot. You put the pieces of tallow behind the partition and then pure oil flowed through the openings below.

Many people lived on Sioraq. For example Paninnguaq, Aninnguaq, Angajulleq lived there, and all the well known names. Angajulleq was the oldest of a family of brothers and sisters. When their father died, he managed the house with the catches of all his brothers. He became head of the family, and his brothers couldn't take any of their catch without his permission. When Angajulleq asked for some of their catch, they brought what he wanted immediately.

In the autumn people entertained themselves on Sioraq by singing songs. They would gather in the house and sang all the merry songs. That was entertainment. In the summer when you saw what someone was up to, you kept it to yourself. You had it all 'in your head'. Only when they gathered in the autumn for a song-feast would the observer tell in song form what the other one had done.

When Panginnguaq sang, it was so lively in the house and so warm that they loosened the pegs from half of the gut-casing window – I've seen many such gut-casings – and it was as warm as a room with a glowing stove. When they had that sort of song-feast there was no one who could get Panginnguaq stumped for an answer. During the singing, when he began to breathe as you do in the cold, he had an answer for everything.[50]

10 July 1965
Pele Juliussen, Søndre Upernavik

Jens Karlsen, Maniitsoq, formerly Søndre Upernavik (65VG5B)

The different hunting seasons at Søndre Upernavik

In 1956 I moved from Søndre Upernavik to Sarfannguit, when our only daughter got married and moved there. They wanted us to come and we couldn't say no to that. In 1958 we came to Maniitsoq. In 1951 I had my leg amputated, and at the recommendation of the *kæmner* Knudsen I then moved to Upernavik. It was from there that I moved south.

At that time there were about 150 people in Søndre Upernavik. Now Kangersuatsiaq is the nearest settlement. But Uluaaq and Ikerasak used to be inhabited. The stretch from Søndre Upernavik to Illorsuit in Uummannaq Municipality is uninhabited. But I've heard that my grandparents' family moved at some time during my father's youth to Amitsoq, which is now sometimes used as an emergency harbour south of Søndre Upernavik. I don't know how many people there were. My father's family moved back to Søndre Upernavik after two winters, but some of their relatives stayed down there.[51] In the middle of the winter they went to Søndre Upernavik to shop; but there was a long thaw that broke the ice up and made sledging impossible. There were only women and children in the house. It was an ordinary house with *qingaq* – a roof vent, In the house there was a young lad as the only 'man'. Five days passed where they got nothing to eat, since the sealing nets disappeared with the ice. When they had no more fire in the house, he took a discarded, rotten net that was now used as a stopper in the roof vent. Although it broke, every time he pulled it he said: "I think I'll hang it out. It's just possible that a seal will come into it". They told him not to get his hopes up too much. So he went over the fjord to the opposite coast at Amitsup Kangerlugutaa, where we ourselves went char-fishing in the summer. He hung the net out there. The next time he went to look a huge male ringed seal was hanging there. Ringed seal males in this fjord are enormous. It must have been a gift [from Heaven – RP]. It was so big that he couldn't drag it home. So he cut some pieces off and took them home. They were rather anxious about him in the house. They could see that he was coming home with something red in his hands. He told them that he had caught a very large male ringed seal. They got very happy and with that they got over the hungry period. A nearby fjord, Maligiaq, is also known for its large seals. In the spring we often hunted seals there for the skins, since we drove overland there.

Those wintering there caught another big seal with that miserable net, and they also survived the hard times. The hunters who had gone to Søndre Upernavik were very worried, since they did not know whether those left behind could survive. Their relatives in Søndre Upernavik began to mourn them. But at long last they could go south again. When the darkness fell they came over to Qeqertaq, and from there they could see that the gut-casing windows were fully lit up. Then they came home and discovered that all those left behind were all right.

They say in fact that there were fine stocks of game then, including caribou stocks, and in the summer there were lots of char. In addition there were plenty of other fish, and there were good quantities of polar bear in the area. At that time the polar bears came to these parts. But after that experience they didn't dare live there any more, and they moved north again. Later no one lived down there.

Søndre Upernavik was settled from Kangersuatsiaq. It was in the not so terribly distant past. But the connection with the Uummannaq district was very weak. The reason why people moved there from Kangersuatsiaq was of course the excellent game stocks. At that time they say there were four turf houses, but the trading building was the fifth, and at that time the trading post manager was the so-called Napparsisunnguaq.[52] At that time they say there were huge stocks of game. It was said that in the winter they caught so many polar bears that you would think they were seals. That was at some time in the 1800s, maybe at the beginning.[53] Once one hunter caught four polar bears, a second caught three, and yet another caught at least one polar bear, all on one and the same day. It was that easy to catch polar bears then. And they would already come with the new ice. At that time it was the custom that people invited one another for coffee in the morning. The trading post manager invited them for coffee, and when they were about to drink it a woman went outside. She came in again and said that she had heard a dog bark. The new ice was being formed, and the present harbour-bay was filled with thin ice. They realized right away that it was a polar bear. They looked at the dogs, and discovered that it was Pinnii's lead dog. [*Pinnii* means ugly – Danish *grim* – and this was perhaps Søren Grim's ancestor – RP]. The lead dog wouldn't bark without good reason, and when they went to see what was happening, one of them said that they should take a kayak and a gun, since the ice was too bad. They knew that if the dogs were by a polar bear they wouldn't leave it. When they came down to the beach, they saw them off the beach. They had fallen through the thin ice; but the dogs were still barking. It was four polar bears that Pinnii's lead dog had stopped. They caught them all, and it wasn't even light yet when they started the flensing.

I have myself had a share in a polar bear. But I haven't caught a whole one myself. In my childhood a lot of polar bears were caught. I can remember that Isak, who had no dogs, came half-running towards us once when my father came with a load. He pointed outwards, and we immediately saw the bears – a she-bear with a cub. My father unloaded as fast as he could and went off after them, and caught them – the cub was still alive. The trading post manager bought it for DKr 30, a fantastic sum then.

In the summer we went out in a kayak; but otherwise we went in the spring – as early as April – on hunting trips, and at the beginning of June we went back home. In my childhood we went on hunting trips in the warm part of the year. In April the beluga began to swim north and followed the cracks in the ice. Many beluga were caught well into June. And once we had caught many belugas and dried a lot of meat, we could go back in July: from my childhood I can remember that a couple of times we did not get back home until August. That was in the time before the protection regulations for caribou,[54] and there were lots of caribou. While we were at the hunting camp people went on the first caribou hunt in July. They went caribou hunting more than once, and the second hunt would be in August. In the winter too people went caribou hunting with a dog sledge. Sometimes two or three sledges went caribou hunting, and when we saw the sledges come from the south on the third or fourth day, we went to meet them. The hunters sat on the load of caribou bodies, from which only the legs and the stomachs had been removed, and the frozen tallow shone everywhere.

The caribou hunters from Søndre Upernavik had since very ancient times met people from Illorsuit in Uummannaq Municipality in the hunting area. In the old days people from the Upernavik region also went down to Uummannaq to buy provisions. In the winter they did so by sledge in around Sigguk, Svartenhuk. But they also took the trip in the summer with an umiak. It happened once, when several umiaks together went down there, and most of the umiaks were off Qinnivik, where you couldn't go ashore, while the hindmost were still off Narsaq, that a storm came from the south. Since there are some large beach pools in behind the pebble beach at Narsaq, the hindmost umiaks took refuge there. But three or four umiaks that were sailing off Qinnivik were wrecked. People in the hindmost umiaks had family in the ones that had been up ahead. The storm went on for three days with violent breakers at the coast. After the three days various bodies were washed up on the beach, but they had been dashed so hard against the coast that you couldn't see who was who, and hardly if it was a man or woman. That's how dangerous this trip could be.

There are many house ruins in this stretch; but we have no stories about them. There are some at Millorfik and Amitsoq, and even on the outer side of Qeqertaq.

Narsaq, 'the plain', fits its name very well: you can catch great quantities of char there.

While I lived in Upernavik, a motor boat came from the south, and the crew said that they had found a new char place at Maligiaq. I didn't comment that my father had already found out in my childhood that there were char there. They used to take a small char net when they were out caribou hunting. Once when they wanted to build a night accommodation house for sledge postmen at Maligiaq, they sent my father to Millorfik with the planks for the house, so that he could build the house. The planks were transported on overland. A few days were spent on transport alone. While he was building the house – a turf house – he put out the char net simply by tying sinkers to it and throwing the net out from the bank. He caught lots of char. We also tried that once during caribou hunting. It was after the protection regulations for caribou had come into force. There was a Dane with us on that trip, we called him Suku.[55] He had worked in the municipality for many years. When we were about to go out on the actual hunt I cast a small char net out. At that time the caribou had become quite rare, and we only got one young buck. But when we came back, those left behind had caught lots of char in our absence. It was later, then, after the amputation of my leg, when I lived in Upernavik, that a schooner came from the south and the crew said that they had discovered a new char river.

Before protection regulations for certain animals came into force, we also had a lot of benefit from eider ducks. Earlier, there had also been a lot of speckled (harbour/common) seals; but that was before my time. Just north of Søndre Upernavik there is a place that is called Saattorsuaq. I don't know how many kilometres long it is [about 8 km – RP], but it is very narrow. In my childhood eider ducks bred there all the

way round the island, and on the outermost island, 'Little Flat Island', they also bred, a lot of eider ducks and other bird species. When the hunters, for generations before us, went out to these islands to gather eggs, it didn't matter which side they came from. There were eider ducks everywhere. But on Avalerna – that's what they call a small rock, almost a reef, on the outermost side of Saattorsuaq – that was where the speckled seals were. At that time, when the kayaks came back from egg-gathering, each of them, no matter how many there were, had one or more young speckled seals. They had simply removed the guts, and had put eggs in the cavity. The eider ducks came already in April, and they gathered at an eddy-cut icehole at Tikerarsuaq.[56] When you got close to them their various sounds almost sounded like a storm. They disappeared north again, these *siorartuut,* the long-beaked (common) eiders (*Somateria mollissima*); but in May the king eiders came and stayed close to Søndre Upernavik and Upernavik throughout the summer. But you can't find a single one of their eggs. I don't know where they breed. Our ancestors said that they breed inland. I have seen it myself once while caribou hunting, when we went over to Siattut (*c.* 54° 20'W, 72° 19'N), around an island I saw a lot of eider ducks; but we didn't get close enough to see whether they were in fact king eiders. But Sullua, which we came through to get to Siattut,[57] is full of king eiders in September, probably because they breed in there. Throughout the summer the king eiders stay close to Søndre Upernavik. They moult in the area in August. At that time you see eider ducks everywhere on the sea. In the moulting period these birds taste best, for then the meat is not so dry any more, and is covered by layers of fat. Towards the autumn, as I said, their young come. I have asked some *inughuit* [people from Thule] whether king eiders breed in their area. Some say yes, according to what they have heard; but they haven't seen them themselves. Others directly say no. However many eider ducks I have caught, I haven't seem a single egg from a king eider.

There are a lot of guillemot cliffs from a place a little south of Upernavik towards the north. Close to Søndre Upernavik there is only one small guillemot cliff on the outer side of Tikerarsuaq; but it is so steep that no one gathers eggs there. People in Søndre Upernavik are not too keen on going to guillemot cliffs either.

The big char stocks at Narsaq are not exploited, because there people often go caribou hunting for several days around Qinnivik. My older siblings and my father talk about the milk-white char river. It was a flat-bottomed river with a steady current. If you had to wade over it, you shouldn't be too ticklish, since the char swim against your legs all the time. But in the big lake at Millorfik there are also many char. At Amitsoq a little east of that you could also catch many char. There are big char at Amitsoq, only slightly smaller than real salmon. I have seen my father catch a real salmon. At that time, when you couldn't buy nylon, you used sewing thread for char nets. But at Amitsoq and Millorfik you had to use thin twine. Sewing thread won't hold the big char, and the water there is too muddy too.

In the 1940s we went char fishing in to Eqaluit this side of Søndre Upernavik. A flat stretch of the river, Nalanera, was at that time often full of char. I had also thought about going caribou hunting from there. Around the settlement there were seals at that time, but once we had taken some of them to caches, we went to Eqaluit. After setting up camp we caught a lot of char and took them down to the camp. The next day we caught just as many. My maternal aunt, who was there to pick crowberry, said, when I said that I was thinking about going caribou hunting, but didn't know the terrain: "I will explain the route to you." She showed me the route, and went with me on the first part of the trip. We followed a path and when we couldn't find it any more, we came across caribou tracks. It turned out that the animals chewed the cud farther down than I was. I went so far that I could see Sullua, and while I was looking I noticed four animals at Salliarusersuaq.[58] I caught them all. When we came back to Søndre Upernavik, a kayak man came from Kangersuatsiaq, and said that the trading post manager there would like to buy caribou meat, if any had been caught. My elder brother and I, and the man from Kangersuatsiaq, then paddled north. While we paddled off, he said: "In the Kangersuatsiaq waters there is something that jumps up out of the water. It isn't porpoise." But he didn't know what it was. When we came up to Kangersuatsiaq close to a bank, something jumped up out of the water. It was a shoal with shiny bodies, but it wasn't porpoise. Every time we came close to a bank, we saw a shoal at the surface. When I came to Kangersuatsiaq, my brother-in-law

told me that it was an animal of a kind they couldn't identify. Only later, after we had moved down here, did I find out that they were salmon in large numbers.

There were also lots of cod at one time – I think it was for about four or five years that cod swam around Søndre Upernavik. When you were in a kayak and came close to a bank at the end of August or in September, you could hear the currents. When you met a shoal on an open stretch you thought you had the sea bed right below you. When we went out on a fishing trip with a small rowing-boat that our father had made, to the bank off the point of our island, and drifted with the current, we got the boat filled with large cod within about two hours. This was even though we only had jigs with two hooks each. For this there were often only two of us aboard. When we had got enough drying-cod in and cached them under stones we stopped fishing. But now I don't know how many cod there are around here. The cod could stay in the waters until well into December.

Besides nets, hooked spears are also used to catch char.

In the caribou area we saw *talut*[59] used earlier for caribou hunting, and *saputit*[60] used earlier for char fishing. In the old days, when there were many caribou, people used to block off their route. They made 'cairns' [possibly with a line stretched out between them] of this height [about 75 cm, shown with the hands – RP], too high for the caribou to jump over, and too low for them to get under them. There was the same distance between the cairns all across the line. At the end of such a system you found *talorsuit*, 'hunting shelters', built up with stones. They were rounded, and looked like house ruins. You found them even on the beach, and people set up a cairn system inland, with ropes stretched out between the cairns. A caribou that ran into the system would follow the rope outward or inward. At each end of the line one had the 'hunting shelters'. The distance between the two lines was long, and they used big stones. They must have been very strong. The two lines didn't quite join up. It was said that the women chased the caribou in towards the cairn system and when the caribou came there they followed the line. They are often found on flat stretches. But you can find them even on slopes when the terrain isn't too uneven. There is such a cairn system at Millorfik. I haven't seen anything like that at Amitsoq, but at the valleys by Umiiarfiup Sullua, and they can be found in the country behind Sigguk/Svartenhuk.

What was the place you thought Narsaarsuk might be the same as?

Piitaatsoq. It's said that Piitaatsukassak lived there, and that there was only one house there. The place slopes with an even rise. It is said that at the time when they lived there, they could get the lamps to burn on caribou tallow all through the winter. The family wintered there sometimes without fellow settlers. The man was called Piitaatsoq, and the place is now called after him, and it is possible that its first name was Narsaarsuk.

I would like to tell a story that is related to the meeting between people from the Upernavik district and people from Illorsuit in the Uummannaq district. [They met on caribou hunts.] At that time the meetings were not always peaceful. There was a widow who had a daughter. Their fellow settlers had killed the widow while the daughter was still a child. They accused the widow of being a witch. After that time the daughter practiced her powers so she could avenge her mother, even though she was 'only' a woman. By the time the daughter had a child herself, the killer had fled down to the Uummannaq district. She is said to have been a very small woman.

'The girl' and her husband once went caribou hunting through Millorfik. They met people from Uummannaq district at Qaarajuttoq, which is within the nearest hunting area between Millorfik and Amitsoq [*c.* 55° 15', 71°41'N]. When they met, they began to tell one another stories. 'The girl's' husband heard a strange sound, looked around, and saw that his wife, who had a child on her back, was shaking so you could hear it. When her husband noticed that, she said that she had recognized someone who had helped to kill her mother. She said that at the time when they killed her mother, she fled to the innermost corner of the house and cried there without being able to find anyone to help her mother. If it had been today she would herself help her mother. After saying that she took the child from the back-bag and handed it to her husband. Then those who were speaking fell completely silent. She looked around and found a caribou antler on the ground. She took it and said: "When they were killing my mother, I ran to the corner of house and shouted for help. But if it had been today, I could help her myself, because now I am like this". She rubbed the

caribou antler between her hands and it crumbled between her hands. Then, while she went on talking, she took another antler, stuck it down in the ground, and threw a 'shovelful' of earth and stones back over her shoulder. She walked between the strangers and on to one of her mother's murderers, who was sitting behind the others, she took him by the seat of the trousers and said that now the hour of vengeance was at hand. But her husband now went quickly to her and said that times had changed, and that they should no longer think about revenge. She hesitated a long time before she let go of the murderer. When she left a strange sound came from him and he said: "I went in my trousers."

Once in my childhood, when I went caribou hunting with my father to Qaarajuttoq, my father said: "Now I have finally seen for myself. There is crumbled caribou antler here. It was probably that woman who made it crumble."

Caribou hunting with a dog-sledge is of course different from hunting on foot. My father used to say that in the winter when there was snow and frost, the caribou could hear the slightest sound, and easily ran away. So they went caribou hunting with skis on. They had hairy ringed seal skin under the skis, so they moved easily themselves on the wet spring snow. You don't make so much noise either when there are skins under your skis. At first they wore white clothes when hunting.

At the time when there were many caribou, you could catch them just as well in summer and winter. When you went caribou hunting with a sledge, you stopped hunting when you had loaded the sledge full, with about six caribou. One man could load the sledge with six or seven caribou. During caribou hunting in the summer you had female helpers with you, and you spent the summer in the hinterland of the fjords. We also used to spend the summer ourselves in the caribou area. I myself was born during a summer stay in the caribou area. We too spent the summer in there until I had my leg amputated. The caribou hunting is a lot like the caribou hunting around Maniitsoq. [The remark fell because I asked whether the caribou hunting in the southern Upernavik district was like the Uummannaq people's hunts at Nuussuaq, where only the men went hunting, and came back when they had a catch – RP].

Is there anything special about Piitaatsoq, to get back to that?

What may seem odd is that they had gathered all the bones from their catch, and had put them in cavities as if it was a kind of burial. They had apparently lived on caribou meat alone, because even after a thorough search you couldn't find bones of sea mammals among these bones. [This was the informant's own conclusion; but bones from land mammals and sea mammals must not be mixed in such 'ossuaries' – RP]. I don't know anything about the place being inhabited later. At least one doesn't hear anything about it. There are in fact lots of house ruins around Søndre Upernavik, even on the opposite side of Qeqertaq. But I haven't heard anything about who occupied them. What we had heard about people from older times – about Tusilartoq[61], about Aqigssiaq[62] for example – came from down here. Down here they have shown me their house ruins, when we lived in Sarfannguit. They told me once at Sarfannguit, when I was sailing in a motor boat to catch *ammassat*, that a steep mountain that we could see, Naajarsuit Qulaat,[63] was the place from which Aqissiaq pushed an *igalilik* out.

July 1965
Jens Karlsen, Maniitsoq

Jens Karlsen, Maniitsoq, formerly Søndre Upernavik (65VG6A)

Sledge routes and land routes, hunting trips, tents and houses, places with house ruins

At Søndre Upernavik there is a very fine overland sledge route, Itillersuaq. You can see a mountain behind the settlement. That is called Orpigarsuit. You drive close by it and then north towards Kangersuatsiaq. In recent years people have mainly driven that way. Even when the fjords were ice-covered we drove that way to our nets.

On the stretch from Søndre Upernavik north there are several overland routes. A lot of stories are associated with these places. Towards Illorsuit too, to the south, I know the sledge route over land, both in around the fjords, and along the coast. People took that route a lot when they still drove with sledge mail – the Amitsoq-Nuugaatsiaq and Millorfik-Arfertuarsuk route, as well as the route over Maligiaq. In my best hunting years we also used to drive in the spring in a

sledge in these parts. Since the terrain was even, and we often drove in the evening, it was a very beautiful drive. You also came across a lot of ptarmigan there, and in my youth you could meet caribou herds. I managed to become a hunter just before the protection of the caribou began. Once when I was hunting with my brother, he caught a caribou cow with a calf in its belly. My brother had been involved a lot in caribou hunts, in both the summer and the spring, far from the coast. He also talked about his uncle and his cousin. When they began to hunt caribou, they could spend several days caribou hunting instead of *uuttoq* hunting. We dried some of the meat, and went on more hunts before the snow melted. He once said that during a hunt he shot a young buck that disappeared behind a small rock dome. When he got close he heard dogs baying in that direction, and when he got there, there was no more meat on the buck.

It was beautiful to drive a sledge in these regions, especially in the spring when the midnight sun had first appeared.

Overland travel gave me the physical infirmity that I have. It was in April in 1946. I was driving the overland route south with Karoline [his wife – RP]. I had the sledge full of halibut, and drove down a valley I have used as a route many times. But on this trip I wasn't careful enough, and broke my leg. I was in hospital for three months. It healed, but was no longer as before. My leg was not all right. Earlier too that leg had bothered me, without affecting my hunting. After the accident at Itillersuaq it bothered me, and later it got bad again. I got TB in the leg and during a stay in hospital in October 1951 I had the leg amputated.

We used to drive over Itillersuaq to go net hunting just before Christmas. At that time there were not so many ringed seals. It is said that more ringed seals have appeared up there, probably because the warm sea currents no longer reach so far up. After my departure the number of ringed seals has grown.

In former times there was also a lot of ice. It was said that people used to go to gather eggs to the islands off Upernavik in a dog-sledge until well into July. It is only in July that the eider ducks really start laying eggs. The birds are rather later up there. At that time there were eddies in our region. They say there are no more eddy-cut places, and that the ice cover at Upernavik is much more solid. In my best years there was a period when there was never proper ice cover around Upernavik. There were so many eddy-cut places. The ringed seals were also quite rare then. Now there are many ringed seals again. But in recent years the beluga have disappeared – that is to say, now they come later and can't be caught in sea nets any more.

Well, we were talking about land routes. There are many land routes in North West Greenland, and some of them are very rough. I've driven over the one they call Upernaviup Itillersua, to the district council meeting, but also to go visiting. The first time you drive it, it's bad. It was bad for me, because it was very high, and it has a steep gradient. When you are to start from the top, and look down at the sledges on the ice below, you only see some black dots, and halfway down there's a large rock face. But at that time, when someone lived at Kingittoq – it was Martin[64] and his family – they must have had a hard time, although they had excellent dogs. But they had driven to Upernavik along that route with the sledge loaded full of blubber. There was ice where you had to start on the descent, and it was very slippery. It was a bad stretch, and it didn't help to wind rope around the sledge runners. I had been given wrong information, and started downhill with the dogs in front of the sledge. I discovered that there was nowhere you could stop. At last by shouting I got the dogs to turn off – there was no way you could use the whip on this stretch. I used to have some fun afterwards with the great hunter Martin, when he lived at Kingittoq (on the southern side of Qaarsorsuaq). When I came to him I said: "If I wasn't so good at Greenlandic I almost think I would have got into serious difficulties. But my Greenlandic did the trick for me". [The shouts to the dogs were in Greenlandic – RP].

Gaabarsuaq told me that he had to drive over many land routes when he went to visit his wife, who is now dead. Once, when they had to drive over a very long valley, and had to cross a large lake, they came to the land route when darkness was falling. Although they knew this stretch that they had to cross well enough, they both grew afraid without any reason. They both saw something or other to the left of the dogs. They were so frightened by it that they couldn't really look at it. It was rather shiny, and hovered about half a metre above the snow. Facing them was something that might have been an eye. But they wouldn't do any more than look sideways at it. The wife said: "Gaaba, can you see it?". He answered: "Yes, I can see

it well enough; but I can't look directly at it either." He gave the dogs the secret speed signal that he used for bear hunting. They speeded up but in their fear they didn't even notice that they were passing a place with a very steep slope. The strange sight kept hovering to the left of the dogs.

Gaabarsuaq was a 'reader' – a catechist without formal training – but then he got a grip on himself, got angry and organized in his mind what he should say. He said a few 'well chosen' words, and the figure disappeared. Then they discovered that they had long since driven over the large lake, and were now driving on the sea ice. The descent that they usually took with the dogs behind the sledge – they had passed it without noticing it, out of pure terror.

Daaversuaq also told me about the land route at one place up there. On that stretch there was a large lake, and when they drove across it, they could come across ringed seals that had come up on the ice. But it's possible that they were really harbour seals that lived on char; I don't know whether harbour seals come up on the ice.

I know only that – even up there – where the harbour seals breed off the outermost islands, they come up on land. Although I have hunted basking seals for many years, I haven't come across basking harbour seals on the ice, and haven't ever heard of any such thing either.

But i haven't heard of such lakes inland up there, nor have I seen any house ruins inland.

At the bird cliffs up there guillemot, kittiwake, black guillemot, puffin and razorbill breed, as well as cormorants. Ravens and falcons also have nests in steep places. Gulls too breed on bird cliffs, if not on the islands. I don't know where the owls breed. On the islands tern and eider duck breed, and in the cracks black guillemot and puffins breed, and long-tailed ducks. Ducks and many other birds breed up there – for example geese are said to breed in the fjords. I haven't come across any geese on the islands; only up the fjords have I seen goslings. There are also many ptarmigan.

People had umiaks until quite recent times. My cousin Ludvig (Karlsen)[65] was probably the last umiak owner. I have seen his umiak skeleton in the museum in Nuuk. He used it until recent times, into the 1950s.

When we drove in the spring with a dog-sledge to the hunting grounds, we used to take the umiak. When we had to move from the hunting grounds to another place, especially to the sunny side of Qeqertaq, we used to take the umiak, because on this stretch we would come to open water. There we put the dogs in the umiak, and sailed with them. But when we came to the other side, we put the umiak on the sledge again, and drove to the next open stretch.

At the hunting grounds we would live in a tent, because we moved around according to the ice conditions. In recent years several hunters' huts have been built since I left Søndre Upernavik, and while I have lived at Upernavik. My son-in-law Ole[66] built them.

There are many hooded seals around Søndre Upernavik. But we used bearded seal skins for umiak coverings. For tent skins we used skins of harp seals and ringed seals. But when you wanted a fine tent, you could also use the skins of adult Greenland seals, but only along with other skins. According to what I remember hearing, 20 skins of adult male ringed seal had to be used for a tent. You call these tent coverings *itsat,* 'inside coverings', and you could use the same tent skins for several years. Even in the worst weather it didn't drip in such a tent.

Does a family have a tent ring at its regular hunting ground?

There is no fixed rule. At the time when people used skin tents, they lived from hunting alone, and they had to move around according to the hunting conditions. There were many people who went on hunting trips. Most of them lived in tents. But we also went to an old hunting place, Illulik,[67] where there were turf cabins, where the ceiling was supported with laths of driftwood. They were used by certain families who owned them, and they were passed on from generation to generation in the family. Now I hear that there is only one left, and it is no longer used. You go to the hunters' huts instead. The hunters' huts belong to the municipality. You go to these hunters' huts when the weather is still cold, also because the skin tents have passed out of use. People use canvas tents now. In the days when people used skin tents, they didn't use primus stoves, and when they woke up in the morning, they ate frozen meat. But otherwise the tents were very warm, heated by the lamps. Inside it was cosy, even in very bad weather. It is sad that such tents have now disappeared. Especially when one has grown old, it would be nice to have warm places to stay at the hunting-grounds. It would probably also be healthier

to live in a tent like that than in a canvas tent. In those days, when there were no doctors up there, you didn't have all those illnesses either. Even old people managed to get through the winter very well, and people ate food that kept out the cold. They could easily manage 30°-40° of cold.

Have whales bigger than beluga and narwhal been caught?

Greenland (bowhead) whale, we didn't catch that. But at the house-ruins you could see that our ancestors had caught it. I have also heard that they were hunted in a strange way. When my mother reached adulthood, there were still many Greenland whales; but I myself have not seen a Greenland whale: you'll see a small watercourse at the pebble beach in Søndre Upernavik. You can probably still see the meat pits. My mother and her playmates had a toy bench where the children ate out, and off the coast they could see sleeping Greenland whales from there. Sometimes several at once. But at that time they didn't know how to hunt them. It is said that they used to be hunted this way: two kayaks came up, one on each side of a sleeping Greenland whale. When they came up to it, they waited for it to swim again, while they held their lances over their shoulders. When it lifted its flukes to swim forward, they came closer, still with the lances over their shoulders, and move forward to a place close to the flukes. When it swam forward, the lances cut the short sinews across. When the whale came down and tilted up, the flukes were paralysed. When the whale dove down to swim with its front flippers alone, they came ashore and looked out for it. If it had not moved, they came out in an umiak. They would already have prepared beams of driftwood by boring a number of holes through them so that the beam was almost cut in half. When the whale stayed on the surface again, they came close by it, and when it opened its blowhole to blow, they stuck this piece of driftwood in its blowhole and broke the piece off. The whale would then try to dive again, but would come back to the surface immediately, because it couldn't close its blowhole and got water in it. Now the whale could neither dive nor swim away. Now they stabbed the whale from the side, ready to pull back from its death struggle. But before long the whale lay with its belly up.

On Søndre Upernavik Island there is a place we call Illut,[68] where there is a house-ruin. It is said that people lived there for two successive winters. That was after some people had been baptized – in Kangersuatsiaq. Søndre Upernavik was still uninhabited, but travellers often landed at the place when they went caribou hunting through Sullua. From Illut kayaks had also caught a Greenland whale. One of the hunters had harpooned a young one. They used big harpoon bladders made of adult harp seal. The bladder was not fully blown up – in beluga hunting too the bladder was not fully blown up because it acted as a more powerful brake. When it surfaced again three hunters harpooned it. They were farther up the fjord than Illut. They hit it with the lances, without being able to see any effect. Then they said: "Maybe the foreshafts of our lances are not cutting in it." It turned out that the foreshafts were too short. The oldest man wanted to try again. He took his short lance and paddled up to the whale. When the lance had cut its way in, the whale swam forward. He said to the others: "I managed to cut some way into it." When it swam out again, they used the big lances on it again. When it came close past the house, its death struggle started. They caught it. It is probably its bones you can see at that place. They don't look so old. They lie close to the house, and some of the vertebrae were used to sit on.

Yes, Greenland whales were caught in the old days – at a house ruin at Kangaarsuk you find whale bones too. The vertebrae had been turned into seats, after the pins [vertebral processes] had been cut off with a bow drill.

There are also house ruins with posts in them. You will probably be able to see the house ruins at Umiarsuaqarfiip Itillia[69] [the inlet on the other side of the 'Seal's Winter Harbour' – RP]. The 'posts' of stone are probably still there. They can be seen even in the winter. It was from there they had taken amulets. That was where the earlier generations lived [the designation used, *siulliarsuit,* indicates that this was from a time within living memory – RP]. The settlers died when they were frightened by *innersuit*?[70] The place is at Umiarsuaqarfik, a little south of Upernavik. It faces the glacier at Umiasussuk – the 'umiak mountain'. It is an island with vertical sides. They say that an *innersuaq* now and then showed itself in front of it. The settlers were frightened to death, including the famous Kaassassuk.[71] *Innersuit* and *alliarutsit* are the same.

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Jens Karlsen, Maniitsoq



Fig. 38. Lauritz Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik, 1966. (Photo Ole Hertz).

Lauritz Karlsen,[72] Søndre Upernavik (65VG11B)

The first inhabitants of Søndre Upernavik

I regret a little sometimes that in my childhood I never asked my father to tell me about the first settlement of Søndre Upernavik. In that case I would probably be able to give you very accurate information. My father was born in Kangersuatsiaq in 1865. At that time they lived on Sioraq, on a small island across from the present-day Kangersuatsiaq. At that time there was also a blubber-house and a trading manager's residence at Kangersuatsiaq. I assume that the first people moved to Søndre Upernavik before my father was born. Since there were many hunters on Sioraq, some of them moved to Søndre Upernavik, to begin with very few families.

But the hunting conditions around Søndre Upernavik were first discovered when people on hunting trips to Umiiarfiup Sullua, Millorfik and Amitsoq came across the island. They got the urge to build houses here. The original name was in fact just Upernavik. I have myself seen one of the first settlers, Thomas Jeremiassen, who according to the custom of the old generations went under the nickname of Minnersaq – 'the smallest'. Since he was called Thomas, and I have Thomas as my middle name, he called me 'Atiissakassaga' – 'my namesake'. After I became capable of remembering various things, he told me once when he came on a visit to my parents' house that he was one of the first to move to Søndre Upernavik. I was born in 1895. At that time Minnersaq had stopped hunting, but could move without difficulty at the settlement itself.

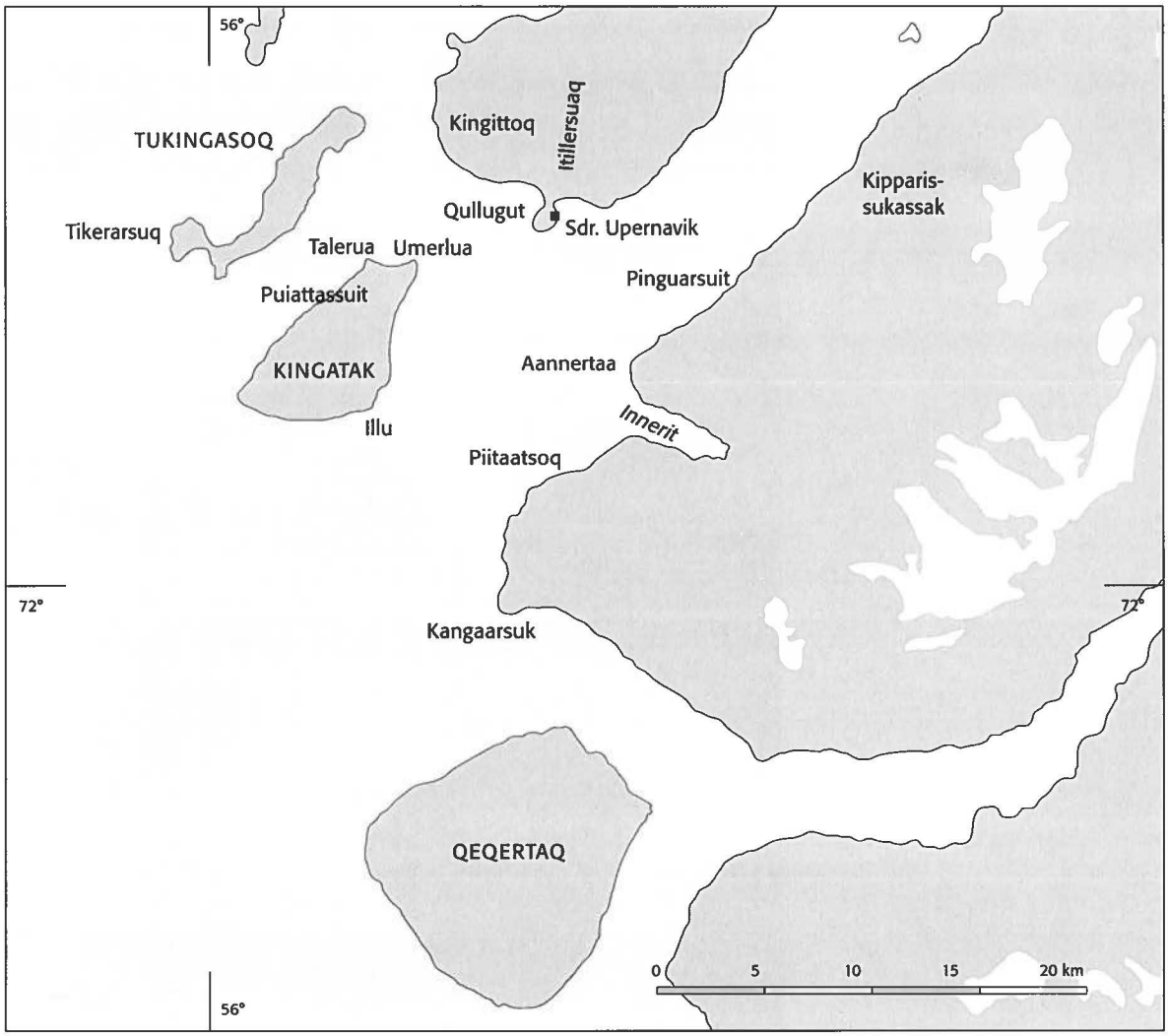


Fig. 39. The area around Søndre Upernavik.

At that time he only had one son, and he didn't have many dogs. Then people were not as well wrapped up as they are today, and the old people stayed more at home in the winter, possibly to keep warmer. They didn't put on outdoor clothes, but mostly stayed indoors, although they were otherwise quite fit. I have seen that many times. Minnersaq had acquired this habit when I saw him.

He had been a great hunter, and I think it was in his best years that a trading manager came to Søndre Upernavik. He has spoken several times about how the hunting conditions hereabouts were at that time, when the first trading manager came. When he later talked about the hunting conditions, which were extremely good, he called the nearest netting place off Kingittoq just north of the houses his 'wallet', and he called the place outside Pinguarsuit his 'savings book'. He himself had one of those. They had very fine sealing then. At that time there had been much more hunting game than today. Now I am the oldest man here, and I can see for myself how much the game stocks have deteriorated. For a long time I have had binoculars, and from up here I look out for seals in our waters. Last summer I saw only two seals with the binoculars. But this spring so many seals were caught here that one recalls the old days.

There were many animals to hunt when people came to live here. At that time no one used a gun for sealing from a kayak, neither a shotgun nor a rifle. One only used a harpoon for the seals from a kayak.

Filemon, my father's – Samson Karlsen's – younger brother, once lent his small muzzle loader to Minnersaq. About this my grandfather, David Karlsen, said to Filemon: "When Minnersaq hunts a seal with your gun, you must have half of the meat, and half of the blubber, and you should sell that to the KGH". At that time the price of one pound of blubber was 4 *øre,* I think. If you sold seal skins in the shop, you got 45 *øre.* No wonder the boy waited expectantly and went to meet Minnersaq when he came from Qullugutaa with a seal in tow. When Minnersaq paddled in, he would say "It was the harpoon's catch," and the boy rarely got his half share.

They say the first trading manager here was called Niels Grim.[73] I have seen one of the settlers here from first trading manager's time, Mathias Mathiassen, a maternal uncle of my father. While he was in his prime, two Danish carpenters came here, and built the trading manager's residence. It is the black-tarred building behind the present house of the trading post

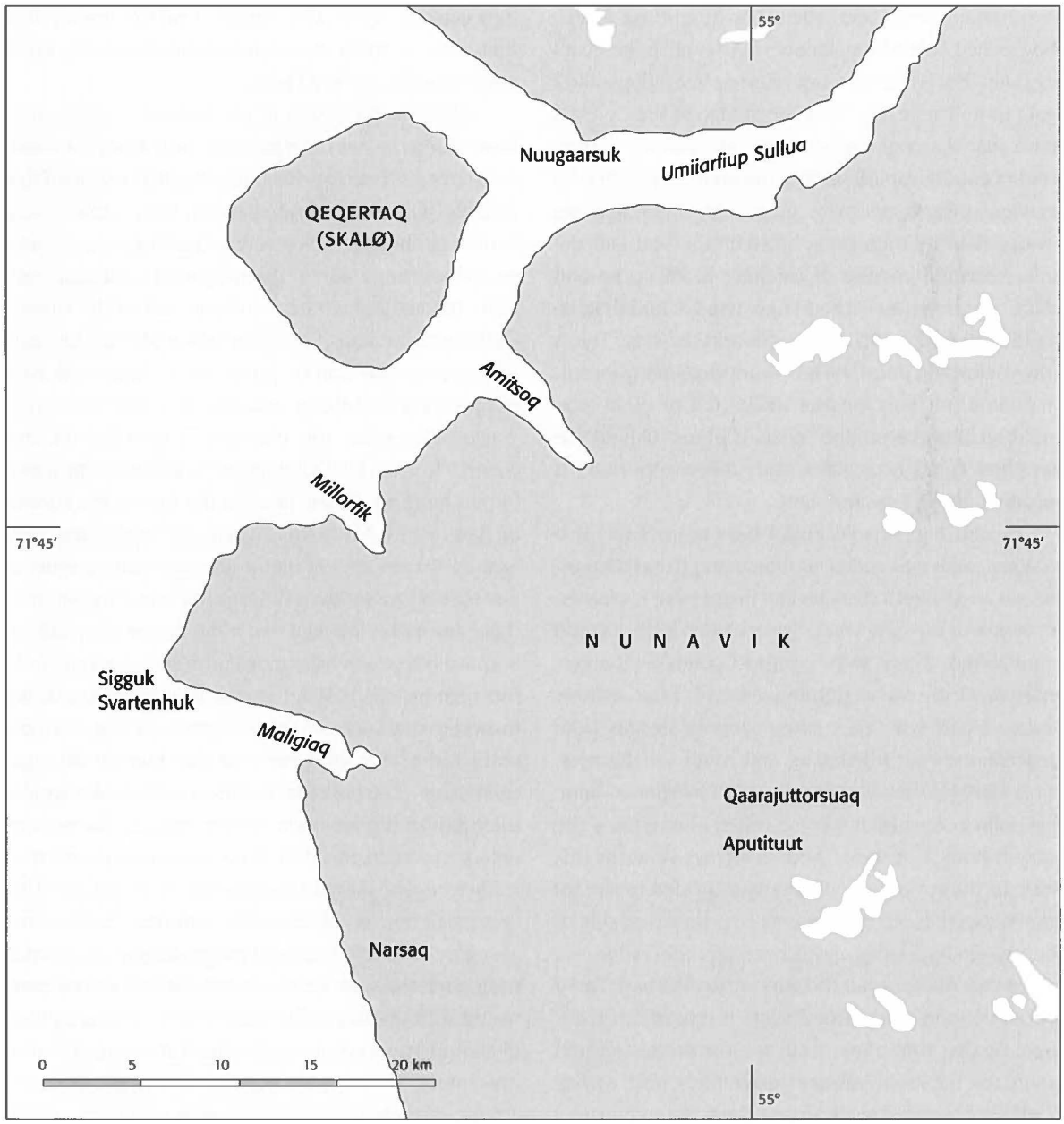


Fig. 40. The area south of Søndre Upernavik.

manager. It is still standing, the first trading manager's house. Now it is used as a warehouse or stores.

For sealing the gun was not used very much. When a settlement was founded at Kangersuatsiaq, the first settlers at Søndre Upernavik still lived there. Then they didn't use nets for hunting either, but when the sea was covered with ice, they used breathing-hole hunting. When the seals came up on the ice, they used *aarneq,* stalking,[74] since you crept towards the seal while you imitated it. You didn't use a gun for sealing. When you saw a flock of *uuttut,* you picked out a seal from among them and got close to it. I myself have also seen basking seals, and when they lifted their heads, they looked around for an enemy. After all, polar bears eat them. But when they saw another 'seal', they didn't react to it. The hunter took advantage of that, picked out a seal that was opposite the one looking at him, tried to cut off its path back to the hole. Then when he crawled towards his prey, he let the other seal get away. When he then came between the seal and the hole, he could be sure of catching it. When he had made sure that the seal hadn't got wind of him first, he could now easily stick his harpoon in the seal. That's how you caught *uuttut*. When there were many *uuttut,* you could not only get the sledge full of them, you could also have a number of seals in tow behind the uprights. That's how many seals there were then. It can still happen now and then.

I heard another old man I have seen, Jonas Kristiansen, who was called Juunarseeraq [from Kangersuatsiaq – RP] tell a story he had heard from his father. It was about the time when Søndre Upernavik was still uninhabited. There were several hunters at Kangersuatsiaq. They went hunting around what is now Søndre Upernavik. They often came in sledges from Qeqertaasaq over Itillersuaq, and could see the present Søndre Upernavik area spread out in front of them. The point at the beach lake[75] is called Aannertaa – 'the current hole' – because there is always water at this time. In the spring an opening was formed in the ice from down there to Nuugaarsuk[76] on the other side of the bay. On both sides of this opening they could see a whole row of *uuttut* all the way across the bay. There are almost always bearded seals there, even in our time. At that time they could see the seals scattered along the banks in clusters, *amisuuttut,* but with a number of bearded seals among them. From up there they drove diagonally down across the slope because it quickly became snow-free over there. They could then leave the sledges and the dogs against a dark background. Then they crawled like seals towards the ice-crack. That's what he said about his father, who was called Tunumioq [today this is used as a name for East Greenlanders – RP]. It is possible that he came around the south of the country from East Greenland[77] – at least they called him Tunumioq. Several times I have heard Juunarseeraq talk like that about his father. There were always so many seals on that stretch that the hunters never got as far as the other side of the Nuugaarsuk point. They always caught as many as they could carry on that stretch. And the upshot was that some of them moved here, and since then until today people have lived here.

When people began to use nets for sealing, they never hung the net from icebergs, only from the coast or at a reef. When they had hung the nets out at all the suitable places at Kangersuatsiaq, they came down here to put nets out. That was at Qullungutaa, the bay on the southern side of the tongue of land that connects the settlement area with the rest of the island. Qullungutaa means 'the place where the ice curves'. This means that cracks appear in it. Bays with two islands at the mouth, for example, get wider and wider cracks. But when the entrance is narrow, the ice curves. To this day Qullungutaa is an excellent place for net hunting. People also put out nets at the corner of Innerit, on Aannertaa, where ice cracks are also formed. I have myself had a net, and caught quite a few seals at Aannertaa. But now no one puts out nets there any more. It is said that it has become so shallow because the waves have moved the stones on the bottom together there. When people from Kangersuatsiaq inspected their nets out there, there were as a rule two seals in the very short net that they put out through three holes. The hole that is closest to the coast would often be on the ice cover on the reef. At the middle hole you attach the trial line, *nusuumisaa,* and this leads from the body of the line up on to the ice. The outermost hole is called *avallia,* and from there a line also goes to attach the net. From that time on, people positioned the shaft on the ice pick so that the ice pick would stick up diagonally in the water, so that a piece of about five inches lay above the water, sometimes a little more. If the piece that lies above the water is close to 15 inches, the slope becomes too much, and it will hit the ice too often, not the hole. When we try to

pass the ice-pick from one hole to the next, we give it a very slight shove. We use forelines, *ammutit,* which we tie to the end of the trial line. When you push the ice pick under the ice this way, one end comes up through the next hole. The piece that comes up is called *puillaa.* Then we hang the foreline up on a *navaranaasaa,* which isn't 'something brittle', but an underwater ledge. [In the southern Upernavik district the ledges on the basalt rock are called *navaranaavi* – RP]. When the owners went there to the *navaranaasaa,* there would usually be more than one seal in the net, and in the end they called the place *Ataaseraarneq Ajortoq* ('the place that is never satisfied with one seal'). The seals apparently always swam there. Now they don't put out nets there any more, since you can't even catch one seal a year.

Maattut used to hunt in the following way, they say. When several hunters came to a breathing-hole, one of them stayed by the breathing-hole, while the rest went on to find other breathing-holes that could be used by the same seal. When they found the next breathing-hole, another hunter stayed there, while the rest searched on. One of them went as far off as a seal could travel in one go under the water. It is said that the first man could catch a seal shortly after the second man walked on. When the seal surfaced in the hole, the waiting man stuck his harpoon through the thin shell of ice, whose opening is sometimes no bigger than a bottleneck. Underneath this the breathing-hole was bigger. Several times I have joined in breathing-hole hunting on smooth ice. We approached the breathing-holes very cautiously – we had tied mufflers of dog-skin or Icelandic sweaters under our kamik soles. We walked forward such that we took steps when we could hear the seal breathing, for then there was less risk that the seal could hear our footsteps. We walked forward like that, and we made allowances for the wind direction. For when you came from the windward side, there was a risk that the seal would get wind of you and would escape to another breathing-hole. The old people had a special ice-hunting harpoon, the *kapuut tuukkartalik,* and they stuck it through the thin layer of ice from above. The ice was very thin at the opening. The breathing-hole 'grows' upwards in a small cone, because the seal makes the water splash up through the opening. The water then runs down the outside and freezes to ice. The seal works on the cavity from below. You can sometimes hear it scratching the hole bigger, since it apparently also grows inward, so that there isn't much space in the end. When you stick the harpoon through the opening, you keep a firm grip on the other end of the harpoon line. But sometimes you would hit the seal in the head, so the harpoon head penetrated and killed the seal at the first stab. Sometimes you hit it in the neck, and had to keep hold of it with the line. When the seal needed air and had to come up, you tramped with your heel around the breathing-hole, but you had to avoid making a hole through the breathing-hole. When the seal had to come up to the surface in the end, you killed it with the ice pick, which was on the back end of the harpoon shaft. They used the same kind of harpoon head as they use today. It was made of caribou antler or walrus tusk. We don't use narwhal tusk so much, since it's hollow, and the actual tusk material is quite thin. Only the root of the walrus tusk is hollow, and the tusk is excellent material for a harpoon head. But as a material it is more brittle than caribou antler. Caribou antler is a much more solid material. You make a hole through the harpoon head, and through this you pull a piece of rope that you sew to an 'extender' of woven sinews of narwhal or walrus. You use winding stitches to sew it. At the back end of the ice pick (the fore end of the harpoon pole) one had a foreshaft that was stuck into a recess on the harpoon head. At the back end of the head there is a spur, the *pamiaq,* and there will often be two barbs in the middle of the harpoon head, just opposite each other. When you pull the harpoon head backwards, the barbs catch. Some harpoon heads have no barbs, only spurs, *pamiaannallit.* They have a lightly backward-curving spur. When you pull the line backwards, the harpoon head places itself crosswise. Some people think that these harpoon heads without barbs and a single spur were once used for another kind of hunting.

Peep-hunting is something else. We have seen in a book that there are supposed to be two hunters in peep-hunting. They make a hole in the ice, through which they peep down. They bale all the bits of ice out of the hole, then the 'peeper' covers himself with seal skin so that no light gets through. They spread a skin on the ice, and the peeper lies on his stomach on it. The harpoon [here the informant uses the word *alligaq,* which is not used in peep-hunting, but from a kayak. The *alligaq* has in fact long since passed out of use in the area. The peep-hunting harpoon is called

itsuartuut – RP]. They make a small hole beside this, and stick the harpoon through it. The other man holds on to the harpoon shaft and the harpoon head is a little way under the ice. When the peeper sees a seal, he tells the holder. The peeper imitates the cry of the seal and sometimes lifts the edge of the skin cover a little, for now he begins to pretend he is an *uuttoq*. The seal under the ice is thus reassured, and approaches the harpoon head suspecting nothing. When the seal comes opposite the harpoon head, the peeper says "*Kik!*". The other hunter stabs downward at this signal. It is said that it looks as if a little smoke comes out of the seal. It is a little train-oil that is pressed out. The 'stabber' doesn't 'catch' the seal, the peeper does, and they take turns to peep and stab.

In my childhood I saw an old woman called Regine Petersen. It was said that her father went peep-hunting alone, controlling the harpoon with one leg. He was unique. People from Kangersuatsiaq went hunting to Nisserfik. Regine's father stayed there while the others went on. The others went *maanneq* hunting off Søndre Upernavik Island to an ice crack at Tikerarsuaq. While he was alone he caught one seal after another. When the others came back, he was waiting for them with a fully loaded sledge.

Amisuuttut are *uuttut* where several seals have crawled up from the same hole, sometimes five or more seals at the same hole. In a case like that a hunter tries to catch them by making himself known to the seal that lies closest to the hole. He tries to shoot it at the instant it has its head above the hole, so that it will lie in the hole itself. The others then can't get past it, and can easily be caught. After we started using breech-loaders I have several times caught three or four seals at the same hole that way. It is an excellent method.

28 July 1965
Lauritz Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik

Lauritz Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik (66VG3B)

Søndre Upernavik in the old days. House ruins in the surroundings

Once, when Jens Olsen was pastor in Upernavik, I helped a carpenter in Upernavik to dismantle one of the colony houses. We found markings that suggested that the house had lain somewhere else first. When Jens Olsen came, we showed him the marks, and he went off to look at old papers in the parish records. When he came back, he said that the house had been closer to the beach, and was originally a bakery. It had then been moved to its present place, and for a while it was used as a house of detention. The house was at that time [the informant later said that this was in 1948-49 – RP] 128 years old. [There is something wrong with this information, since there was no colony at Upernavik in the period 1814-1826 – RP]. But at the time I unfortunately forgot to ask him when people first built houses in Søndre Upernavik. [According to population lists it was in 1855 – RP].

My grandfather had lived in Kangersuatsiaq, and my father was born in Kangersuatsiaq. So it must have been in the latter half of the nineteenth century that people moved here. My father was born in 1865, and his family came here some time after the first families had moved here. He was still a boy then, but he could remember that they moved. He then lived here for the rest of his life. But my mother had her family in Qeqertarsuaq/Godhavn. She was descended from the second trading manager at the place. The first trading manager was called Napparsisunnguaq.[78] He had many children. I can't remember what his name was, but he was a Dane who had lived farther south in Greenland for many years. So he had learned to speak excellent Greenlandic. He was sent as a trading manager from Qeqertarsuaq. When Napparsisunnguaq moved from here to Upernavik, another Danish trading manager came from Qeqertarsuaq. He was married to a Greenlander. His name was Søren Grim, my mother's grandfather. My mother said that she was the daughter of Abel, Søren Grim's eldest son. I haven't seen him myself. Søren Grim came as a trading manager with his whole flock of children. When the parents died, their descendants stayed here: Abilinnguaq, Suffia, Sakkaaq, Juaanna and Rasmuusi. There were five children. I managed to see the whole flock of brothers and sisters except the oldest, Abilinnguaq, my grandfather. A large part of the population here are their descendants. But as I said I did not ask what year the first trading manager came here. I do regret rather that I didn't ask, since I had the chance to find out.

I learned from your uncle, Jenseeraq,[79] to keep a diary so that by looking in it I could remember various events again. I had many notebooks in which I had

kept the diary. But one winter, when my son was at a sanatorium in Nuuk, and I only had my grandchild in the house, the weather then was so bad that we couldn't get to the shop. When the child began to freeze, we kept warm by burning many of the diaries. But I still have some of them.

Do you know a place that is called Narsaarsuk?

The only thing that resembles that is a place south of Sigguk but north of Qinnivik. It is called Narsaq. They say there's a house-ruin there. I saw it once at the time when I drove sledge mail to Uummannaq and Illorsuit. I don't know when people had lived there; but it may have been the first Greenlanders who came from the north who had lived there, among others. They say that there are several house-ruins around here. When I was a child, old folk said that the built their houses on house-ruins, which they called *illoq-qortoorsuit* – 'the long-houses'. A house-ruin like that had space for three of the newer houses. The first settlers built their houses on something that was raised up a little, so the houses could be cleared of snow more easily. They talked about the size of these old houses, saying that you could prepare whole harpoon shafts for peep-hunting, *itsuarniutit,*[80] and smooth the surface of the shaft by turning it round in the house interior.

I know one of the first people who moved here, Thomas Jeremiassen, who called me Atiissakassaga, because I have Thomas as my middle name. At that time people used a lot of nicknames, and they called him Minnersaq. He told me about their move here from Kangersuatsiaq as the first settlers.

In earlier times, when they sailed from Kangersuatsiaq to go caribou hunting at Umiiarfiup Sullua, Amitsoq and Millorfik – several umiaks together – they used to make a stop at Iterlaa [Qeqertaasap Iterlaa on the western side of the island – RP] at a place just off Norraat, the innermost part of Iterlaa. There they set up camp to procure provisions. The mountain Puiattassuit, which lies close to the beach, was the place where the caribou gave birth to their calves in the spring. Søndre Upernavik is on an island which at that time had caribou stocks. There was also a calving-place. There were so many caribou calves there that they called the place Norraat ('the caribou calves'), a hill at Puiattassuit.

Once Minnersaq went caribou hunting with an umiak, and sailed around Aannertaa. Then he discovered that there were four caribou cows, and a buck as the fifth, on their way towards Qullungutaa, and quite close by. The name Qullungutaa is due to the packing of the ice there. Soundlessly he took the umiak to the beach, and reached it just as the animals were slowly and steadily disappearing behind an overhang. He said to the women and children that they should spread out across the tongue of land. If caribou came towards them, they were to make a noise and run back and forth so that the caribou would run back. He himself followed the caribou in the direction of Qullungutaa, and caught them all.

When I was still a child, I once saw a caribou skull there, with the antlers still on it. Red rock lichen had formed on the antlers. The caribou skull still lies in the same place on the heights on our island.

We call the inner part of Umiiarfiup Sullua Tasiusap Ilua. When we were hunting caribou in there, we came within a few hours to an area where caribou hunters from Ukkusissat in the Uummannaq fjord hunt.

At that time, when caribou were not protected,[81] one went caribou hunting from here in the spring when the sea ice was gone. One just went to the other side of the waters here. The whole country on the other side was caribou territory. One went up on the high plain over there, where it was easiest to get up. After I myself had begun to hunt, I caught several caribou over there across from us.

Now that my brothers, Jens and Niels, have moved south, [I have stopped hunting caribou] and since that time there have been no more people who go caribou hunting from here. I usually say that the last generations can't be bothered going.

Do you know any stories about Norsemen from the area around here?

No, not Norsemen. But they say here that once around the beginning of colonization a 'settlement'[82] was founded that was only inhabited for very few years. My parents showed me the house-ruins – they are still quite clear. They were built with turf and stones. It was said that the uppermost ruin, which was quite large, was used as a shop and a manager's house.

Do you know stories associated with Piitaatsoq?

Piitaatsoq lies over there on the other side of the sound. They say that a man lived there called Piitaatsoq, and when he died, they called his settlement after him. They say that he talked about his first winter at

the place. They didn't use seal blubber as lamp fuel; but they got caribou tallow to produce oil, and used it for the lamps. So there were many caribou there. They did not have to put out the lamps a single time. There is a house-ruin at Piitaatsoq, and they say that it is Piitaatsoq's house.

There had been incredibly many caribou. When I became aware of things, my father liked to go caribou hunting, and often caught caribou. He spent the summer caribou hunting, and only interrupted this with short sealing trips. He went on several caribou hunting trips south in his umiak. He only stopped when he came home before the ice cover. Then he caught seal in the meantime. After the ice cover he hung his nets out, and then went looking for caribou. Sometimes he went out to inspect his nets, and we didn't think he had anything else in his mind but that; but towards evening he could come home with three caribou.

This house belonged to a relative on my mother's side, an old man called Benjamin Grim, a descendant of this Nipisaaq (Søren Grim), who came from Qeqertarsuaq. When Benjamin died, and there were no buyers for his house, the colonial manager Egede,[83] Gert Egede's son, who was manager in Upernavik, said that he thought that I should buy it, if I could. At that time I had stopped being an active hunter, since my eyes had been so bad that I had difficulty hitting anything with the gun, and I helped the carpenters with various things. When he discovered that I only had two unmarried daughters, he spoke to me along with Suku [the commercial superintendent Lund Drosvad at Kangersuatsiaq – RP], and said: "If you winter in Upernavik and help the carpenters, you can pay for it all at once." It turned out in fact to be a very cheap house. And since both my daughters and I had work, we could already pay for the house in the early autumn. For a long time now I have been on the list of those who were supposed to go to the old people's home; but such a long time has passed that I have grandchildren, and I don't want to go to the old people's home [in Upernavik] any more. From here there is no one who has gone to the old people's home; but from Kangersuatsiaq and the northern district several have gone.

30 July 1966

Laurits Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik

Lauritz Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik (66 VG4B-3)

Sukasik[84] etc.

[Although the introductory sentence it true enough in itself, the informant's own inference is doubtful as regards shaman qualities. It belongs to another story – about grandparents as protectors – some examples of which are known from Upernavik Municipality – RP].

One hears from earlier generations that there were some *angakkoqs*[85] whose things must not be touched by other people. Sukasik hunted at Eqaluit and had winter provisions there. The distance from Umiiarfiup Sullua to Eqaluit is quite short. Sukasik travelled out here with his family from Eqaluit, and brought his dried meat reserves, but left his cache there.

After he had come out here, people came overland from Umiiarfiup Sullua to Eqaluit. They discovered his meat cache, and got the urge to taste it. They began to take the stones from the cache, when one of the men said: "Look there!"

They discovered a hood on an *amaat* that was flensing the ground and was going around them, since it moved widdershins. As the old Greenlanders did, one of them said: *"Piaarserniannginarput, aapanniarippununa."* [The informant – and others – regarded this as old-fashioned ordinary Greenlandic. But it was spirit language – often called shaman language, and it means "We will not harm him, we just want a taste" – RP]

After these words the hood vanished. It turned out that Sukasik had his grandmother as an 'amulet'. His grandmother was perhaps an *ilisiitsoq* – a witch. [This association between an amulet and witchcraft has no basis either – RP].

They fetched something from the cache now and then. Once when Sukasik and a companion went from Eqaluit to Taseraarsuit, which is on the other side of a pointed peak – quite close to Eqaluit – they discovered a caribou cow without a calf, a barren cow. There are also bitches that don't have pups even after mating. And it presumably also happens with other animals. They saw this caribou cow without a calf, and began to sneak up on it; but suddenly it flew up with its long legs hanging under it. It went down the valley at Taseraarsuit, and disappeared in the direction of Kip-

parissukassak. What Sukasik is supposed to have said about that, I have unfortunately forgotten. They talked about it in my childhood.

They went on from there to go caribou hunting; but they saw no caribou, only a lot of tracks. Then they went from Eqaluit to here, and afterwards went caribou hunting in other places. Sukasik grew very old, and in the end his sons did not dare let him drive a sledge alone.

Sukasik had extraordinarily good pulling dogs. Now that he was getting on in years, his sons thought that it was too dangerous for him to travel on a sledge. They took his dogs from him. But now he began to hunt on foot – he also had his nets at the mouth of the waters between Kingatak and Tukingasoq. He went all the way out there on foot. He couldn't stand sitting at home, and when his sons went off hunting he went off on foot to put out his nets. He carried his gun on a cord. He had a gun of the kind people had before, and which I managed to see, a muzzle loader with a percussion cap. I haven't seen its predecessor, a flintlock. He went north around Umerlua, where there is now a navigation mark put there by Gabel [Jørgensen, from the Navy]. When he reached so far that he could see Umerlua against the light, he noticed a number of puffs of 'frost smoke', and he immediately realized that it had to be the breath of a polar bear. He began to keep an eye on the place, and right away a polar bear came over the edge. It was on its way north, because it had seen one or more dog-sledges driving south of Kingatak. Sukasik found an ice-floe that had come out on the sea because of ice-packing. He lay on his stomach behind it.

The polar bear went directly towards him, and when Sukasi thought that the polar bear would soon be within range, it reared up to its full height. Sukasik quickly sat up; but now the polar bear ran fast out towards the ice-covered sea. Sukasik began to get annoyed, but said to himself: "Just let me try all the same!" He tightened the cords along the bottom of his trousers – at that time the bottom of the trousers was at the back of the knees. He started to run after it and began to catch up on it. What must he have been like when he was still young? When he overtook it he got on the right-hand side of it, and barked at it like a dog to see how it would react. Now the polar bear ran at him, and he ran away from it. When he discovered he could outrun it he first teased it in the same way from both sides, still barking at it like a dog. When he thought the game had now gone on long enough he put a bullet in it as it ran and he killed it.

He took the skin off it, cut up the meat and laid it in a heap. He tied a rope to the skin and went home towing the skin behind him. When he had come home, and the sons came home, he sent them for the meat.

July 1965

Lauritz Karlsen, Søndre Upernavik

Isak Mathiesen, Tasiusaq (66VG1A-B)

Hunting conditions at Tasiusaq

I have been a kayak hunter, but I also hunted on ice. This year the ice went away unusually late.

At the time when I began to go hunting, there could be an abundance of game in the spring. Now it can sometimes be difficult for the hunters, not least because big motor boats sail back and forth across the hunting grounds.

When the *uuttoq* hunting ends because the ice gets bad, one continues with kayak hunting just outside here. For over there (the point at Noorliit)[86] the ice goes away first, so that open water appears across to Innattaat [the south west point of Tasiusaq Island – RP].

I myself experienced the time with lots of animals to hunt. There were some people who caught a lot. The actual species of animals hunted are still the same: ringed seal, young harp seal and adult harp seal, hooded seal, beluga and narwhal. Now we only rarely see a narwhal around here. Before there were very good narwhal stocks, especially in the spring and in the autumn. Now they don't come here much. But beluga come here in the spring.

I have myself caught some narwhal, and my son has also caught a few. That was some years ago. Last year and the previous year he didn't get anything.

Now the narwhal only comes in the autumn. For a long time we hadn't seen them. But migrating beluga come in the autumn. Even earlier many narwhal came in the autumn. But now narwhal are on the whole rare – even at places where there was an abundance of them before, they come very rarely now.

I used to spend the autumn in the north at Iterlassuaq,[87] where I waited for the ice cover. There were so many animals to hunt that I doubt that my son and

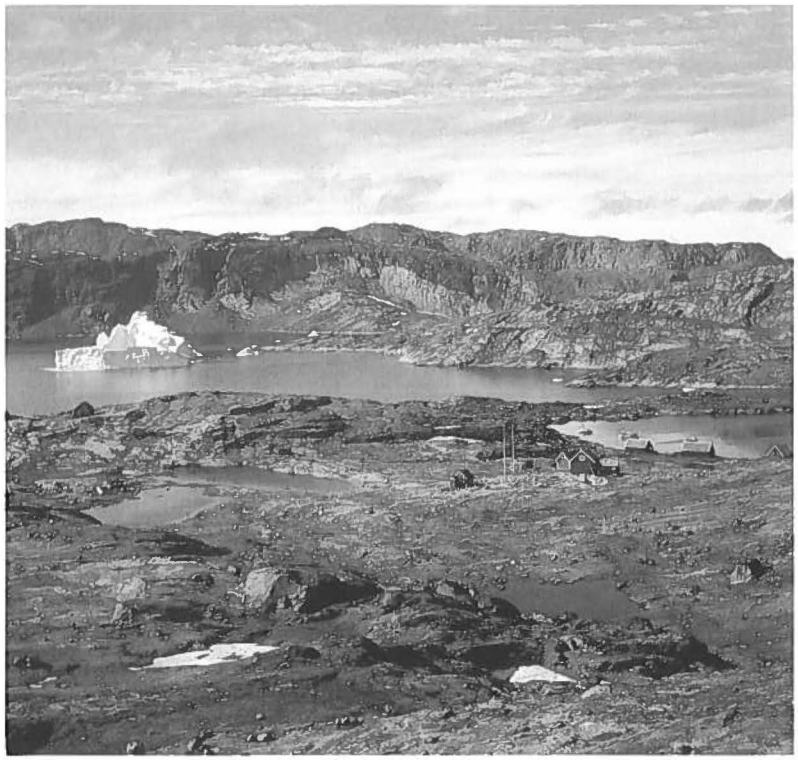


Fig. 41. The village of Tasiusaq, 1966. (Photo Ida Nicolaisen).

his contemporaries would get very much sleep if they were to experience a time with so many animals to hunt, especially narwhal. When you came out of the house in the evening after darkness had fallen, you could hear the echo from the narwhals sounding on the mountain behind the house. I hunted from there all through the time when you could catch narwhal. That was before my son became a hunter. But when I left the place, it was all over with the narwhal stocks there. We caught narwhal with a harpoon, but also with nets. The whale net was a sea net[88] that was put out from the beach. Sea nets looked after themselves, since they were held up by floats. It happened sometimes that there was no catch when you went out in the evening, and the next morning you could find the net with two animals in it.

The *uuttut* have also begun to decline; but the actual hunting method hasn't changed.

Net hunting for ringed seal and beluga was also something that used to be done. People also hunted the seals at the breathing-holes. For breathing-hole hunting we only used the rifle as a tool. We went towards the breathing-hole, while the seal was breathing, and when it then dived under the water down to the depths, we went forward to the breathing-hole. That was smooth-ice hunting. In recent years people have begun to catch seals with *nipparneq*,[89] that is breathing-hole hunting on snow-covered ice.

Itsuarniarneq (peep-hunting) is said to be another method, which has to be done by two men; but I haven't seen this method used. It is said that to do it one had a very long harpoon shaft, and the peeper is said to have covered his head with skin so that the light couldn't get in. The second man, who had to stab the seal, stood up. When it was caught, the seal belonged to the peeper, not the stabber. The harpoon head for peep-hunting was not like the harpoon head for kayak use. The foreshaft was attached to the harpoon line.[90] The foreshaft was in a recess on the pole. It was not attached to the harpoon head. The line was attached to the harpoon head, and the foreshaft was attached to the line.

Walrus are caught now and then, but rarely. This spring two walruses were caught. But here people don't hunt so many walruses from the ice. They mainly hunt them from a kayak in open water. Normally you shoot the animal before you harpoon it; but those who know their stuff prefer to harpoon it rather than shoot it first. The hunters are very different. Some are a little afraid of the animals they hunt. Others are willing to

attack any animal. In earlier days people sold walrus hide; but now it is cut into pieces.

Now they don't make ropes of walrus hide, but of bearded seal skin.

In earlier times you always had skis with you on a sledge journey, keeping them in a skin case. You could use them when you got out on bad ice, or when you had to sneak up on a seal during the *uuttoq* hunting.

In earlier times there were very few people who could manage a kayak roll, and hardly anyone can manage it here today; but in the surrounding area there are many who can do that trick.

The kayak is used in some months. The duration of the kayak season depends on when the ice breaks up, and when the ice cover comes back. We have sometimes had open water in May, and sometimes the ice comes at the beginning of December.

Bird-catching also has some importance here. Guillemots and eider ducks are the most important. In the late summer the eider duck is caught, but at this time (in July) the eider catch is quite poor. The bird dart is not used by the young people. In former times the bladder dart was used; but when I myself grew up, I didn't see anyone who used that kind of tool.

Here there are some kayak men who hang the shooting screen on the line rack. But others have another shooting screen in front on the prow.

We also use a lattice of twine as *ikaarutit*[91] on the

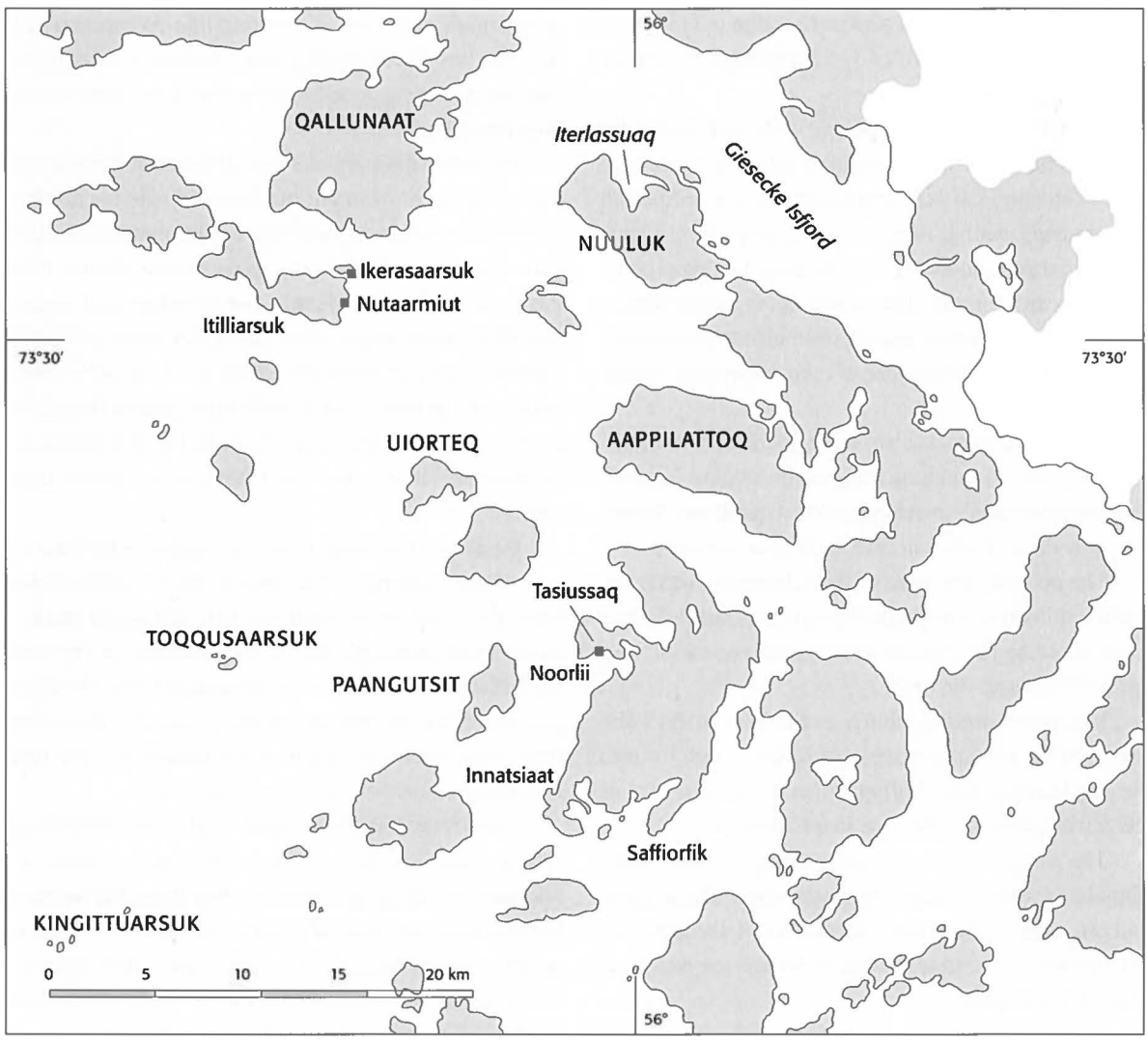


Fig. 42. Giesecke Isfjord and Aappilattoq.

line rack. But some have one of wood. The lattice was also used in the old days.

Akit on the sledge were also used in the old days. Those who want to take the kayak along on the sledge support it with *akit* on the sledge. This is a very useful device, especially on uneven ice.

Those who drive out to the sea have dog teams of different sizes. Some only have five dogs, others have over ten. The number of the various hunters' dogs varies a lot.

Here it is rare to hunt polar bears. In former times polar bears were caught in larger numbers. Now one doesn't see it very often, although people drive a good deal on a sledge. But they don't directly try to go bear hunting. In earlier days the polar bear hunters went out on the sea ice outside the archipelago. Now in fact you can't find polar bears here; but some are caught north of Tasiusaq. It was also at the time when not so many people lived north of Tasiusaq that they caught polar bears.

There used to be some people who went from here to Eqalugaarsuit to go caribou hunting. But now they've stopped caribou hunting from here, although they go char-fishing. Now it's a long time since I have heard of anyone shooting caribou from Eqalugaarsuit.

There are no real char stocks north of Eqalugaarsuit.[92] They say there is a stock of small char in Kangerlussuaq.[93] [He showed a size of *c.* 40 cm with his hands – RP].

Greenland shark is also caught here, but here people don't fish so much as long as the sealing is good. Now you can't earn anything on the Greenland shark's liver any more. Only seal skin earns you money.

The poorest time here as far as hunting goes is the middle of winter, especially when net hunting doesn't yield anything. But when net hunting goes well, you get fresh seals all the time.

You drive overland both to the east and to the south. Some of the passages are rather rough for me; but the hunters don't bother much about that sort of thing when they get the urge to go hunting.

The sledge drivers are very careful on rotten ice. They know more or less when and where the ice gets bad, so they avoid these places. When the sun has become so strong that the whole of the ice gets bad, they stop sledging.

You can manage the ice cracks if they aren't too wide. Sometimes you drive straight over them. As you approach the crack you can also pull in the traces [so you can let go when the dogs have to jump over the crack – RP]. But in some cases you float over with sledge and dogs on an ice-floe.

During the seal migration you know which places the seals come up at most frequently, and you home in on these places with the mountains as landmarks. As landmarks we use various places, for example Paangutsit and others. When you ask a hunter who has come home where he has been, he answers with the name of the landmark and says that he has been at that place.

In the winter you use a long line with a slider to fish for ocean catfish and Greenland halibut. In the summer you fish just off the beach. For winter fishing you use various numbers of hooks. In earlier days people used a jig for Greenland halibut, but now they've gone completely over to the long line. When you put the long line out from the coast, you tie it to a stone or the like; but there is no one who has 'first right' to this long line place.

In earlier days anyone was allowed to hang a net out wherever he wanted; but now the rule for netting places off the coast is that a particular man has particular netting places that are respected by others. This has meant that some people, out of respect for someone else's prior right, don't hang out their nets at a suitable place, and when the man with the prior right hangs out his nets, a lot of seals have passed the place in the meantime. When it comes to netting places at icebergs, of course we don't have this kind of first right.

Since ancient times people have gone egg-gathering on the guillemot cliffs. But in recent years limits have also been set to when you can go egg-gathering. In earlier times people used a hooked spear at the bird cliffs to catch birds. Then in the autumn they used the gun when the fledglings left the nests. But in recent years you mustn't use a gun at the bird cliffs – you can only fire it some distance away from there.

The protection of the eider ducks was something people really felt here, because we weren't allowed to take as much as an egg. Now we may shoot the birds;[94] but we may not take the eggs. You could also trap moulting eider ducks inside bays and catch several; but in recent years permission has not been granted to do this. In any case we ourselves haven't done any of this kind of hunting.

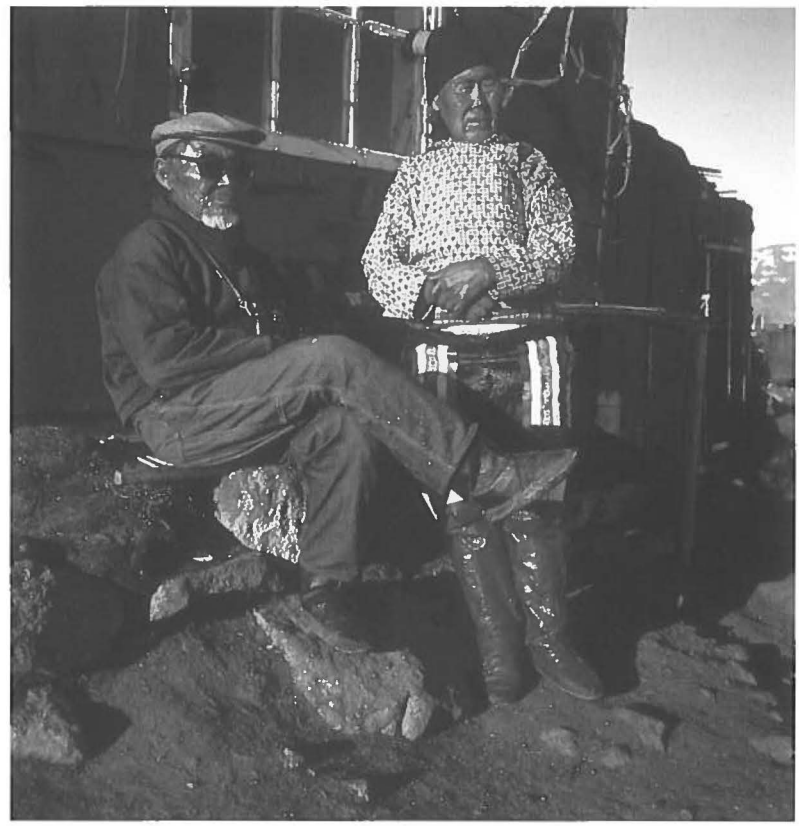


Fig. 43. Martin Nielsen, Marteeraq, and Laurette, Kullorsuaq, 1956. (Photo Jette Bang/Arktisk Institut).

Other seabirds are not as important. It's true there's a puffin colony at Toqqusaarsuk [others mention Kingiituarsuk – RP]; but there are not so many birds there. At this time of the summer the guillemot is a popular bird to catch. The Apparsuit bird cliff lies north of us, a few hours' sailing by motor boat. There you can lower yourself down today and gather eggs. In the old days you didn't use a line, you climbed up from below.

7 July 1966

Isak Mathiesen, Tasiusaq

Martin Nielsen, Marteeraq, Kullorsuaq. (Avangnâmioq 1957)

The author was born in 1883, shortly after his father became a catechist at Ikerasaarsuk, north of the settlement Tasiusaq. Ikerasaarsuk was the northernmost settlement in West Greenland. His father, who was also called Martin, was the catechist there – a kind of assistant pastor and teacher. He died when Marteeraq was 15 years old. As a young man Marteeraq himself went to catechist school, and after that he worked at several of the northernmost settlements in the area. In 1944 he retired as a catechist at Ikermiut, and moved north to Kullorsuaq, where he died in 1963.

This story is not from a tape-recording, but was translated from Greenlandic in its entirety by myself from the periodical Avangnâmioq. Martin Nielsen, who was the main informant for Hans Lynge's (1955) collection of folklore from Upernavik Municipality, later published some of his information himself; but there are also other articles that cannot be found elsewhere. He wrote in Greenlandic. His first articles were published in 1947, and the last in 1958. This is one of them. The page numbers in brackets are the original ones.

The northward population moves in the northern Upernavik district

(p. 206): I do not know when the settlement Tasiusaq was founded. But I grew up and lived north of it.

According to what I have heard, it was rare that there were Greenlandic trading managers at Tasiusaq. Usually they were Danish trading managers. Shortly before I was born, a Danish trading manager died at

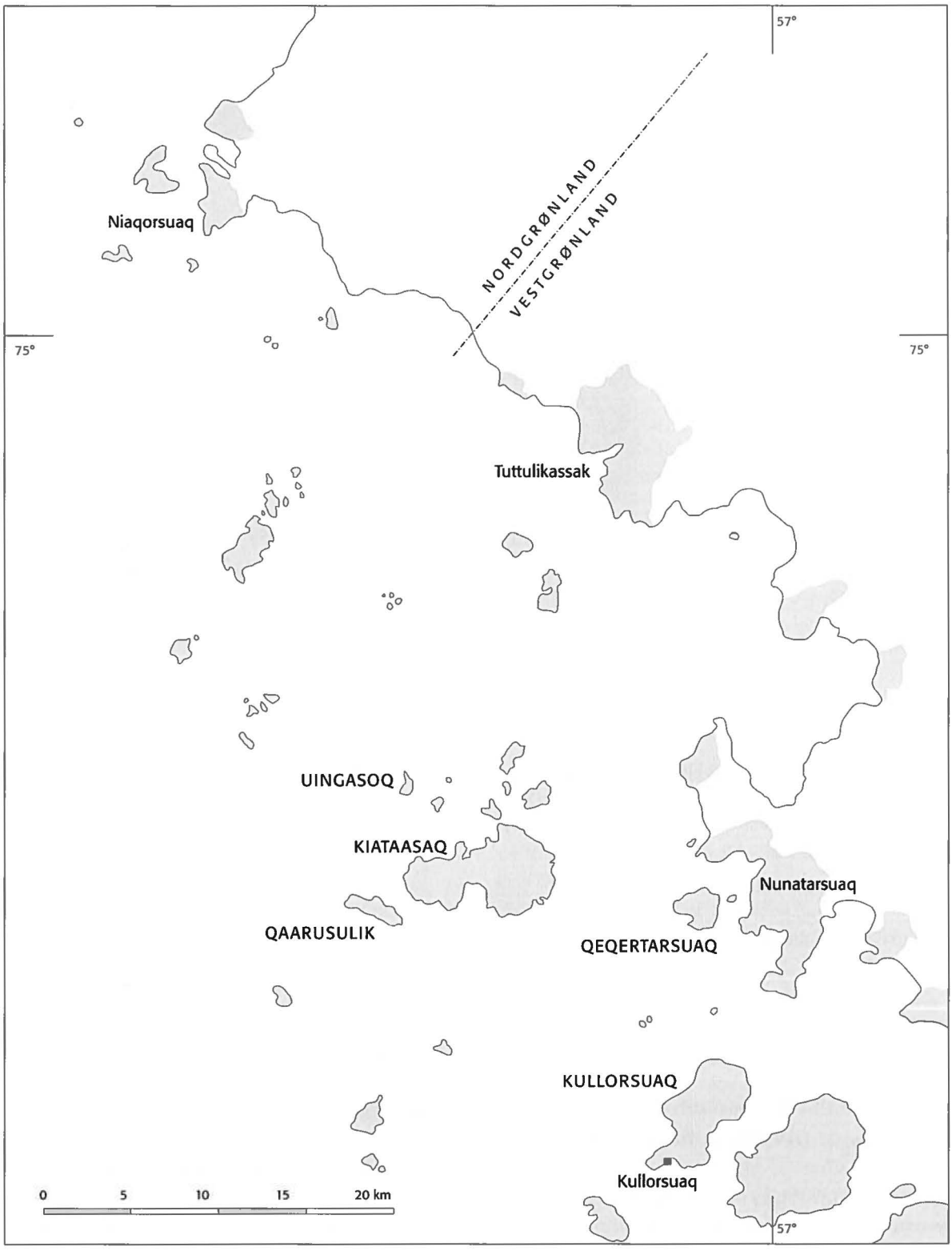


Fig. 44. Kullorsuaq and southern Melville Bay.

the place. He was sucked out by a huge wave in the autumn while he was trying to tie up his beluga net on the beach. He was married to a Greenlander. He was never found, although there were people on the beach to help him.

At that time my parents lived at Upernavik. The colonial administrator sent a boat up to Tasiusaq to fetch the dead man's widow, and got her to move to Upernavik. My father was in that boat, and he talked several times about the trip. He told me that they did not feel safe during the trip, because they had to resort to a rowing-boat so late in the autumn. For at that time you could not get to inhabited places on that stretch, since Tussaaq and Innaarsuit were not yet settled.

In 1883 my father was sent north of Tasiusaq to work as a catechist. Shortly before that people had moved north of Tasiusaq.

That year, when my parents moved up there, I was born in the autumn at Ikerasaarsuk. The following year we moved to Itilliarsuk. It was the 4th of October. There my father was catechist until he died in 1898. Very few people lived around us. The area north of us was only visited by people on hunting trips, especially in the summer. While I was a child an Icelandic trading manager in Tasiusaq went to Upernavik alone. He got on to eddy-cut ice and perished. He was not found. He was a bachelor. After him came a number of Danish trading managers. The last of them was married to a mixed Greenlandic-Danish woman. He was the trading manager at Tasiusaq until he retired because of his age. His name was Søren Nielsen, but he was called Nappaja 'the cooper'. After him no more Danish trading managers came to the place. Now it is trained Greenlanders who work as trading post managers.

Shortly before my parents moved north, the first people moved north of Tasiusaq to the following settlements: Saattoq, Ikerasaarsuk and Itilliarsuk.

Those who moved out from these settlements often went egg-gathering by kayak in the summer, when the ice had gone, to the bird cliffs at Appaalissiorfik.

[Once] when these kayaks reached there, they came across a British ship that had been wrecked a little north of the bird cliffs. The crew were unloading the cargo on the island of Killeq.[95] Since the island lay close to the bird cliffs, the kayaks discovered the shipwrecked sailors and paddled over to them. They discovered that the ship was partly on land, and people were unloading the cargo on to the island while they were draining the ship of the water that was flowing in. The kayak men did not think any more about eggs and began to help. They were given some British food as payment.

The captain promised these men a reward afterwards, and they helped as much as they could. When they had finished bringing things ashore and had placed them in two large heaps with canvas over them, the captain and mate said to these helpers that they could now take whatever they could find of value on the ship, because they were now themselves abandoning the ship. So they took the various things – especially food – ashore and put them in a heap so they could share them out among themselves afterwards. In between they had to bale the water out of the ship. It was only when they were quite exhausted and had gathered enough together that they stopped. When they stopped, the crew started up the engines and set fire to the ship. When the ship had been turned towards the south, the moorings were cut. The ship sailed south blazing away, and when it came off the outermost bird cliffs, the masts began to fall. They said it was a mighty sight, as it was lit intentionally [not by accident – RP]. When the ship got close to Kiffaku [actually Kippaku][96] it sank to the depths.

The things that were brought ashore were fetched by a boat from Upernavik. But the kayak men came home to their now anxious families with a real abundance of British food and many other good things. They said that they still had some barrels at Killeq. Some of the barrels of food had not been opened yet. Since others too were able to barter with the whalers, they were able, although they lived at a place without a shop, to taste European things during their trips.

When I was growing up at Itilliarsuk I had a lot of pleasure listening to the children at the place talking about this meeting with whalers, and about how, in the winter after the ice cover, they fetched various things from the island. At that time, so far north, it was difficult to get suitable containers, so some people had used (p. 207) harpoon bladders to bring syrup home in. It was very funny to hear them spin yarns about how the children licked syrup from the hunting bladders. The grown-ups too had a lot of benefit from the things they got from the shipwrecked whalers.

During my childhood people moved north of the settlements that were already farther north than

Tasiusaq. This was to Kuuk and Mernoq. After the brothers Ittuersuaq and Makkorsuaq [the so-called Simon Bearhunter and his brother Markus – RP] had moved up there from Aappi,[97] several others moved to the area up there. These were mainly their relatives, so the population grew slowly. Around 1905 the two brothers moved north again, Ittuersuaq to Itussaalik and Makkorsuaq to Kittorsaq. Finally there were others who, on the initiative of Abel Danielsen, moved north of them again in the summer of 1908. That summer I came as a catechist to Sarfaq a little north of Kuuk. All the settlements mentioned belonged at that time to the area of the trading post Tasiusaq. That summer a new chapel was started up in Tasiusaq, and on that occasion when I counted the umiaks present, there were 17. Naturally the new school chapel was crowded, and several people had to stand outside. At that time all good hunters had an umiak, because they used it for hunting trips in the summer and for shopping trips to Tasiusaq. When I got married, I got myself an umiak too. At that time the catechists were also hunters on the side, because the pay was so low, especially for us with a catechist school education.

At that time people used umiaks to go on hunting trip after hunting trip, and then sailed to sell the blubber in Tasiusaq. It was only when the autumn was coming on that they stopped making these trips. The summer journeys I was able to experience were very pleasant and memorable, especially the journeys in good weather, and at an unexpected place you could meet another umiak, and sometimes several umiaks. We were not content to just ask for news, we entertained ourselves by playing ball games. The old people watched nearby while they told one another stories. It was only late in the evening or well into the night that we would decide to go on with the journey.

When I moved to Appaalissiorfik,[98] I came to a place that was visited by egg-gatherers, looking for both guillemot and eider duck eggs. But it was also a place where people who lived farther north called – sometimes several umiaks at once – and spent the night there. They would be on their way south and on the way back north. Sometimes they spent several days there. It has happened that some of the women have given birth to children at the place. Only when the mother could travel again would the travellers continue their journey. I have heard from the time before I moved to the place that it happened to a group of travellers that a woman gave birth to her child aboard the umiak before they could cross a fjord. It was a place a little north of Tasiusaq. But they all reached their destination safely. I can remember that once, while we ourselves lived at Appaalissiorfik, an umiak came – my brother-in-law's – to shop at Tasiusaq: since the opportunity arose, my wife went with them, partly to help paddle, [partly to shop]. They came back some days late, so we had got rather anxious. When they came back here, they said that my brother-in-law's wife had a child on the way, and that this was the reason for the delay. It turned out that just as they started on the journey back, they met a group of kayaks a little north of Tasiusaq. The kayak men said that they were longing for Danish things. When they came ashore, they made coffee, and then when the kayaks continued south, they began to take things aboard the umiak. But when the pregnant woman went into labour, they hurriedly set up the tent. Very soon the woman had a child. Since they now had a new member, they pulled the umiak up on land, and although it was good weather, they stayed for three days at the place. Only after that did they continue north, and called in with us to bring my wife home.

Around 1920 people began to talk about a trading post north of Tasiusaq, and people sailed north in the summer to take a look at the situation. Finally Nuussuaq – Kraulshavn – was founded in 1923. A trading post manager's house was built, as well as a shop. At that time there were lots of seals on the southern side of Nuussuaq. Umiaks came there to hunt seals. Nuussuaq is much exposed to the north wind, so it was clear from the start that the place would pose quite a few problems for the residents, not least because of unfortunate ice conditions in the autumn. But the place had apparently been chosen because of good harbour conditions, although the settlement Itussaalik seemed in several respects to be better suited.

Some hunters from Kuuk also moved there. Only a few hunters settled at the place, and from Itussaalik Karl Simonsen moved and built a house. Once the ice is solid, Nuussuaq offers excellent sealing; but the ice conditions in the autumn cause the residents many difficulties. The first people to move to the place left it again after just a few years.

Some of these hunters in Nussuaq already knew about the rich hunting conditions north of Kiatassuaq – Holm Island. When they began to fear the difficult

time in the autumn at Nuussuaq, they moved north in the spring in dog-sledges. Gabriel Olsen, Karl Simonsen and Søren Lynge from Kuuk moved to Qaarusulik in 1926.[99] After settlement thus began north of Kiatassuaq the population grew, partly because some people moved up there, partly through the birth of children. But some people moved south again, either so that the children could go to school, or (p. 208) because they missed the shop goods. But most of them stayed up north. After some people moved from Qaarusulik to Kullorsuaq in 1928, I was able to follow how things went. Now I will say a little about that, but also about what I heard in my childhood about the area around Kullorsuaq.

In my childhood I heard many times that far north there was a place that was called Toornaarsuup Kullorsua [translation of *Djævelens Tommelfinger,* in turn a translation of *The Devil's Thumb* – RP]. At that time I heard that people gave Kiatassuaq the name Nuussuaq Ungalleq, 'Farther Nuussuaq', that is 'the big point'. And the peninsula where Kraulshavn lies was called Nuussuaq Tulleq, 'Nearer Nuussuaq'. The people who lived farthest north, for example Ittuersuaq and Makkorsuaq, did not know anything about a sound behind Kiatassuaq, although they often came close to Kullorsuaq on their dog-sledges. It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that the Danes learned where Kullorsuaq was.

I have heard that the first Scandinavian from the south who saw Kullorsuaq was a Swede [cf. Laursen 1965: 'Bjørlingmysteriet', *Grønland:* 354-368 – RP].

While I was a child, an expedition man came from Upernavik to the north. He had a catechist, Gabriel Løvstrøm, with him as an interpreter and helmsman. When they came to the place that was then called Nuussuaq Ungalleq, the Swede and the catechist went up on the mountain with a theodolite to look at the landscape to the north. When they came up, they discovered Kullorsuaq from the best angle. Although the mountain was high, they continued up, and when they could see the landscape to the north, the famous mountain appeared to them.

Later I heard the catechist talk about this experience. There was so little doubt about what they saw that this Scandinavian shouted "the Devil's Thumb!" as loud as he could, and was extremely happy to be the first Scandinavian to see it. To get as much as possible out of the trip, they followed the mountain ridge east. By doing so they saw that a sound separated Kiatassuaq from the mainland. At that time it was not common for Danish researchers to come to those parts. Shortly before that time, between 1880 and 1890, two Danish explorers wintered in Upernavik. The Inuit called one of them Qilertaasalik 'the one with the tufted cap' [this was Lieutenant Ryder – RP]. These two marines sailed in the summer with an umiak and a rowing-boat. They called in at Itilliarsuk while I lived there as a child. That was probably around 1886. On the island from which they turned back they built a cairn, and after that we called the island Inussulissuaq, 'the big cairn island'. It is said that the two men who were the first to come so far north mistakenly thought that Paattorfik, a high mountain on the south side of Illulik, was 'The Big Thumb' [cf. Ryder. The whole report is in *M.o.G* Col. 8:203-270. Itilliarsuk is mentioned on p. 253].

It is said that British whalers called the mountain 'The Devil's Thumb' because there were often shipwrecks while they could see this mountain. In my childhood even the northernmost Greenlanders knew only a little about the place, and we knew most of it from the Scottish whalers. At the beginning of the twentieth century the catechist Gabriel Løvstrøm, who had travelled with the Swedish polar explorer, was transferred to Tussaaq.

Once, while I was at Tussaaq, I heard a conversation between the catechist and the two brothers, Ittuersuaq and Makkorsuaq, who then lived farthest north of all. But they were visiting Tussaaq. While the brothers talked about their experiences, the catechist asked them whether they drove around or through the sound along the inside of Nuussuaq Ungalleq when they went bear hunting to the area around Kullorsuaq. The two brothers answered that they always drove around the outside because it was a large point without any sound behind it. Then the catechist said that when he was on the journey with the Swede he crossed the mountain ridge at Nuussuaq, and discovered that there was a sound behind it and that it was not a point, but an island. Then the brothers said that they could now drive north themselves when the ice cover was early, since because they did not know about the sound, they stopped their journeys north when there was water out at the point.

I saw Kullorsuaq for the first time in 1918 when I went with the bear hunters who drove from Appaalis-

siorfik to the areas around Tuttulissuaq – Cape Seddon. We drove around the outside of Kiatassuaq, and saw Kullorsuaq from the western edge. It was the finest spring weather with clear air. I held up my right thumb in front of me, and the similarity was striking. When you see the mountain for the first time in fair weather, you cannot immediately take your eyes off it – a rare sight, a mountain that seems to draw your gaze in towards it. There are many old ruins from our ancestors on Kullorsuaq and the islands around there – Kiatassuaq and an island in the sound behind it also have ruins of dwellings where our ancestors had lived.

This Nuussuaq Ungalleq, as it was called then, we began to call Kiatassuaq, a place-name that the *inughuit* used. It was at the time when the *inughuit* began to drive down to Tasiusaq. We also took over other place-names, such as Kiataasaq and Qaarusulik – Bloch Island – from the *inughuit*. On the islands outside Kullorsuaq you find many house-ruins, and it is said that there are ten house-ruins on Qaarusulik. Some of them do not look so terribly old, and there you find things from the days of the whalers.

I have heard a story about Kallaq, who was the only one left after a fatal pandemic. She was in her house on the island of Qeqertaq, and Qupanu, who lived east of Tasiusaq, fetched her to his house, and got her into his household. That was probably at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[100] Kallaq is said to have died at a great age close to Upernavik, only after she had been baptized. Kallaq's house-ruin at Qeqertaq seems to have been contemporary with the more recent house-ruins on Qaarusulik. It is possible that it was at that time when Kallaq was left alone at Qeqertaq that this illness had totally depopulated the northern area, that is the whole area from the surroundings of Tasiusaq up to Qaarusulik, so that for a while it was not inhabited at all by Greenlanders. But the house-ruins at Kullorsuaq are very old. At Ikermiut, where I also lived, there were both more recent house-ruins and very old ones, just like the house-ruins at Kullorsuaq.

I have mentioned that I had difficulty keeping my eyes off Kullorsuaq when I saw it for the first time. On the same trip we came over Qaarusulik. It was spring in the latter half of May, and there were many snow-free patches. On the point at what was later the Qaarusulik settlement I saw kayak stands of stone, which lay almost unharmed, and were still very clear. At this time no one lived up there, and no one came in the summer. The kayak stands did not look very old. When I compared them with the other antiquities I had seen it seemed to me that they must be about contemporary with Kallaq's house-ruin.

In 1928 three hunters moved from Qaarusulik to Kullorsuaq and built houses there. They were Karl Simonsen, Ludvig Eliassen and Vittus Jensen. They lived in two houses, and after that Kullorsuaq was inhabited continuously, and the population grew steadily. While I lived at Ikermiut, there was no catechist at Kullorsuaq. I went up there often, in the winter too, because I was in charge of announcing the banns when the pastor's visit was coming up. I also took the confirmation candidates down to Ikermiut, and gave them confirmation instruction.

In the first period after Kullorsuaq and Qaarusulik had been settled, there was so much game in the surroundings, and no reason for scarcity, if they had not had to spend several days in the spring and summer on a trip down to the shop in Nuussuaq. Especially in the summer, they wasted precious time, because they went down there for essential shop goods, and that could take many days. When I lived at Ikermiut, and was a member of the municipal board, I suggested that something should be done about the shortage of shop goods up there, although I knew that the authorities, who were not hunters, were against the population moving north. It happened unfortunately, when a depot with goods was built for the difficult autumn period, that against the wishes of the population it was built well within the Kullorsuaq settlement, on another island, a mile [Danish mile, *c.* 7.5 km – RP] from the settlement. It was a very small depot, and its placing was said to be due to good harbour conditions. But since there was no suitable building site except what the depot took up, no one could move there. So it was not really of much benefit in the autumn when the storms increased, and when the ice cover began, and going there was not without its risks. Only after a while was it moved to Kullorsuaq. At the time when we wanted it moved, we encountered some opposition; but when it was done in the end, it was a great relief. At first there were so few goods in it that it was emptied in no time; but in the end they built a proper shop in Kullorsuaq.

When I retired as catechist at Ikermiut,[101] my chil-

dren wanted to move, especially my sons, who were all hunters. Although there were enough animals to hunt around Ikermiut, the sea was a bit too rough. I moved with them in April 1944 in a dog-sledge. I had lived in various places north of Tasiusaq. I spent one winter in Tasiusaq as a replacement for the catechist there, who was on a family visit in Nuuk in 1910-1911. Then I had a chance to visit my sister, (p. 222) who was married and lived at Tussaaq. I went down to Tussaaq with the superintendent[102] in Tasiusaq, who had to go to a meeting in Upernavik. He was then to travel on with the superintendent at Tussaaq in a kayak. That was in September.

It was the time when the municipal boards were to replace the superintendencies, and it was the last meeting of the superintendencies. That winter the municipal board in Tasiusaq and its surroundings began on the 31st of December 1910. When the municipal board began, I was at the meetings to take minutes. When the municipal board got going in Tasiusaq and the surrounding area, the above-mentioned trading manager, Nappaja, attended the meetings, although he was not a member. It was because we knew so little about the work and wanted to learn that he attended as a kind of adviser. He understood everything that was said in Greenlandic.

When the catechist I replaced came back in 1911, I moved north again, and then lived in the settlements Saattoq, Sarfaq and Appaalissiorfik. After living at each of them for some years, I moved in 1924 to Ikermiut, and after living there for 20 years, I came in 1944 to Kullorsuaq.

When we came to Kullorsuaq, the hunting was easier than at Ikermiut, because the hunting weather was better in the summer. But my sons, who were hunters, were used to shop goods, and they used (p. 223) to spend a lot of time on trips to the shop in Nuussuaq, not least when we older people began to miss the good things. But we had no wish to go south, since our last settlement was better for hunting and travelling than all the southern settlements, although there could be a few poor hunting periods, especially around the time of the ice cover. The poorest time was the harsh winter period in February and March; but the sealing did not stop entirely. Seals were caught all the time, although more rarely in that period. So we decided to stay at the place, instead of going back south again. Throughout the good time we never lacked meat, and in the summer we could easily eat a lot of mattak.

In the spring, that is in April when the *uuttut* come up on the ice north of us in Melville Bay, some hunters go north to the even better hunting grounds, for ringed seal and bearded seal hunting, and for polar bear hunting.

Although at this time too there are ringed seals and bearded seals on the ice near Kullorsuaq, some people prefer to drive north to Melville Bay, because there are even more seals there, and because the sledging country up there is supposed to be extremely even. The nights are very cold at that time, though. It could happen that those who drove north from Kullorsuaq and were lucky with the hunting (p. 224) turned back on the third day with the sledge fully loaded. Those who wanted a quick catch thus went north. It is wonderful when they come back with bearded seals and polar bears, even before we expect them home. That is why the good hunters at Kullorsuaq have stopped thinking about moving south. When the attempts to move the population started up for the first time, we tried in our hunting community to get out of this difficulty; we were not happy about it. At that time I was no longer a child. Although I knew that the authorities were trying to guide us to something better, it was still not always good to say yes to everything. This often led to vexation. I also tried to explain it to my fellow settlers. It was clear after all that it would lead to great adaptation difficulties if the hunters were to become fishermen. I have read that although fishing was profitable, it cost immense hard work. And that was hardly so desirable in the hunting settlements that were still good. It happened when people came to Kullorsuaq to agitate for the population concentration that I argued against them on behalf of my new fellow settlers. I knew, as already mentioned, about the authorities' opposition at the time to people moving to Qaarusulik and Kullorsuaq, and I could see for myself what good hunting settlements they actually were. I also thought that it would be a pity if the area were no longer inhabited by hunters.

As arguments for the depopulation they mentioned the navigation dangers, and the wastefulness of the population. I have read exaggerations that could well be called lies, and although there was some truth to the things mentioned, it was a bit too obvious that it

was agitation from some people who wanted a depopulation of this area.

After this agitation there were some of Kullorsuaq's inhabitants among those who moved south. But there were only very few. When it became clear to us that no one would force us, we decided to stay, although we would miss some shop goods. In the good hunting season the hunting families had enough meat, so you could not call Kullorsuaq and Qaarusulik settlements in need. Now that all the settlers at Qaarusulik have moved over to Kullorsuaq,[103] Qaarusulik is only a hunting-place. There are several hunters' huts there, where the hunters from Kullorsuaq go when they think it is suitable.

In the best summer period, in August, the hunters who want to do so go narwhal hunting inside the Kullorsuaq area. It is marvellous in the summer when we can get a taste of narwhal mattak. The hunters could do this right from the time Kullorsuaq was settled. Those who want to hunt seal just go on with that, inasmuch as some hunters go on a trip of several days to an uninhabited place, and they put the meat from the catch in a meat cache, from which they can fetch it in the winter. Now some hunters from Kullorsuaq prefer to catch seal in the summer, because the price of seal skin has risen, and so they leave the narwhal hunting alone. That is what has happened since the shop was built here.

In 1952 several houses were built for the hunters who did not want to move south from Kullorsuaq. That summer three Danish carpenters built 18 houses, including the trading post manager's and the catechist's houses. The next year the chapel was built, as well as a new large shop, about which we were very pleased. It was particularly good for the hunters, who now no longer needed to waste so many days on a shopping trip to Nuussuaq, for this trip was rather unfortunate for the hunting. In that way Kullorsuaq became a settlement with a shop.[104]

Now in the summer of 1956 a radio transmitter was set up. Now that I am an old man, its establishment recalls a lot of thoughts to me. When Kullorsuaq was first settled, it was Karl Simonsen and Ludvig Eliassen who built their houses here first. The site of the two houses was later completely levelled. But this odd thing happened. The Danish carpenters who were to build the shop themselves chose, with no guidance, the site for the building, and they chose precisely Karl Simonsen's old site, so that the middle part of the shop covers the place. When people set up the transmitter aerial for the radio broadcasts on Ludvig Eliassen's site, I thought as an old man that it was a good sign. It is as if they give us hope that for a long time to come Kullorsuaq will be inhabited by Inuit. Now this summer the trading post manager's residence is being enlarged, and they have prepared the site for it, and it is to be built next year.

After a shop has been built in Kullorsuaq, and new houses have been built, there is no longer the same scarcity of clothes, cloth and detergents, and you cannot help noticing considerable progress in the material area, (p. 225) about which an old man can only be happy.

I have also seen the weather conditions up here at the time when the first families moved here, and with the certainty of an eye-witness I can say that the weather then was colder and the autumn more difficult to get through than now. In the first time when I lived up here paraffin became a tough mass in the cold period; it ran out of the spout of the can as thin as string, so it took a lot of time to fill the tanks with paraffin. In the first period when I lived in Kullorsuaq, the ice could hamper the hunting trips, even in good weather in the summer. But that was only for short periods at a time, and as soon as it was gone, you could travel as otherwise. From 1949 on there was a noticeable improvement in the climate – even when the cold is worst in the winter, we do not experience the solidified paraffin any more. From that time on it became easier to travel on the sea in the summer, and the ice does not bother us any more except when there are southern winds for several days. In such weather the ice drifts in at the settled part of Kullorsuaq; but as soon as the wind dies down the ice drifts away again. In calm weather we have no trouble with the ice, even when there is ice north of us.

Our area, especially the northern part, can be strewn with icebergs; but the current does not take the biggest icebergs south around Kullorsuaq. They come out north of us, and disappear around us. The northern course is the route for *maniitsut.* They are greatly feared, because despite their huge size they completely fall apart when they first begin to calve, and they come out in Baffin Bay, north of us. The sounds at Kullorsuaq and the neighbouring islands are a little too shallow for them.

(p. 230) If one were to say anything about the fish stocks at Kullorsuaq and Qaarusulik, it must be that there are lots of Greenland halibut and ocean catfish. There are also lots of Greenland sharks. But people only fish at the time when the sealing is poor, and they mainly do it for the sake of the dogs. In the spring when you begin to catch *uuttut*, you stop fishing for halibut and catfish. Only a very few people hunt Greenland shark, and they collect a little shark meat for the dogs. Since there are a lot of catfish close to the houses in Kullorsuaq, it would be a good source of income for the population if trading in them began.

The summer of 1955 felt rather colder than the preceding summers, and the weather was more unsettled than before. On the 20th of July there was snow at Kiatassuaq across from Kullorsuaq. And it came so far down that it almost reached the water's edge. For the rest of the summer it did not really thaw until the snow came in earnest. The summer of 1956 was also a little chilly; but the following winters were not colder than the preceding ones, since the paraffin did not freeze to a viscous mass. The next summer felt milder again.

The spring of 1957 was the warmest I have seen, since the ice melted just with the heat of the sun [without being broken up by storms and carried away with the current – RP]. On the 25th of June there was open water, and the whole ice foot disappeared, and as I said this was from the heat of the sun alone. Last summer sledges were driving out and in at this time with no difficulty. In addition last autumn [1956 – RP] the weather was rather good. This year the snow melted quickly and the ground was already dry at the beginning of June. Since we have had sunny weather for a very long time, the warmth can really be felt. On the north side of our island some glaciers melted completely, something that has never happened before.

After mentioning various things I will finally mention the conditions up here at the time when no one lived up here, but people only came on hunting trips.

In my childhood hunters never came up here from the small settlements north of Tasiusaq on a hunting trip, except when they were hunting polar bear. Since it was only polar bear hunters that came, there was no one who hunted ringed seals or bearded seals around here. No one came sealing up here at all, although the immense abundance of hunting animals was known; but the distance frightened people off. It is not so strange that the stories about the abundance of hunting animals later attracted the hunters.

According to what one heard, there were then lots of polar bears around Kullorsuaq. At that time it was mainly *inughuit* who hunted in Melville Bay when the ice was good. The polar bears gave birth to their cubs around Kullorsuaq, and stayed south when we who lived towards the south were kept up there by open water, while the *inughuit* were still in Melville Bay. One of the signs that the *inughuit* were in Melville Bay was that we got many place-names all the way down to Kiatassuaq from the *inughuit*.

The polar bear is only beneficial to the hunters who hunt polar bears. But the meat tastes so good that in fact you cannot keep stores of it and for the same reason it is not much good either as dog food. Although polar bear skin is warm and profitable, polar bear is not so beneficial for people and dogs as the seals. For that reason the decline in the numbers of polar bear is no great loss for the hunters who do not hunt polar bear.

August 1957
Martin Nielsen, Kullorsuaq

Martin Nielsen, Kullorsuaq (Avangnâmioq 1955, pp. 199ff)

The madman at Taartoq[105]

(p. 199) One of the settlements that was inhabited earlier was Taartoq, which is across from Qaamaneq, where Inussuk's houses lay. A narrow sound separated Taartoq from Inussuk.

At that time, when the colony was founded, there was one house at each of the two settlements. These were as usual communal houses, where several hunters' families lived.

The autumn when our story begins, people caught a lot of narwhal at Taartoq. One day Amitsualaaq came back to Taartoq from hunting with a female narwhal and its young in tow. His daughter had died some time before this. When the flensing was over, and they were inside the house again, he saw that someone had taken sinews from the young narwhal into the house. When Amitsualaaq saw that, he said: "How cute they are – a pity that there isn't a little girl to play with them." It turned out that his mind was full of sorrow, and he said this because he could not say what he

would otherwise have said. [Name tabu after a death – RP].

(p. 200) When they woke up the next morning, Amitsualaaq had lost his wits.

During his derangement he gained great strength, and other hunters had to wrestle with him, to calm him down. They had to give up hunting since they had to keep a watch on Amitsualaaq.[106]

In the end all the men had difficulty managing him. When he got into this state, there was however one man he could not take on. When Amitsualaaq began to use his strength, and the others could not manage him, the man came forward to help the others, and as soon as he touched Amitsualaaq, the latter said "Ouch!", and collapsed feebly. The man was Ujarattalik, 'the one with the stone', a man with a stone as an amulet. Although the madman had not heard that this particular man had such an amulet, he felt pain from just a touch from him. It is said that this Ujarattalik had got his amulet from a stone that stood as a post in a house-ruin just inside Upernavik, on the other side of the pass at Umiarsuaqarfik. It is said that our ancestors fetched amulets from this stone.[107]

When Amitsualaaq used his strength so that the other men had difficulty managing him, Ujarattalik touched him, and Amitsualaaq collapsed, looked at the man, followed him with his eyes up and down, then said: "When I look at that man there he looks like a standing stone."

When Amitsualaaq had not eaten anything for several days, and his wife became anxious about him, her housemates said to her that she should try to get him to eat something. He was given a piece of mattak. He chewed and chewed on it, but in the end he swallowed it; when he was given more, he chewed on it a few times, swallowed it, and asked for more. They discovered that his eating became perceptibly more intense. When they gave him more, he now swallowed it without first chewing it.[108] Now that they thought he had eaten enough, they gave him a piece of mattak from Ujarattalik's catch without saying anything about it. He tried to swallow it without chewing it first. When he did not succeed, he chewed it for a long time and tried repeatedly to swallow it, and when he could not he threw it on the floor and asked for no more.

His discharges of energy grew more violent, and the others had more and more trouble keeping him calm. One day he began to say that the men would not be able to manage him any more that evening, and that he would eat them all when they could not manage him any more. He therefore thought it best that they immediately buried him alive, as he was disgusted by the thought of eating people. He said to the others that they should quote his words if the Danes in Upernavik were to reproach them for burying him alive; that is, that he himself had asked to be buried alive out of disgust over having to eat people. The others believed him and prepared to bury him alive.

It is said that the heathens used a hunting line as lashing around the shroud when they had to bury men. In addition they did not take the body out of the house entrance, but out of the window, and then up on the house, and then carried him down over the back wall.

When Amitsualaq was prepared for burial, he relaxed, and the others dressed him and wrapped him up, and lashed him in with his hunting line (perhaps not properly because of the discomfort – MN). (p. 201) When they had finished the work, they took him out of the window, and when they laid him on the house roof the lashings fell off him in rings. They carried him in and lashed him again, while the man himself hurried them up, claiming that they would not be able to manage him towards the morning.

This time they did it properly. They laid him in the grave with the skin of the caribou his son had caught as an underlay. He had himself put it aside for that purpose. They closed the grave at the top with flat stones, and heaped other stones above to weigh them down. When they had laid rather a lot of stones, Amitsualaaq began to lift the stones from below, and they heard him say: "I can still manage the heap of stones, because my underlay skin presses me upwards. Lay even more stones on the grave!" They heaped more stones above him. In the end the grave was so high that the top stones began to fall off.

At this point one of the helpers went down to the beach, without saying anything about what he was going to do. He is said to have been *samunga sammisoq*, 'downward-oriented' [*sedna*? – RP], that is, a person who has a particular beach plant as an amulet. From the beach he carried a small piece of clear ice up and when he came to the others, he very carefully laid the piece of ice at the top of the stone heap, still without saying anything. When he laid it on, they heard Amitsualaaq say: "Now I can't lift them any more."

After the burial people wanted to move over to Qaamaneq on the other side of the sound, for people lived there. Unfortunately there was thin ice on the sound, and there was a big iceberg there. There was no solid ice, and there was open water in midstream. They had to get the umiak into the water.

When they had got the umiak in the water, they wanted to try to get over to it across the thin ice. They often got into clusters, and when somebody shouted "The ice is giving way" they discovered that they were running over a depression in the ice,[109] and they were so busy with it that no one had time to be afraid of the iceberg; but in the end they all got on board, and paddled over to the other side, and were installed in the house on Qaamaneq.

When the people at Qaamaneq came out of the house that evening after darkness had fallen, they heard the buried man talk, chat and burble. They heard him lure the dogs to him in order to give them a fright. The barking of the dogs was mixed with his shouts. There was nothing to do but act as if nothing was happening.

When Amitsualaaq had been buried, one of the refugees at Qaamaneq came over to him every day to see how it was going. It was an old man called Taka. When it got light in the morning, he paddled over there in a kayak, went ashore below the house at Taartoq, pulled the kayak up a little and then went quietly up to the grave. When he stopped at the grave, the other one in the grave asked: "Who are you? Are you Taka?". Without answering Taka turned around, went into the abandoned house, and under the window bench he took the tail fins and front flippers of a narwhal, and when he had eaten his fill, he would take a zither bartered from the whalers and play on it. When he was finished he went down to the kayak, paddled back and said that Amitsualaaq was still alive.

[The next few pages recount how the young people, including Tuutingaaq, entertained themselves during their forced stay at Qaamaneq – RP]

(p. 202) The man who was buried alive only died some time afterwards. He froze to death during a storm. When the storm died down Taka came to the grave, and although he was standing by the grave, he did not hear a sound from it. Now that he knew that Amitsualaaq had frozen to death, he went back without having been in the house first. He was very sorry for the dead man's widow and children. He went and said that now the man was dead.

It was only when he talked about the man's death that his wife and children began to cry.

When Amitsualaq died, the Taartoq settlers went back before the ice cover came in earnest. After the winter came the spring and summer, but the freshwater ice that 'Samunga sammisoq' laid on the grave was unable to melt but in fact became a little larger when the autumn snow came. It is said that this piece of ice grew, and within a few years it covered the whole place around the grave, so that no one knew any more where the grave was.

I have told the story of Amitsualaaq's death exactly as my parents used to tell it, and they told it according to what Tuutingaaq, who had himself seen the events, had said.

Martin Nielsen, Kullorsuaq

Adam Petersen, Naajaat (66VG2A1)

Hunting conditions at Naajaat The informant was born in Qassersuaq in 1913. His father, Jørgen Petersen, moved from Qassersuaq to Naajaat, and it is his family that lives at the place.

Now the animals hunted are rather late for the season. That's because of the ice conditions. [The ice fjords had discharged a lot of ice a few days before, and there was still much ice on the water – RP]. Now in fact we only hunt the ringed seal, because the adult and young harp seal haven't come in recent years. Now it's said that it should be possible to see harp seals. Some kayak men saw harp seal flocks yesterday, but in recent years they haven't come. Last year a few harp seals were caught. This time only Abraham had caught a harp seal, and my son two young harp seals. During kayak hunting you use a saloon rifle and a shotgun. Now it is rare that one harpoons a seal that has not been shot with a gun, especially young, incautious ringed seals. But the wind conditions play a role, if you are to harpoon a seal before it has been shot.

Towards the end of July the seals are usually in these waters for some time. At the beginning of August they are less frequent, but they come back towards the end of August. Then they are in the area until the ice

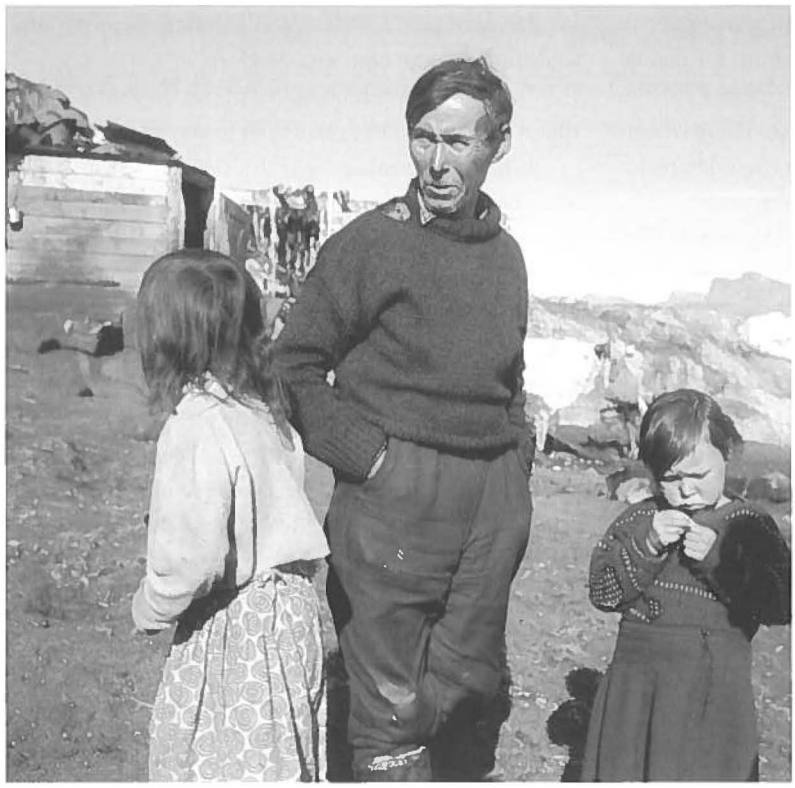


Fig. 45. Adam Petersen, Naajaat, 1966. (Photo Ida Nicolaisen).

cover comes. Hooded seals usually come in the last days of July; but the hooded seal season is short, only a month's time.

The beluga also appear in the area, but also only for a short season. It is very rare that beluga are caught from Naajaat.

In the winter, after the ice cover, you mainly use a net for sealing. But when the conditions are suitable, one can on rare occasions go sealing with a gun. For a short season breathing-hole hunting is done on smooth ice; but that is only for a short period. We don't yet know anything about breathing-hole hunting on snow-covered ice; but I've heard that it is done from the nearby settlements. At these places some people have learned to do breathing-hole hunting by having a sledge drive around the place. They have also started using this method in Tasiusaq. The use of this method is spreading from the north. During that kind of sledging you make a noise. As far as I know our northern neighbours learned it from the *inughuit*.

I myself go breathing-hole hunting on smooth ice, for example during a thaw.

Here some of the hunters have fixed netting places, but not all, and one doesn't use fixed netting places at icebergs. The fixed netting places can be inherited, and they are passed on within the family. We don't use sea nets here. I did try a sea net last year, but didn't catch anything.

In *uuttoq* hunting the catch is fine. You can safely say that. *Uuttoq* hunting is done exclusively with a shooting screen and gun. Now I only hunt seal rarely. My eyes are not so good any more. During the *uuttoq* hunting you stop the sledge when you're about 1 km away from the seal. Some hunters have trouble with their dogs during *uuttoq* hunting, because the dogs try to follow the man. But the well trained dogs only come when the man has fired his gun.

Our hunting area in the summer is in the waters north of us. The ice fjord[110] isn't far from here. You can get there in 'only a part of one day', and many people go to the ice fjord, especially to hunt ringed seal.

When we drive in to shop at Tasiusaq when the early ice cover comes, we drive overland, over Tasiusap Itillersua. We often drive with about ten dogs. The distance between the sledge runners varies, even within the settlement.

For dog food we don't only use seal meat, but also fish, especially Greenland halibut. The fish stocks here

are not bad. In previous years there were quite a few ocean catfish; but now there are not so many any more. Now you have to be lucky to find the catfish, because they move. Otherwise there are a few Greenland sharks[111] in the summertime; but there are not so many in the winter. In December people don't hunt so many Greenland sharks any more, and they only come back again in April. The long line is used in all kinds of fishing, even from the ice. For the Greenland halibut we use the slider to put out the long line; but the slider is not used in the Greenland shark fishing.

I have never come across *sassat* [whales trapped in ice-holes – RP]. But I have seen people from Upernavik who have had *sassat*. Around here there have not yet been any *sassat*.

Here the ice-mirror is used a lot in ice-hunting, and is very useful.

People prefer skins of adult male ringed seals for harpoon bladders, because they are wider than all other skins. But people out on the outer part of the archipelago prefer harp seal skin. Here harpoon bladders are made of 'water skin',[112] and are not curved. I don't know why people prefer uncurved harpoon bladders.[113] Here you use wooden feet to fix the harpoon bladder. The harpoon bladder is dried while inflated, and when it is quite dry, you put train-oil in it. For the drying process you first use bindings that keep the bladder in a particular shape, but afterwards you remove the bindings. The actual bladder is turned inside out so that the fleshy side is outermost. When the bladder is quite dry, you dry the bindings yet again and the bladder skin is put in seawater and rubbed. Then it is given new bindings [around holes made by the wounds, and wooden knobs are attached, packed in a piece of bladder skin or gut-casing] to prevent the air leaking out. For without this packing the air seeps out, even if the binding is done properly. Only after such treatment can you have an airtight harpoon bladder. To grease the inside you can use various forms of train-oil – 'self-running' train oil [i.e. oil that runs from the blubber through the natural process of decomposition], boiled train-oil or even lamp oil. You can also use beluga train-oil. With the inside greasing the harpoon bladder is made airtight, and needs no outside greasing.[114]

The harpoon line is greased to make it more flexible, both before use and also after you have started using it, as it can get stiff when it is dry. When it is greased, it doesn't draw so much water either. But on the other hand if you have greased the line too much it can be unfortunate when you have to pull a heavy seal in. Your hand slips all the time on the line. Here the length of the harpoon line is as a rule seven fathoms, but you can also have a line of nine fathoms. The line is made of bearded seal skin. In recent years people here have also begun to use lines of hooded seal skin. They are also excellent as whips. Harp seal skin is also excellent for ropes and straps and they are stronger than ropes of hooded seal skin.

For kayak skins we use harp seal skins and the skins of adult ringed seals. We usually use five skins for a kayak. Some people may use the same kayak covering for several years; but others re-cover the kayak after one year. My son re-covers his kayak very often, also because he paddles a lot in ice-filled waters. Kayak skin with white paint on it is not exposed so much to wear. White paint is also used as a kind of camouflage for the seals. You can use a white fur overall during kayak hunting; but you don't need that so much in a fjord area like this. It can also be a disadvantage to be too white, for example when it is completely calm with a dark 'land shadow'.

I have seen kayaks here that are somewhat curved – is that because of the thin ice?

No. It is probably to get up more speed. The kayaks that can slide up on the thin ice don't have much trouble getting past thin ice. But the kayaks that can't get up on the thin ice get into difficulties and are difficult to use in thin ice. The kayaks that can get up on the thin ice break it from above, and can get up rather a lot of speed without much difficulty. Here can we use the kayak until some time into November.

In the spring and in the autumn we can catch seals from the ice-edge. But otherwise we are far from the ice-edge. But we hunt at ice-holes instead. We don't hunt seals from ice-floes. To lure the seals we scratch on the ice, but we don't scream like a seal.

Often several people hunt a large seal together. But walrus are only rarely caught. Beluga are not caught in the spring. They don't come so far in.

I am 53 years old now (1966). I have caught three walruses in my life.

12 July 1966

Adam Petersen, Naajaat

Ole Svendsen, Kangersuatsiaq (65VG9B)

Ole Svendsen, who was in his late sixties in 1965, is from Kangersuatsiaq. He is an excellent hunter, and a highly respected man at the settlement and throughout Upernavik Municipality. He has held several official posts – for example he was a member of the Greenland Provincial Council and in 1965 was a member of the Upernavik Municipal Council. The conversation, which had been pre-arranged, was disturbed somewhat by the fact that administrative officials came from Nuuk, and we did not have the necessary quiet.

This place was a winter settlement in the old times. But I've heard that Sioraq, just on the other side of the sound here, was settled first.

In recent years the seal stocks have been good; at one time the stocks were not so good. But in recent years, especially the winter before last, there were many seals, and last winter too one couldn't complain either about stocks.

People hunt bearded seals. But this spring not very many bearded seals were caught because the ice conditions were bad. You couldn't get out to the places where the bearded seals were.

In the summer people still use the kayak for sealing, at least as long as there is open water. Recently, though, the canvas boats have been used increasingly.[115] One can also see that the canvas boat isn't much inferior to the kayak when you want to hunt seal. It is only recently that canvas boats have been used around here, and we discovered then how excellent they are for use in hunting. Now they are used more and more here, both as travelling boats and for hunting.

One can still find kayaks that are fully equipped, and there are still hunters who harpoon a seal without first shooting it, if the conditions are favourable. Here the kayak's shooting screen is hung on the front of the kayak rack.[116] And one also has another shooting screen on the prow of the kayak. In ice-filled waters, and when the ground is white, it gets more difficult for the seals to notice the hunter.

After the ice cover comes you first use nets for sealing; but you also hunt seal at ice-holes. Since the ice may well drift away outside Kangersuatsiaq, you can also sometimes use the kayak in the winter.

Im my childhood I saw people go hunting when there was smooth ice; but in recent years there has not been smooth ice around here.

Maanneq[117] is no longer done around here.

Uuttoq hunting is done from March in the spring when the sun begins to give heat, and the seals have begun to crawl up on the ice. You continue with it as long as there is ice.

In former times people hunted beluga and narwhal from a kayak, but not in the last few years. But this spring a beluga was caught from a canvas boat. The belugas now come very late in the autumn, and in the spring they now on the whole swim past this area. If the ice broke up earlier, they would probably come in to us again. In the past, when barrage nets were used, people caught many beluga. It was also in that period that the beluga came in the greatest numbers.[118] There was lots of meat on it, and it was exciting when one tried to chase the animals into the sound here – although one didn't always get the whole flock in, a considerable number always came. That was in the sound just below the houses.

In the summer there are many birds in the surroundings. The eider ducks fly around the islands in July, and when you go to the guillemot places, you can shoot large numbers not far from here.

There are also bird cliffs for fulmar north of us. The guillemots breed on part of the mountain, while the fulmars stay in the top part. In the winter there are no guillemots here; but I believe eider ducks gather at the open ice-holes.

I have participated many times in the ringing of birds. At first I thought that the eider duck stocks in the fjords stuck to the same fjords; but oddly enough every year you can ring hundreds of eider ducks in the summer in the same fjord without finding any already ringed, except for one or two here and there. In particular some years ago when we trapped eider ducks for ringing at Qeqertaasaq on the way over towards Søndre Upernavik, there were several hundred we ringed. We barred their way with a motor boat, but there were so many eider ducks that – when I paddled out in a kayak – I couldn't hear the chugging of the motor boat for the screaming of the eider ducks. So we don't think up here either that there is any imminent danger that the eider ducks will be wiped out. There are more and more of them.

Around here there are no Greenland halibut stocks; but people fish for Greenland shark, catfish

and fjord cod.[119] In former times *ammassat* (capelin) came up to spawn fairly close to the settlement. I have heard this year that *ammassat* were caught again in the fjord. The size of the individual fish has not changed. At least we can't see it.

There are char stocks, and we ourselves went in for char fishing at Eqalugaarsuit – Laksefjorden ('the Char Fjord'), which is nine Danish miles (1 Danish mile = 7½ km) from here. But the fjord ice broke up early this year, so that we came too late for the descending char. In August they come up again. Char barrages *(saputit)* are not known up here. In former times hooked spears were used in the river. But now people mainly use nets.

In earlier times people also went caribou hunting from Eqalugaarsuit.

I have heard of the Piitaatsoq family, who are said to have lived on caribou in both summer and winter.

Piitaatsoq is across from Søndre Upernavik, quite close.

North of us there is a place we call Ammaqqua. It is a fjord entrance, and inside it the eider ducks lay eggs on some islands. These are the common eiders; but sometimes you see king eiders.

The wooden houses in Kangersuatsiaq are quite new. The square houses too were built recently; but they are not good. People even say that they are leaky.

People dried meat in the old days. Meat that had been cut in slices was laid out in the sun so it could dry quickly. If there was a small piece,[120] it would be rinsed in water before it was laid out to dry. If it was a larger piece you didn't rinse it. In former times I have seen pieces that were dried after they had been boiled first. That was seal meat. But I haven't seen that done in recent years. Maybe people have become more 'Danish'.

Here people had storage places with stone walls on Sioraq. They are built up so that they are airy and dry inside.

Here *ammassat* are first and foremost dried on crowberry heather. The *ammassat* that are dried on rocks are not turned but loosened from the rock when they are almost dry. Those on the heather are not touched because they lie in an airy open place. I have seen *ammassat* dried on rocks being turned by hand. You kept an eye on the weather, especially for signs of rain, because dried *ammassat* are not worth much after they have got wet.[121] Once people used to pack *ammassat* in skin bags. They were then put in a dry place; but today people use canvas sacks. Among other fish, fjord cod and char are dried.

In earlier days char were often smoked; but now people don't smoke them so much because you can brush them with stuff you can buy nowadays.[122]

In earlier days I have seen people boil mussels and eat them; but in recent years I haven't seen them eaten. I haven't seen beach plants being eaten either.

I've seen crowberry and bog whortleberry eaten, as well as lousewort. But people also preserve leaves of rose bay in blubber and eat them with dried meat. Dried meat is not preserved in blubber, but is eaten with bits of blubber.

In former times, after egg-gathering, people put a quantity of eggs in meat caches without further treatment, and they let them lie there until it froze in the winter.

Our ancestors spent several days caribou hunting. They went ashore behind the fjords. Some of them went in there with their whole family. In other cases it was just a group of hunters; but they also spent several days on it. In recent years, though, there have not been so many caribou, and it is no longer profitable to go caribou hunting. In my childhood people who sailed in to Eqalugaarsuit, and went caribou hunting in there, often met people from Illorsuit in Uummannaq Municipality. This went on up to my youth. It is said to have been customary to exchange gifts on such occasions. In earlier days people also went caribou hunting with a dog-sledge in the winter; but when they introduced the protection laws for the caribou, the winter hunting of caribou stopped. In my childhood I saw the caribou hunters come home in the autumn with a lot of caribou, and the winter hunting probably also produced similarly good results.

It is said that there are hunting shelters in the caribou area.

Here people mainly make harpoon bladders from 'water skin'. But in my childhood we also saw harpoon bladders of 'light' skin. But the dark harpoon bladders were the most common. Here neither the light nor the dark harpoon bladders are curved.

According to what I've heard, our ancestors also caught seals by peep-hunting: there was a peeper, and another man to stab with the harpoon. The peeper looked down, and when he said *"Keq!"*, the harpoon was stuck into the seal.

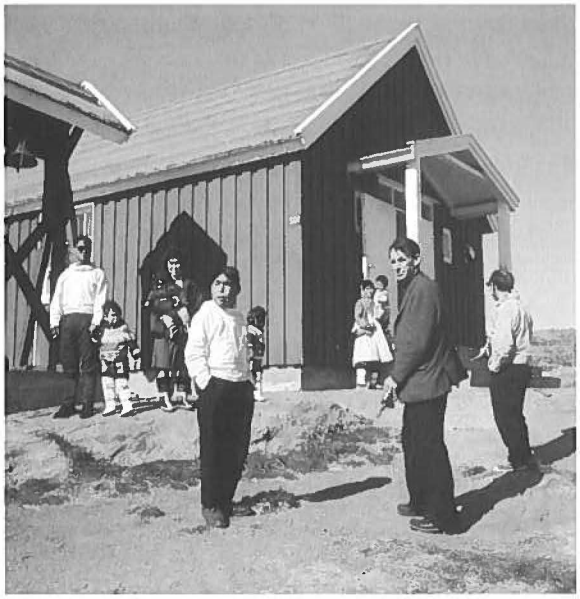


Fig. 46. Sunday in Tasiusaq, 1966. (Photo Ida Nicolaisen).

We don't use an ice-hunting harpoon, because we only use the rifle to hunt on the ice. We use a hauling rope as a tow-rope.

In smooth-ice hunting the hunter uses a *tuteriaq* – either a dog skin that he spreads on the ice, or something else that he ties around his feet.

The ice scoop, *ilaat,* is used a lot in net hunting – putting out the net would be very difficult without the ice scoop.

The hunter who watches at a breathing-hole we call *nippartoq.*

We don't do any sealing from ice-floes here. I've heard that the method is used at Upernavik. But earlier, when the beluga came more often, I have seen some people hunt them from ice-floes. People also hunted beluga from the ice-edge, and some of them have also been caught in ice-holes.

Walrus hunting has not been uncommon here. But this year no walrus were caught from here.

In the summer the adult harp seal is our most important game. In recent years there have only been a few hooded seals. Around here there are no places where speckled (common) seals gather. Polar bear is rarely caught. I have seen two polar bears in the summer. One was caught fairly close to the houses. The other one was caught from motor boats inside our fjord. A *tikeraaq,* that is a polar bear caught close to the settlement, is considered everyone's catch. The price of the skin is shared out among all those who take part in the hunt.

Paaruliaq, a seal that crawls on the ice without being able to find water, is caught now and then. It belongs to the man who kills it.[123]

8 July 1965

Ole Svendsen. Kangersuatsiaq

Extracts from diary entries in 1966

Tasiusaq, 6th July 1966

From a conversation with Valdemar Bidstrup.

The informant, Valdemar Bidstrup, is about 25-30 years old, and comes from Tasiusaq. He is a hunter, and has a kayak and dog-sledge. Sometimes he sails with his paternal uncle's motor boat.

He mentioned that people from here hang sealing nets both from the beach and at the icebergs. A man has a right to certain netting places, and this right is inherited by his closest relatives. As a rule one of the sons takes it over while the father is still alive. If you hang your net at another man's netting place, you risk that the man who has the right to the place takes the catch as his own.

There are a number of current eddies in the surroundings, and this means that there are quite a few sledge routes over land. But when the ice is safe, you can drive as you wish. Valdemar Bidstrup has tried driving on the ice outside the archipelago, but so far without meeting any polar bears. This was towards the spring.

In the spring there is a short migration of narwhal. In 1966 none were caught. Beluga are more common. In the same spring two narwhal were caught – Valdemar Bidstrup caught one of them.

Søndre Upernavik, 30th July 1966

Timotheus Karlsen, David Karlsen and Knud Karlsen.

Knud Karlsen, in his early 30s, is the son of Timotheus, who is about 60. Timotheus' cousin David was 59. They are all hunters, and occasionally fishermen. In recent years David has had to supplement his hunting with a pension. Timotheus' and David's grandfather moved to Søndre Upernavik a few decades after the

place was founded, and since then the family has lived there. The previous year Knud, who was a municipal bailiff, had built his own house with turf walls around it. Because of the official housing policy no one could get a housing support loan there. Timotheus, who has an open motor boat, sails with Knud, but on some trips they have also taken other hunters. Their information is partly mixed together.

Ice nets are used from the place from November into April. Around Søndre Upernavik the ice is solid, as there are no eddies close by. In the best season Knud has about 60 ice nets out at the same time. They have been hung out in different directions, and he cannot manage to inspect them all in one day. He contents himself with driving in one direction at a time, and inspects the nets that have been hung out on this route. How often he inspects the nets on the various routes depends on how the catch was distributed in the preceding days. But at the same time one has to allow for the sand-hoppers ('beach fleas'), because they make holes in the skin. There are most sand-hoppers in the inner waters, around Ikerasak, Uluaa etc. There are most sand-hoppers at the coast; but in recent years sand-hoppers have also been seen at the icebergs on which there is earth. The sand-hoppers are most bothersome at the beginning of the netting season; but later they go down to the depths.

When ice nets are hung out, one makes three holes in a row. If one hangs the net out by the land, this is generally done by drawing the line with an ice-pick in towards the land. This cannot always be done in the same way at icebergs, because the net is often hung out where the iceberg has a tongue projecting out under the ice, and one risks damaging one's hand if the ice-pick hits the iceberg during pushing-out [when one bangs the ice-pick in, one has the iron spike resting against the palm of the hand – RP]. But the ice-pick can be used from the inside outwards without this risk. In general one uses three sinkers for an ice net. When you inspect your net and find a seal in the innermost part of the net, you loosen the innermost foreline, and you can simply pull one half of the net up. When you have taken the seal up, you straighten the net out again. Knud Karlsen lets the body of the net hang about 60 cm under the ice, because the seal can then more easily get caught up in the net, and this decreases the possibility that it can escape. For that reason the level of the nets must be lowered repeatedly when the ice gets thicker. Otherwise there is a risk that it will not be caught up in the net, and even that it could freeze to the ice. In such a situation you spoil the skin when you have to loosen it from the ice. When you hang the net out from the coast, you have to watch out in case the ice does not only get thicker, but is thus also pressed out. Since the seals apparently pass the coast at the same distance, the place where the seal goes into the net gradually moves inward. If it hits the net around the middle part of the suspension, both halves of the net get tangled, and the whole net then has to be pulled up. That is why at the coast the net is moved partly down, partly inwards.

A catechist who came from the south had the idea of making a net that gets narrower inward so it follows the foot of the iceberg. But then the seals would not get caught up in the innermost part of the net, and they often got away. In the dark time you can feel if there is a catch, simply by pulling up the middle section a few times.

In the autumn there are often rough seas off the settlement. Then they sail in a motor boat to Sullua, Uluaa etc., where the sea is calmer. In general a family uses the motor boat alone. Normally three men go. But in the autumn when they have to look for calmer waters three other hunters go too. Who the three others are depends on the wants and needs of each one. On such longish trips the yield is shared such that the motor boat gets a share, and otherwise they share equally, regardless of the number each has killed. The skin itself is sold so that the price is shared among all the participants.

Søndre Upernavik, 31st July 1966

From a conversation with Hans Aronsen

Hans Aronsen, a man in his late thirties, is the settlement's representative in the municipal council, as well as the chairman of the local hunters' association. He is an excellent hunter. With his father and a brother he has bought a motor boat. They use it to fish for ocean catfish, and to go on hunting trips lasting several days.

The catfish fishing is well under way. There are most catfish in July and August. But fishing from boats continues until October, and then one fishes from ice, putting out the long line with the slider. There are many catfish just below the houses; but all the coasts of the island have substantial catfish stocks. All the same,

catfish is only traded as dog food and dried on racks, which one can always build up more when the space gets too cramped. The dried catfish is only sailed once a year to Upernavik. When traded, catfish fetches DKr 0.20 a kilo.

In the Søndre Upernavik area there are no breeding grounds for seals, as is the case in the north. For that reason there are no areas where sailing in a motor boat is prohibited. The only prohibition here is that it is forbidden to chase a seal close to the settlement, up to 5 km from here. These prohibitions were proposed by the hunters' association and adopted by the municipal council. This happened before Hans Aronsen was elected to the municipal council. But Hans Aronsen has often criticized the 5 km limit as meaningless, since it is prohibited to chase seals within this limit; but you are allowed to chase birds within the same limit. Whether one is chasing a seal or a bird, one still disturbs the kayak hunters there. In the case of bird-catching the grounds are even poorer. In the same way many people have difficulty seeing the sense of the prohibition against using an outboard motor north of Tussaaq. For the ordinary motor boats may be used there, and no one is forbidden to buy an outboard motor. You may own one, but not use it.

There are many minke whales in the surroundings, and in recent years more and more have come. People had considered buying a cutter with a harpoon gun; but with the earning potential they have at present that would be rather a large burden to take on. It would not be possible to sell the meat surplus. Last year a trading post manager in Uummannaq Municipality killed sixteen minke whales, for which he got DKr 90,000. In the Disko Bay the informant has seen a 30-foot motor boat with a harpoon gun. That size would be sufficient.

After the KGH had stopped trading in shark skin and shark livers, the Greenland shark fishing was completely abandoned. Shark meat is not traded either. Since that time the Greenland shark stocks have grown perceptibly. Greenland sharks have also come to shallower waters, and have become a great menace to the catfish fishing, since they often cut the long lines in two. Fishing for Greenland shark could itself mean earnings; but it would also benefit the catfish fishing.

Søndre Upernavik and Aappilattoq are the two places in Upernavik Municipality that can show fishing profits. In Tasiusaq and Kullorsuaq there are in fact good Greenland halibut stocks; but no significant fishing is done. This year there is to be a joint municipal meeting in Qullissat for northern West Greenland. There will be talks about among other things catfish fishing in Søndre Upernavik. There are good char stocks in the surroundings. At Amitsoq there are good stocks of large char. There the char can be fished rather earlier than in Eqaluit, where the best season is in late August. Char is sold to private families in Upernavik, the best fish are sold for DKr 6 apiece.

If the KGH will not buy char, this is probably because the season is too short.

At Søndre Upernavik there are a little more than thirty men who hunt seal. About 2000 seals are caught in a year. In May alone 800 basking seals were caught. The *uuttoq* hunting is best in May and June, and it stops when the ice disappears at some time in June (earliest at the beginning of June).

In September-November a fair number of seals are caught from kayaks. From November until the ice cover you can also use sea nets. The sea net is used here because the ice cover comes later than in the northern district.

In 1964 and 1965 special permission was granted for battue hunting of moulting eider ducks. This produced a good yield, and people miss this possibility this year. Around the settlement there are few breeding grounds for eider ducks. At Umiiarfiup Sullua there are two small islands where some people had gathered 10 kg of eiderdown, then there was no more. People here do not use eiderdowns, but put various birds' feathers in their bed linen.

Farther north, it is true, there are various islands where the eider ducks breed; but the hunters in Kangersuatsiaq have rented the eider duck islands. Each hunter has two or three islands which he rents for between 50 *øre* and one *krone* once and for all. In addition his descendants can inherit this right. On these islands they build small nesting shelters for the breeding birds, to prevent the down blowing away. On their 'own' island they then gather down. It is mostly the sons who inherit this right. Hans Aronsen discovered this to his great surprise after he had joined the municipal council. A couple of applications for 'own' islands came from Kangersuatsiaq.

Both the sealing and the catfish fishing have improved in recent years; but the exploitation pro-

duces too small a yield. The discontinuation of the trade in blubber is very depressing, and the rise in the skin prices was only perceptible at the beginning. Now it needs regulating again. It would be better if Greenland shark was fished for dog food and catfish for human food. The possibility was discussed in the municipal council, and a letter was received from the KGH, where the possibility of trading in shark meat for dog food was mentioned; but so far no more has happened in the matter.

In the Greenland Provincial Council, disparaging remarks are made about the hunters, although fishing has benefited a lot from the surplus from hunting. The fish factory in Nuuk was to a great extent built with funding from the 'counter-cyclical equalization reserve' which came from the surplus from hunting. This emptied the surplus reserves. Not only in Upernavik Municipality, but also in the Uummannaq district, the hunters are now inclined to want to separate from the fishermen's association.[124]

The municipality has made sure that a couple of children's kayaks were built. They were furnished with all the necessary tools, re-covered etc. For its part the school gets hold of a man and pays him to give the children instruction in the use of the kayak.

Most hunters are members of the hunters' association. A few older hunters are not members; but the membership is growing as all the young hunters join. The membership fee is DKr 12 a year. It is not larger because some hunters have loans they are paying off.

Only when the children have become quite familiar with paddling a kayak do they begin to learn how to throw the hunting weapons. Several hunters can roll in a kayak; but that is not part of the kayak instruction.

Aappilattoq, 6th August 1966
Vilhelm Grim.
Vilhelm Grim has been presented in connection with his statements on tape. Here he added that he was the great grandchild of Niels Grim, who was mentioned in connection with the founding of Søndre Upernavik. However, we also had a conversation which was not taped, and from this the following comes.

Vilhelm Grim explained that net hunting was the most important form of hunting in the winter at Aappilattoq. One usually hangs the net from the coast, because there is a lot of current, and for that reason the icebergs are not always held by the ice. A man always has fixed netting places, and this right is inherited or taken over by the man's natural heirs, first and foremost sons, and then nephews. They may also be taken over when the man retires as a hunter. A man's fixed netting places are often taken over by his heirs. It is quite common for a married couple without sons to have a nephew as a foster-child, who then takes over the man's netting places and other hunting implements.

The informant was a member of the municipal council for 26 years, and knows the 'inheritance rules' from there. These rules are rather old, and in 1915 or 1926 the old customary rules were confirmed as municipal by-laws.

When hung from the coast the nets must not be closer to one another than four metres; but at the icebergs, where one cannot have such fixed netting places, one can hang one's net 2 m from another. This is because a seal often swims up from below an iceberg, but at the coast it must swim along the coastline.

In 1965 sea nets were tried, and a number of harp seals were caught this way. But because of the drifting ice they cannot be put out facing the ice fjord. One hangs them on the coast that faces away from the ice fjord. [The informant constantly compares the situation with the one at Søndre Upernavik – RP]. Sea nets also play an important role in the hunting life of Søndre Upernavik.

At Aappilattoq a hunter normally puts out about 30 ice nets. At first the number of a man's nets depended on how much money he had. But now that the hunters have more money, the number of a man's nets depends on how many nets he can inspect during the day. At the places where one puts out one's nets the current is rather weak, and there the ice can become very thick, so the inspection of the nets is a time-consuming job. In 1935 and the time around then, when not so many people lived at Aappilattoq, Grim took part in the counting of the hunting equipment, and there were about 800 nets. Now he cannot say anything about the number of nets; but it has at least doubled. Both the number of nets and the number of dogs have risen substantially in recent years; on the other hand a good deal more seals are caught than before.

The seal stocks at the place are good all year round, because the seals that swim in and out of the ice fjord swim past nearby.

The harp seal disappears from the area with the first ice cover, but since there is a strong current close to the settlement, open water always comes when the weather becomes milder in the winter. The kayak is therefore also used in the winter to hunt ringed seals.

In the fjord within Aappilattoq, markers have also been set, as far as which motor boats may sail, but they must not pass them, since there are breeding grounds for seals inside the fjord. From here too people sail in motor boats to this limit, moor the motor boat, and paddle out in a kayak to go hunting. Aappilattoq lies south of the limit to the north of which one must not use an outboard motor. But people here do not care much for the outboard motor, since it is difficult to get close to game, for example birds, when one has an outboard motor running. It is thought that this is due to the nature of the noise and the exhaust from the motor under the water. "Animals are not frightened so much by the sound they hear as by the scent they can smell", he added, perhaps meaning that he was not wholly in agreement with the reason given; but he added that the ordinary 'chug chug' does not frighten the animals. Such a slow-sailing, chugging motor can in fact attract the seals.

A few years ago the hunters at Aappilattoq killed a killer whale of seven metres. The meat tasted just as good as the meat from a ringed seal. Its mattak was very thin, but underneath, instead of *maassak,* 'leather skin', it only had a solid layer of blubber. It could float.

One rarely sees foxes. But in towards the ice cap there are several eider duck lakes. No one rents them as the hunters in Kangersuatsiaq do. [One of the guests remarked that for the last three years he had sent an application to rent some islands, but he had not heard anything about it.]

The fish stocks are good – in particular there are many Greenland halibut; but they are mainly fished in the winter, since the drifting ice often destroys the long lines in the summer. An experiment with long line fishing in the ice fjord failed because there were too many Greenland sharks. The slider is used in winter fishing.

In earlier times it was common when people got married for the bride to move to the groom's house. But in our days, when the housing situation is more difficult, the deciding factor is often in whose home there is most space. In our days housing construction is too burdensome and too expensive. When you apply for a housing support loan you have to remind them and remind them. It is not rare for some people to get married without having a home, and they must often live with the parents of one of them.

In Vilhelm Grim's house the weak element is the house passage, which only has one layer of planks. In the winter when it is cold outside and warm indoors, you often have to defrost the planks. That makes it very difficult to have paint on the walls. When it has become cold in the winter, they move the furniture away from the wall, for otherwise it would get damp behind it. But Grim's house is well insulated, and he thinks that it is just as cosy as a turf house.

People hunt from the ice-edge in the winter when a storm has broken up the ice. During this kind of hunting one lures seals by scratching with the ice-pick on the ice, or by imitating the cry of the seals. In the fjord itself the ice cover is bad. Southern storms often break loose and break up the ice. So the hunters are often in danger of their lives.

In February the sun gains power, and then the seals crawl up from their holes and bask (*uuttut*). Then the *uuttoq* hunting begins and continues into March and April. The *uuttoq* hunting is very intensive; but net hunting is still the most important form of hunting. One of the reasons for this is that some hunters drive up north to Kullorsuaq during the *uuttoq* season, and do *uuttoq* hunting from there.

Vilhelm Grim's first kayak was made by his father, and as long as the father was alive he made kayaks for his son. When his father died, he began to make his own kayaks according to the father's instructions. [Vilhelm Grim is often described as the best kayak-builder in Upernavik Municipality].

When he lived in Søndre Upernavik, he fastened the kayak coaming to the kayak covering with buttons of caribou antler. But at Aappilattoq, where caribou antler is in short supply, the kayak coaming is lashed to the covering. The kayak coaming can be bought in the shop, and is used without changing its shape. The kayak ribs are also bought in the shop. They consist of hard wood, and were actually designed for canvas boats. In earlier days people had used hoops from rye flour barrels as kayak ribs.[125]

At Søndre Upernavik there is such rough water in the autumn that people build the kayak narrower and higher. The advantage of this form is that the kayak is

not so easily pushed down in rough seas. The low kayaks lay a lot under water in rough seas, so that it could be difficult to get air. The kayak built at Aappilattoq is bent a little upwards at both ends, for it could shoot up if it was covered under the water, but it could also get up on thin ice and break it from above. In a few days the ice from the fjord will come with calved-ice pieces and thin ice. The slightly upward-bending kayak is also easier to roll.

In Vilhelm Grim's first period at Appilattoq, a few people knew how to roll a kayak. It is said that hunters from Innaarsuit are still good at kayak-rolling. Today there are no kayak suits for kayak rolling at Aappilattoq; but now, through kayak training, they want to re-introduce the kayak suits, and the art of kayak rolling. One of the reasons for the disappearance of the kayak suit from here is probably that some hunters were not interested in having their children practice the art of kayaking. But it is also because the skin has become an important commodity. Canvas is an excellent, durable covering in itself; but since people doubt its resistance to the wear from the ice, it is only the older hunters who use it. On the one hand they have trouble getting skins for kayak coverings, on the other they are not exposed as much to ice as they were when they were younger.

Motor boat crews in Søndre Upernavik in the summer of 1966

1. Timotheus Karlsen. In general the following are members: Knud Karlsen (son) and Peter Karlsen (a young relative). On longer trips in the autumn when the sea at Søndre Upernavik becomes too rough, others come along, especially those who need to, for example Peter Josvasen, Markus Løvstrøm and others. All those mentioned live in their own households.
2. Hans Aronsen. In general with Tobias Aronsen (brother). Each lives in his own household. Otherwise various other hunters. The motor boat is new.
3. Aron Karlsen. In general with Gerth Karlsen (brother) and Martin Johansen (step-brother). The three hunt together, and do not take others with them.

   When the motor boat is pulled up on land in the autumn, the owners are helped by volunteers.

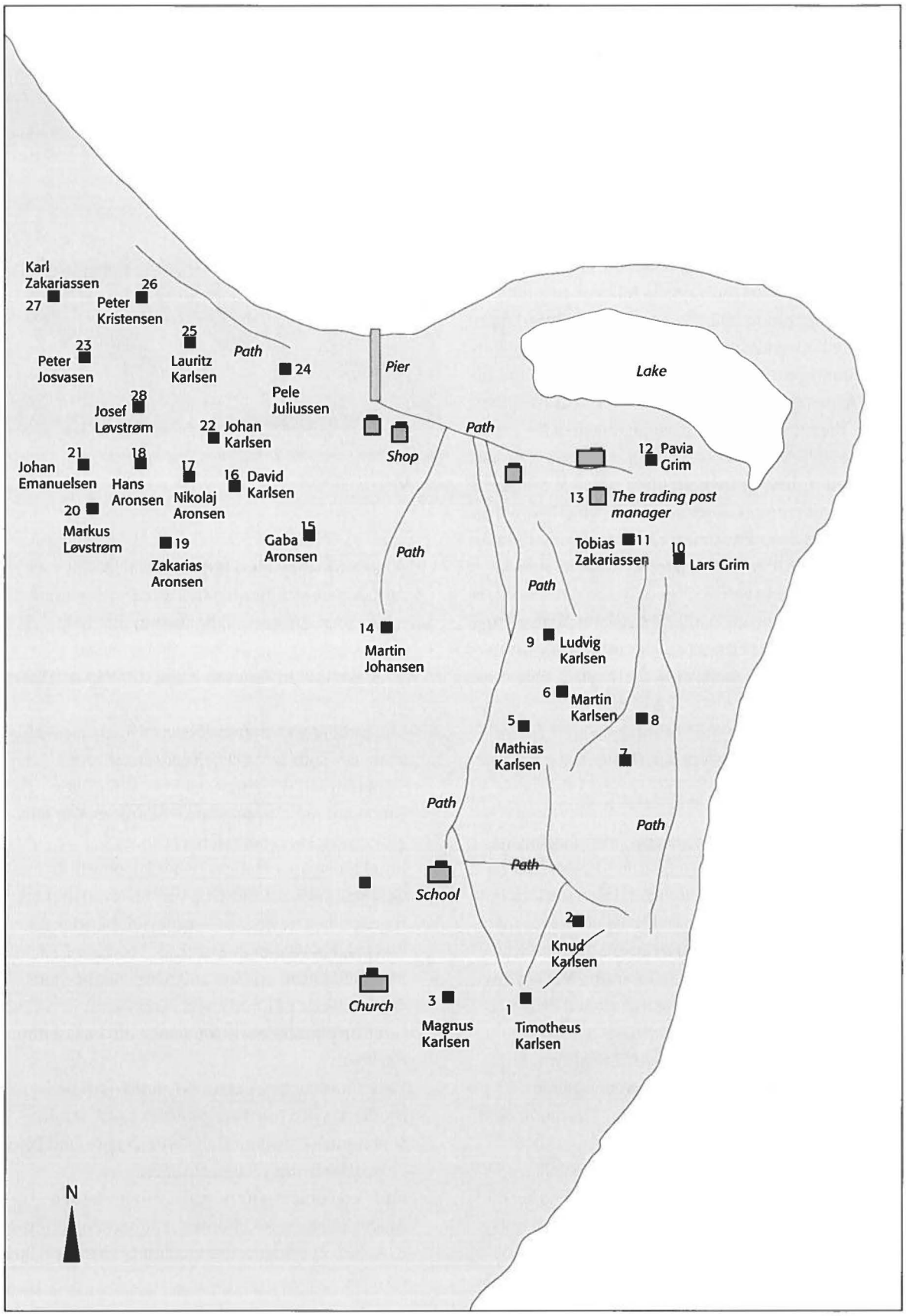


Fig. 47. Tabita and Karl Zakariassen, Søndre Upernavik, 1965. (Photo R. Petersen).

Sometimes they must pay for the help. But such rare shared actions are often done without payment, since anyone might need similar help.

Motor boat crews in Tasiusaq in the summer of 1966

1. The trading post manager Peter Svendsen and his sons. The sons Piitaaraq Svendsen and Jens Svendsen sail with it, besides the son-in-law Gudmand Kristensen. Martin Adamsen also sails with them. He is not related to them.
2. Knud Bidstrup and his nephew Thomas Bidstrup. Originally Edvard Bidstrup was involved, but he retired when he became a widower. Besides the two owners Valdemar Bidstrup (brother of Thomas), Ole Bidstrup (son of Edvard, nephew on brother's side of Knud), and Peter Adamsen who is the brother-in-law of Valdemar, also sail with the boat.
3. Hans, Mathias and Johan Kristiansen, three brothers. With the three brothers sail Jeremias Johansen, a cousin of Hans' wife Cecilie, and Pele Zakariassen, not related to them.
4. Karl Peter Johansen. He sails with his father, Adam Johansen and Kornelius Johansen, a cousin of Adam. The boat is the smallest of them and has no deck.


Karl Zakariassen
27
26
Peter Kristensen
25
Lauritz Karlsen
Path
23
Peter Josvasen
24
Pele Juliussen
Pier
Lake
28
Josef Løvstrøm
22 Johan Karlsen
Shop
Path
12 Pavia Grim
21
Johan Emanuelsen
18
Hans Aronsen
17
Nikolaj Aronsen
16 David Karlsen
13 The trading post manager
20
Markus Løvstrøm
19
Zakarias Aronsen
15
Gaba Aronsen
Path
Tobias Zakariassen
11
10
Lars Grim
Path
14
Martin Johansen
9
Ludvig Karlsen
6
Martin Karlsen
8
5
Mathias Karlsen
7
Path
Path
Path
School
2
Knud Karlsen
Church
3
Magnus Karlsen
1
Timotheus Karlsen
N

Placing of the houses and closest family ties in Søndre Upernavik in the summer of 1966. The numbers correspond to the numbers on the map. = means married to.

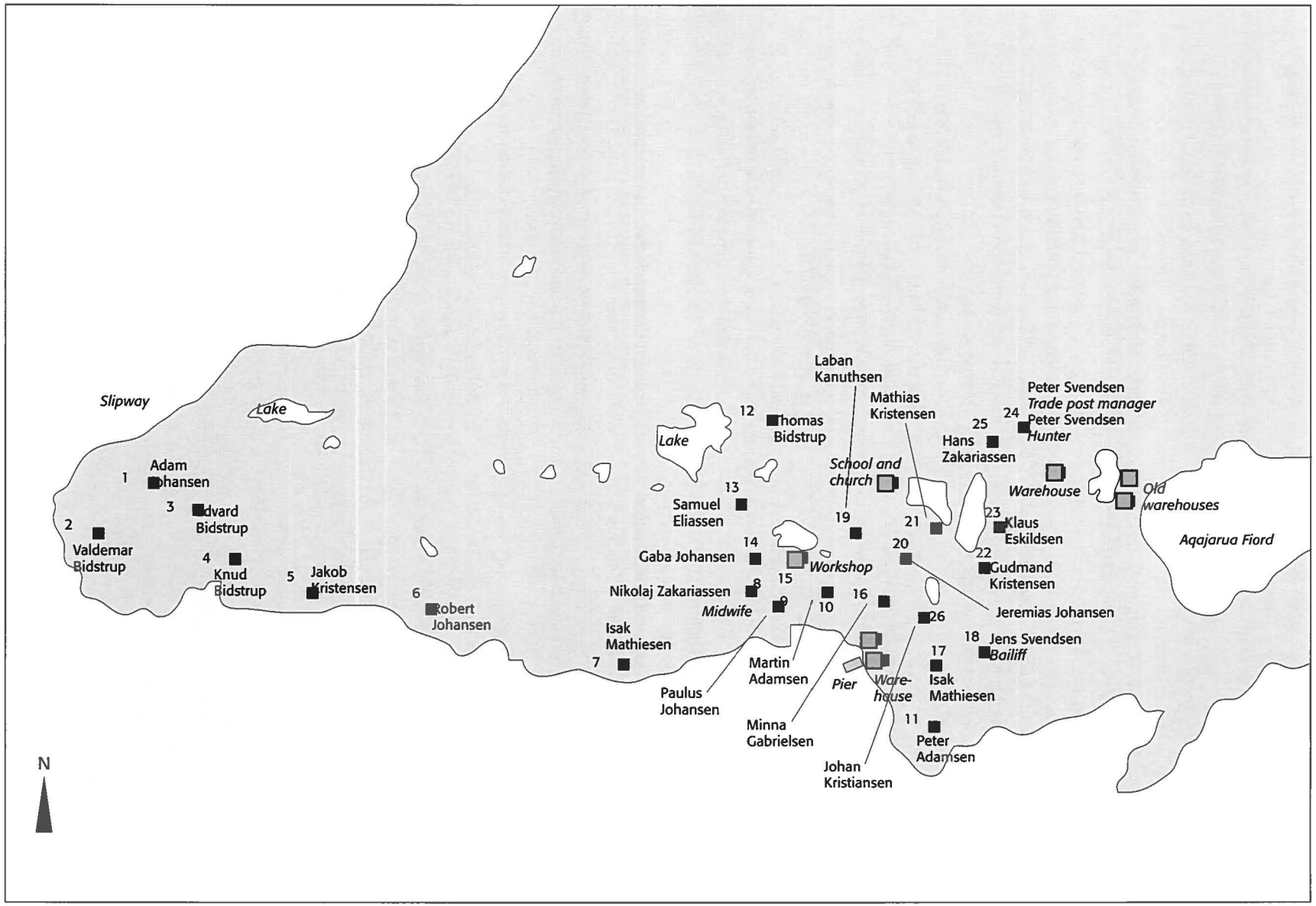
1. Timotheus Karlsen, brother of Ludvig Karlsen (9), David Karlsen (16) and Mathias K. (5). = Theresia, b. Emanuelsen, sister of Johan E. (21).
2. Knud Karlsen, son of House 1. = Sibylla, b. Petersen in Aappilattoq, has also lived in Kullorsuaq and Upernavik.
3. Magnus Karlsen, cousin of Timotheus K. (1), David K. (16) and Mathias K. (15). = Ane, b. Karlsen, cousin of her husband and of his three other cousins.
4. The school.
5. Mathias Karlsen, brother of Timotheus K. (1), Ludvig K. (9) and David K. (16). His wife is dead.
6. Martin Karlsen, son of Ludvig K. (9). = Mette, b. Aronsen, daughter of the widow Magdalene A. (15).
7. and 8 not finished yet.
9. Ludvig Karlsen, brother of Timotheus K (1), David K. (16) and Mathias K. (5). He is a widower.
10. Lars Grim, brother of Pavia G. (12) and Pauline Løvstrøm (28). = Inger, daughter of Mathias K., Maniitsoq, brother of Lauritz K. (25).
11. Tobias Zakariassen. No information on family relationship. = Amalie, b. Karlsen, daughter of Lauritz K. (25).
12. Pavia Grim, unmarried son of Sara G. in the same house, brother of Lars G. (10) and Pauline L. (28).
13. The trading post manager, a new man in Søndre Upernavik.
14. Martin Johansen, son of Ane Karlsen (22). = Agathe, b. Karlsen, daughter of Lauritz K. (25), sister of Amalie Z. (11).
15. Gaba Aronsen, unmarried, son of the widow Magdalene A., b. Karlsen in the same house: she is the sister of Lauritz K. (25) (cf. 25).
16. David Karlsen, brother of Timotheus K. (1), Mathias K (5), and Ludvig K. (9). = Ane, b. Frederiksen, no relatives at the settlement
17. Nikolaj Aronsen, father of Hans A. (18), Zakarias A. (19), and Vita Josvasen (23). = Birgithe, b. Kristensen, sister of Ane Karlsen (16) and Peter Kristensen (26).
18. Hans Aronsen, son of Nikolaj and Birgitte Aronsen (17), = Pauline, b. Karlsen, daughter of Timotheus and Theresia Karlsen (1), sister of Knud K. (2).
19. Zakarias Aronsen, son of Nikolaj and Birgitte A. (17), brother of Hans A. (18) and Vita Josvasen (23). = the midwife Emilie (no information on maiden name), Innaarsuit.
20. Markus Løvstrøm, cousin of Josef L. (28). = Lea, b. Karlsen, daughter of Ludvig K. (9), sister of Martin K. (6).
21. Johan Emanuelsen, catechist, brother of Theresia Karlsen (1). = Eva, b. Bidstrup, daughter of Daniel Bidstrup, Upernavik.
22. Johan Karlsen, brother of Magdalene Aronsen (15) and Lauritz K. (25) (cf. 25). = Ane, b. Kristensen, sister of Birgithe Aronsen (17) and Peter Kristensen (26).
23. Peter Josvasen, no relatives at the settlement. = Vita, b. Aronsen, daughter of Nikolaj and Birgithe Aronsen (17), sister of Hans A. (18) and Zakarias A. (19).
24. Pele Juliussen, widower, no relatives at the settlement.
25. Lauritz Karlsen, widower, brother of Magdalene Aronsen (15) and Johan K (22), as well as Jens K. and Niels K. in Maniitsoq.
26. Peter Kristensen, brother of Birgithe Aronsen (17) and Ane Karlsen (22).
27. Karl Zakariassen, has no brothers, has relatives in Tasisuaq and Aappilattoq. = Tabita, b. Blytmann, has relatives in Kangersuatsiaq.
28. Josef Løvstrøm, cousin of Markus L. (20). = Pauline, b. Grim, sister of Lars G. (10) and Pavia G. (12).

Placing of the houses and close family ties in Tasiusaq. Summer 1966

The numbers of the houses correspond to the numbers on the map on the next page. = means married to.

1. Adam Johansen, nephew (brother's son) of Paulus J. (9) and of Gaba J. (14); no married sisters, and no family on the mother's side; brother of Robert J. (6) and Jeremias J. (20). = Amalie,

Fig. 48. Søndre Upernavik settlement.


Slipway
Lake
Lake
1 Adam Johansen
2 Valdemar Bidstrup
3 Edvard Bidstrup
4 Knud Bidstrup
5 Jakob Kristensen
6 Robert Johansen
7 Isak Mathiesen
8 Nikolaj Zakariassen
9 Midwife
10 Martin Adamsen
11 Peter Adamsen
12 Thomas Bidstrup
13 Samuel Eliassen
14 Gaba Johansen
15 Workshop
16 Pier
17 Isak Mathiesen
18 Jens Svendsen Bailiff
19 Laban Kanuthsen
20 Jeremias Johansen
21 Mathias Kristensen
22 Gudmand Kristensen
23 Klaus Eskildsen
24 Peter Svendsen Hunter
25 Hans Zakariassen
26 Peter Svendsen Trade post manager
School and church
Warehouse
Old warehouses
Aqajarua Fiord
Paulus Johansen
Minna Gabrielsen
Johan Kristiansen
Ware-house
N

family at Nuussuaq. The couple had had a house beside Paulus J.'s house (his paternal uncle).

2. Valdemar Bidstrup, brother of Thomas B. (12), nephew (brother's son) of Knud B. (4) and Edvard B. (3). His sister and mother's family live in Upernavik. = Marie, b. Eliassen, in Nutaarmiut, sister of Sara Adamsen (11).
3. Edvard Bidstrup, brother of Knud B. (4), father of Ane Marie Kristiansen (21), and of Ole Bidstrup in the same house. = Anna?, b. in Tussaaq, now dead (cf. information om motor boats), no relatives at the settlement. Olina, Ole's fiancée, the son Simon (apprentice bricklayer) and a sister, trainee midwife Benigne, who is on holiday in Tasiusaq, also live in the house.
4. Knud Bidstrup, brother of Edvard B. (3) and paternal uncle of Valdemar B. (2) and Thomas B. (12). = Dorthe, b. Pollas, from Uummannaq, granddaughter of 'Trading manager Nielsen', Tasiusaq. The couple have no children, but have had several foster-children, and they still have two: Benigne, daughter of the brother Edvard (3), and Jokum, son of a deceased brother.
5. Jakob Kristensen, widower, moved from Saattut, no relatives on the father's side. Isak Mathiesen (7) is a cousin on the mother's side. Also living in the same house: Ole Kristensen, son of Jakob K. in the same house, related to Adam Johansen's children (1) on the mother's side. = Agnethe, b. Eliassen, daughter of Samuel and Ida Eliassen (13).
6. Robert Johansen, brother of Adam J. (1) and Jeremias J. (20). While the father was alive, the three brothers lived near the father's house (not marked here). = Dorthe, b. Zakariassen at Eqqorleq, father moved to Tasiusaq, but is now dead. She is a sister of Nikolaj Z. (8), another brother in Nuussuaq, and yet another in Qeqertarsuatsiaat (Fiskenæsset).
7. Isak Mathiesen, cousin of Jakob Kristensen (5), and a relative of Adam J. (1). Isak M.'s wife Anna is dead. Peter Mathiassen, son of Isak M., lives in the same house. = Maren, b. Adamsen on Saattut, sister of Peter A. (11) and Paulus A. The family moved to Tasiusaq with Jakob Kristensen (5).
8. Nikolaj Zakariassen, brother of Johanne A. (10) and Dorthe Jo Hansen (6), cousin of Hans Z. (25). = Najaaraq Z., midwife, born in Alluitsup Paa (Sydprøven).
9. Paulus Johansen, half-brother of Gaba J. (14), paternal uncle of Adam J. (1). = Maren J., b. in Nuussuaq, daughter of a cousin of Knud B. (4) and Edvard B. (3).
10. Martin Adamsen, cousin of Peter A. (11), born on Eqqorleq. The rest of his family moved to Upernavik. = Johanne, b. Zakariassen, sister of Nikolaj Z. (8) and Dorthe Johansen (6). She also has married sisters in Kullorsuaq.
11. Peter Adamsen, moved from Eqqorleq, brother of Maren Mathiesen (7), cousin of Martin A. (10). = Sara, b. Eliassen, sister of Marie B. (2).
12. Thomas Bidstrup, brother of Valdemar B. (2), nephew (brother's son) of Knud B. (4) and Edvard B. (3). = Louise, b. Johansen at Eqqorleq, niece of Peter Adamsen (11).
13. Samuel Eliassen, b. at Nutaarmiut, cousin of Marie Bidstrup's (2) and Sara Adamsen's (11) father at Nutaarmiut, paternal uncle of Dorthe K. (26). = Ida, b. Eskildsen at Søndre Upernavik, paternal aunt of Klaus Eskildsen (23).
14. Gaba Johansen, half-brother of Paulus J. (9), paternal uncle of Adam J. (1), brother of the widow Magdalene Halsøe (17). = Lene, b. Johansen. Both moved from Eqqorleq.
15. The house is the municipality's workshop and is unoccupied.
16. Minna Gabrielsen, widow, b. Jakobsen on Kuuk, sister of Pauline Johansen (20). Her late husband, Samson G., was also from Kuuk.
17. Hans Kristiansen, brother of Mathias K. (21) and Johan K. (26). Their father was the catechist in Tasiusaq, but moved back to Uummannaq. They have a married sister in Thule. = Cecilie, b. Johansen, daughter of Paulus J. (9). Also living in the house: the widow Magdalene Halsøe, paternal aunt of Cecilie K.
18. Jens Svendsen, son of Peter Svendsen (24), municipal bailiff, brother of Piitaaraq S. (24) and Amalie Kristensen (22). = Louise, b. Nielsen, descendant of the trading manager Nielsen, Tasiusaq.

Fig. 49. Tasiusaq settlement.

19. Laban Kanuthsen, catechist, b. at Tuapaat near Nanortalik. = Jakobine, from Qaqortoq (Julianehåb) Municipality. The family came from Kulusuk, East Greenland, in 1965.
20. Jeremias Johansen, brother of Adam J. (1) and Robert J. (6). = Pauline, b. Jakobsen at Kuuk.
21. Mathias Kristensen, brother of Hans K. (17) and Johan K. (26). = Anne Marie, b. Bidstrup, daughter of Edvard B. (3) and sister of Ole B. (3).
22. Gudmand Kristensen, distant relative of Jakob K. (5), foster-son of the trading post manager Hans Nielsen, Tasiusaq. = Amalie, b. Svendsen, daughter of Peter S. (24), sister of Piitaaraq S. (24) and Jens S. (18).
23. Klaus Eskildsen, nephew (brother's son) of Ida Eliassen (13). K.E.'s father, John E., moved from Søndre Upernavik with his sister, Ida E., to Kuuk, and from there to Tasiusaq. = Dorthe, b. Zakariassen, no information on family relationship.
24. Peter Svendsen, trading post manager, father of Piitaaraq S. in the same house, of Jens S. (18) and Anne Marie Kristensen (22). = Johanne S. Both are from Kangersuatsiaq. Peter S. retired in 1966, and built a house in Tasiusaq. Piitaaraq Svendsen, their eldest son, also lives there. = Benedikte, b. Petersen in Tasiusaq. Her family has moved to Upernavik.
25. Hans Zakariassen, son of deceased Hans Z., Eqqorleq, and brother of Daniel Z., Upernavik, cousin of Nikolaj Z. (8). = Elisabeth, b. Johansen, daughter of Jeremias J. (20).
26. Johan Kristiansen, brother of Hans K. (17) and Mathias K. (21). For other information, see (17). = Dorthe, b. Eliassen. Niece (brother's daughter) of Samuel Eliassen (13).

Notes

1. Søndre Upernavik is the southernmost settlement in Upernavik Municipality.
2. Somewhere in northern West Greenland, probably in the Uummannaq district, the use of the gun in kayak hunting began in the nineteenth century. One innovation, 'the shooting-screen', is said to have been used for the first time in Uummannaq for ice-hunting. Later it was said that a man from the district tried it in a kayak. His fellow settlers laughed a lot at him – an *uuttoq* hunter in a kayak – until he came home with seven seals in tow behind the kayak (Nathan Petersen, NES).
3. When the harpoon has a tendency to turn to the left or to the right, the tendency is decreased by changing the attachment of the harpoon knobs to the throwing board. This is called adjusting the throw.
4. Water skin is depilated seal skin with the black outer skin left on.
5. *Paaguaq* is two flat pieces of bone attached to one another at an angle, and connected with thongs to the hunting bladder. They can be stuck in under the cross-thongs of the kayak and they hold the bladder. They can be loosened with a strong jerk. But some people prefer two pieces of wood shaped like feet, 'wooden feet', which work in the same way.
6. When there are no other openings in the ice, the seal makes a hole so big that it can crawl up and bask in the sun: such a seal is called an *uuttoq*, pl. *uuttut*.
7. In 1927 the Greenlandic Provincial Council adopted protection regulations which only permitted caribou hunting in August and September.
8. This is the so-called shooting covert, used earlier for caribou hunting with a bow and arrow.
9. About 10 km west of Søndre Upernavik.
10. *Umerloq* is on the north side of *Kingatak*, an island south west of *Søndre Upernavik*.
11. The northern point of *Kingatak*.
12. Young harp seals or 'bluesides' – *allattuut*.
13. This remark was made because at one point I mentioned that on Nutaarmiut a man could reserve a suitable netting place by raising a block of ice if he did not have a net with him when he discovered it. But he must put out his net there before three days have passed. This sounds like a local consensus.
14. A mirror attached to a handle, invented by Otto Knudsen at *Appat/ Ritenbenk* in the 1930s. It can be used like a reverse periscope to investigate the underside of the ice to see whether a seal that has got away might still be lying dead under the ice. Since distances are difficult to judge under the ice, one makes a small hole at a point along the same line of sight and judges the distance from the seal in relation to an ice-pick stuck down through the small hole.
15. To muffle one's steps one ties a soft skin or a piece of soft cloth below one's feet.
16. *Aarneq*, 'stalking', has been mentioned among the hunting methods that were abandoned with the transition to hunting with a gun.
17. The so-called shooting-screen is a piece of white cloth stretched over a portable frame. The hunter approaches the seal hidden behind it.
18. An island a little south of Apparsuit. There is also a bird cliff on the island.
19. The weekly supply route from *Upernavik* goes as far as *Søndre Upernavik* in the south, and *Tasiusaq* in the north.

20. *Mannasse Mathæussen* (1915-1989), a well known kayaker, was regarded as the epitome of the art of kayaking, both in Greenland and abroad.
21. The fastening of the dog traces.
22. Certain proclamations required that the sledge dogs' canine teeth were cut to reduce attacks on people.
23. *Esajas Pjetturson* (b. 1908, now deceased) was a great hunter from Illulik.
24. *Jonathan Nielsen* (b. 1910). A great hunter from Kullorsuaq, son of the informant Martin Nielsen. He is briefly quoted on p. 202 in Appendix 1.
25. In such training one used the 'conditioned reflexes' in practice.
26. One drives to many places overland, either to take a short cut or to avoid dangerous ice.
27. A few hunting families south of Disko Bay know something about the castration of dogs, but keep their knowledge to themselves. However, most hunters prefer their dogs to be able to breed, well aware that they could lose them, for example through distemper.
28. This depopulation was probably related to the fact that the northward expansion from *c.* 1850 until *c.* 1925 had a particular effect on *Aappilattoq* as the mid-district's northernmost settlement.
29. *Hendrik Olsen* (1901-1967), the son of Thule's first missionary, was for many years employed by the KGH at Upernavik.
30. *Sassat*, whales trapped in an ice-hole when the sea freezes from the outside in. They may keep the ice-hole open for a while. If more were not caught then, this must be because the whales made their way under the ice to the open ice fjord. But most *sassat* in fact do not have much of a chance of reaching open water.
31. A seal can open up a hole in the ice by scratching it away. It is said that they can get some more air when they have made a depression by violently jerking under the depression so that the air bubbles form an air pocket in the hollow. When the sun begins to get warm, they can expand the hole so much that they can crawl up on the ice as *uuttut*.
32. Now there are only limited caribou stocks behind *Svartenhuk*.
33. The fjord *Eqalugaarsuit* has its name from the char stocks – the fjord's Danish name, *Laksefjorden,* literally the Salmon Fjord, comes from the fact that char was formerly called *laks* (salmon) in Danish in Greenland.
34. Rink (1857:131) spoke of *Narsaarsuk* as a place where caribou were caught in the winter. This prompted Grim to talk about *Søndre Upernavik*, where caribou were earlier also caught in the winter. But Rink's mention of drifting ice-floes between the islands rather suggests the area around *Aappilattoq*. The place could not be identified, but could be *Nuugaarsuk* within the Upernavik area.
35. *Qassersuaq*, situated north of *Upernavik Isfjord*, was a trading post from 1864 until 1922 and was depopulated the next year; but the potential of the place was still exploited from *Aappilattoq*.
36. The *Birthe* mentioned was the informant's wife(?).
37. After 1950 the traded seal skins were furnished with code numbers so that one knew who had caught the animal. After the skin is auctioned off in Denmark the hunter can then be paid a bonus.
38. The young harp seals are called 'bluesides', see Appendix 1, note 12; 'blacksides' are adult harp seals.
39. Without harpooning there was a risk that the narwhal would sink.
40. The *akit* is a rack on the sledge. The kayak is lashed up on front on the outside of the *akit*, and then to the upright of the sledge on the same side. The *akit* is only used in Upernavik Municipality.
41. Cf. Appendix 1, note 15.
42. Cf. Appendix 1, note 2.
43. The line rack is a rack on which the rolled-up harpoon line is kept. Cf. also Appendix 1, note 91.
44. In southern West Greenland the harpoon bladder is made to curve. Its 'snout' sticks into the water, and thus works like a brake when it is pulled after the harpooned seal. In ice-filled waters a bladder that can stand up in the water when the seal pulls it down is preferred.
45. Cf. Appendix 1, note 5.
46. The knob harpoon has a bone knob at the back, while the winged harpoon is furnished with two 'tail feathers' of bone. Cf. Chapter 3.
47. This was an old ritual.
48. The place below the houses of the present *Søndre Upernavik*.
49. Probably on Kangersuatsiaq Island.
50. It was probably because of such a song-feast that people on *Sioraq* were denied Communion for a period. People made fun of the catechist (Lynge 1991:157).
51. According to the official censuses 41 people lived at *Amitsoq* in 1876-1877. They were only listed there one winter.
52. He is also called *Philip Petersen*, b. 1816 (Lynge 1991: 34).
53. If this is Søndre Upernavik, it was after 1856.
54. From 1927 one could only hunt caribou in the months of August and September. From the same year the hunting of eider ducks and the gathering of their eggs was prohibited in the period when they were in the Upernavik district.
55. *Andreas Lund-Drosvad* (b. 1899, d. *c.* 1985) came to Greenland as a tutor in 1922. Afterwards he was a business leader in Upernavik district for many years.
56. A peninsula on the southern point of *Tukingasoq*.
57. *Siattut* is a group of lakes in *Umiiarfiup Sullua. Sullua* is the uppermost reaches of the fjord.

58. He had gone south east from *Eqaluit*; cf. Appendix 1, note 82.
59. Shooting covert used by caribou hunters with a bow and arrow.
60. Char barrages of stone, *saputit*, once used in connection with spear fishing.
61. A figure from a family saga from the Nuuk area.
62. An old legendary hero known from East Greenland and West Greenland, whose deeds have been localized to several places.
63. A bird cliff in Sisimiut Municipality.
64. Most people mentioned in this section were not identified.
65. In 1965 this person lived in *Søndre Upernavik*.
66. Catechist and teacher at several places, *Ole Skifte* (1927-). He was the mayor of Maniitsoq in 1963-1970, except for one year.
67. None of these was identified.
68. None of these was identified.
69. A low pass at *Akia/Langø* at *Upernavik*, leading from *Sælens Vinterhavn, Umiarsuaqarfik* to the other side of the island.
70. *Innersuit* were described as a supernatural people living below the beach line.
71. *Kaassassuk* was a legendary figure known in Greenland and Arctic Canada.
72. *Lauritz Karlsen* (b. 1895) was an elder brother of the previous informant and was 70 years old at the time of the conversation.
73. *Niels Grim* (1816-1892) came from Godhavn and became trading post manager at Søndre Upernavik, probably after 1860.
74. The hunting method described is called stalking in English. Cf. also Appendix 1, note 16.
75. A lagoon below the houses at *Søndre Upernavik*.
76. A point 2 km farther north on the actual *Søndre Upernavik Island*.
77 Today Tunumioq means an 'East Greenlander'. Tunu means 'the east side', and is thus also used of East Greenland; but as a place-name it is used in several places in West Greenland. There is incidentally a theory that Upernavik's population came from East Greenland north around Greenland. The dialect has East Greenlandic features; but this Tunumioq need not himself have come from East Greenland – if that is what is hinted – since nicknames could be inherited.
78. Cf. Appendix 1, note 52.
79. *Jens Petersen* (1880-1934) worked as a catechist in Søndre Upernavik for many years.
80. Peep-hunting harpoons were about 10 m long. By no means all hunters would have such a harpoon.
81. Cf. note 54.
82. At *Eqaluit* the district's first colony was founded in 1769. It was moved after two years to the present Upernavik site, as it was south of the settled area.
83. *Storm Egede*, (b. 1917?) son of the pastor and politician Gert Egede (1892-1963), was colonial manager in Upernavik in 1947-48.
84. *Sukasik* was born around 1800, and died in 1874; cf. Lynge 1955: 170.
85. Shamans.
86. The western point of Tasiusaq Island.
87. A bay on Nuuluk Island north east of Tasiusaq.
88. A net used in the ice-free season.
89. Breathing-hole hunting for one man.
90. A reply to my question, whether the harpoon head for peep-hunting could be tilted around the point of the foreshaft, that is if it was a so-called 'toggled' harpoon. It was not.
91. On this latticework the rolled-up harpoon line was placed. This solution is only known from Upernavik.
92. Cf. Appendix 1, note 33.
93. Danish name: *Giesecke Isfjord*.
94. In the 1940s permission was granted to catch eider ducks on daily migrations.
95. An island about 4 km west of the bird cliff *Apparsuit*.
96. An island 10 km south of the bird cliff *Apparsuit*. There is also a large guillemot colony on the island. 'Kiffaku' is a hypercorrection of *Kippaku*, since /ff/ and /pp/ are neutralized in the Upernavik dialect.
97. On the north coast of *Upernavik Isfjord*.
98. This happened in 1917.
99. *Qaarusulik*, according to the census lists, was settled in 1925.
100. As mentioned, the epidemic has been dated to 1814.
101. This happened in 1944.
102. An elected member of 'the superintendencies', a socilat[?] administrative body introduced around 1860.
103. This happened in 1952.
104. With a branch of the KGH.
105. *Taartoq* is an island near the *Inussuk* that gave its name to the archaeologists' 'Inugsuk culture'. The event in question happened just around 1830.
106. It was common for the men to hold the limbs of a mentally disturbed person who used force during a fit.
107. At this place in 1966, in a house-ruin, there was a stone column filled with many small garnets. It was probably this stone from which people took the amulets.
108. In West Greenland there was a view that mentally deranged people would develop into cannibals. It was said that they ate more and more violently, and in the end would eat up their housemates. It is clear that the sick man also believed this himself. This explains the housemates' fear. The West Greenlanders shared this view with some Boreal Indians (cf. Landes 1938).
109. Salt water ice is highly flexible.



Fig. 50. Picking up ice pieces for drinking water, Tasiusaq, 1966. (Photo Ida Nicolaisen).

110. Giesecke Isfjord.
111. Arctic shark.
112. Cf. Appendix 1, notes 4 and 5.
113. Cf. note 44.
114. Cf. H.C. Petersen 1997:118ff.
115. A canvas boat is a rowing-boat with a wooden skeleton, covered with canvas (later also painted over with fibreglass); cf. Kapel 1973.
116. Shooting-screens placed on the front of the line rack are peculiar to Upernavik. There may be a second shooting-screen on the prow of the kayak, as in the rest of Greenland.
117. *Maanneq* is breathing-hole hunting, where a group of hunters spread over a system of breathing-holes.
118. Barrage nets were used by the KGH at *Kangersuatsiaq*. Beluga and perhaps narwhal were chased into a sound, which was then blocked with nets at both ends.
119. There are no ice fjords in the immediate vicinity of Kangersuatsiaq. Around 1960 the more warmth-seeking fish reached well up into Upernavik Municipality.
120. I.e. an impurity.
121. Dried *ammassat* get very hard and lose some of their taste, and presumably also some of their nutritional content, if they are exposed to rain during drying.
122. After 1950 liquid pyroligneous acid was used to give fish a 'smoked' taste.
123. In certain areas the *paaruliaq* is 'caught' by the first person to see it, no matter who kills it.
124. Later the hunters abandoned this wish for separation from the fishermen's associations.
125. These barrel hoops were made of wood – osiers.

Appendix 2

Information from a number of people on hunting conditions etc. from Ammassalik Municipality

Marie Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG2B1)

19 July 1960

The informant died in the autumn of 1969.

A little about life in a communal house

I have lived in a communal house.[1] There were often song-feasts in a communal house. Sometimes the lamps were put out for spirit-calling. I had four brothers, and I was the only girl, the youngest.

In the summer people moved out to a hunting camp. All sorts of people gathered there. We used to be on the island of Aammaat at Ikkatteq. At that time there were many seals, especially hooded seals, which at that time we called *imarmiisit* [those out in the sea, as opposed to those on ice-floes – RP].

From there we went away, all at the same time. That happened when the evenings had got dark. Some people went to Akerninnaq, and over there lie Qeertartivatsiaq and Kakalik, where there was also a winter settlement. Some people lived at Innartivaq farther up the fjord.

At the hunting ground out there, there would often be a festive atmosphere. When someone had caught a big animal, the kayaks paddled in towards land singing. They sang like that for example when someone had caught a *nertik,* that is either a narwhal, a beluga, a walrus or a polar bear. From the singing those at the camp could hear what it was that had been caught. In my childhood I was not aware of this. Out there, there was also a very old woman who had difficulty walking. Once, when there was shouting that the kayaks were singing on their way to the camp, she went up to the lookout hill and after listening a little, she said: "Alaqqaajik has caught a *nertik*. He is singing his grandfather's song".[2] She knew right away what it meant.

There was a lot of singing at the hunting camps. Sometimes there was a song-contest. I can remember that someone came once from the north for a song-contest. It was Maqaa (Maratsi) who challenged Kunnak to a song-duel. Many people came. Several umiaks came from the north singing, accompanied by a lot of kayaks. Kunnak had to entertain his guests. Kunnak had two wives. My daughter who now lives in Kulusuk is the granddaughter of Kunnak. Uiiliimmajik [Vilhelm Kunnak – RP] is the brother of my first husband.

When people gathered in that way, there was also bartering.

In the late summer people went to their respective settlements. Some went to Akerninnaq, others to Sarpaq close by here. At that time, when not so many people lived at Tiileqilaaq, there was a settlement at Sarpaq. On the opposite side of Sermilik, Kakalik was inhabited, and a little farther in, on the same side as Kakalik, Qeertartivatsiaq was also a winter settlement. Farthest in on the same side, Qipa was occupied by a single family.

Several families often lived in the settlement houses. Even unrelated families went together to a settlement, and lived in the same house. They fixed up the house and covered it with a roof together. For the roof they laid on a wood frame as a bearing construction. The occupants of the house cut turves and laid them on the woodwork, and they strewed crumbled turf on these sods. Such houses were very warm.

When a hunter came home with a catch in the winter the meat had to be boiled over a lamp – they had no stoves. They put the pieces in the cooking pot and when it had been boiled they distributed meat among the housemates.

Did both men and women help when the house was to be prepared in the autumn?

– Yes. Not everyone had an umiak; but families without an umiak were also given the opportunity to go in an umiak to a hunting camp.

Since I was born at a summer camp, my family almost stayed living there. I have often regretted that it didn't happen. We travelled around so much in my childhood, when we lived with my maternal uncle, that I never had a chance to be taught in a school. It was only after I had become a young girl that I lived with someone who had learned to read. Since she had an ABD [an ABC of West Greenlandic – RP], I learned to read from her, and only later did I learn to read satisfactorily. I am very eager to learn, and have read what I could get hold of, both textbooks and stories.

In a communal house, various nuclear families often lived, often related to one another in the sense that people in the parents' generation were often siblings. The various nuclear families were separated in the house by posts to which stretched skins were attached. These skins divided the sleeping platform into family partitions. The distance between the posts varied according to the sizes of the individual nuclear families. A man with the two wives needed a large section. In my childhood the man who was to become my father-in-law, that is my daughter's grandfather, had two wives. In Kulusuk too there was a man with two wives. Within the same sleeping platform section the man and wife lived with their smaller children. One of Kunnak's [the father-in-law's] wives, Natseq, had two small children. His second wife, Qivi, had six children. Kunnak's first wife had ten children, but most of them died.

When people had moved into a house at the same time, they also moved out of the house at the same time. The deciding factor was the time for spring hunting, and at first people went out to a hunting camp in a sledge.

During the winter visitors came from other winter settlements. The pleasure of anticipation spread when it was shouted that a visitor was on the way over the ice. In special cases many visitors might come at the same time. I can remember that people from Kulusuk came once for a singing-contest on Sarpaq. My mother wanted to go and see the singing-contest. She said to me that I was to stay here at Tiileqilaaq; but I wanted to be there and got stubborn, and in the end I was allowed to go along. My, how they sang that evening! You could also go on short visits to get a singing-evening out of it, and I think that they did that in the old days too. The song-feasts were held in the evening when people had come back from their various chores. I have seen *tippalersertit*, people who sang other people's duel-songs for fun. There were two women in particular. One stood in front of the other and sang at her. But not everyone participated in singing. Some people were known as non-singers. In our family we didn't sing much. There was one that I called *ukuaajiga*, 'my small aunt', the wife of my maternal uncle – my mother called her *ukua*, 'sister-in-law'. I just imitated my mother. This aunt sang, and so did my mother's sister, Juliette. We were just one big household; but among us most people didn't sing. All the same we enjoyed it when some household members sang. I also learned to sing, but didn't sing so much. In my childhood I could sometimes take the drum and sing.

Uaajeerneq[3] was also performed. I once saw Taqqisimat's grandfather Taqqisimat, Domedia's husband, perform an *uaajeerneq* number, which he called *Uppalinngivakajikka mamiangisuttarpakka*, "I am ashamed of my poor lower extremities", and such numbers. It was about being ashamed of your thin legs. Some people who performed *uaajeerneq* had a kind of club or stick. But they didn't hit children, at least I can't remember anyone hitting children during these numbers. But they could be scary to look at.

When a hunter who lived in a communal house caught a seal, all the housemates would eat some of it. In my childhood there were many seals. When we had come from the summer hunting camp back to the winter settlement, but had not yet moved into the house, they put the newly-caught seals on the point over there where the unflensed seals were stored. All the dogs were tethered. The seals then froze, and they had a wonderful 'scent' to them in the winter. A couple of days ago I also spoke about these things. I was so fond of those seals that had been frozen unflensed. The frozen, unflensed seals were also eaten communally. When the frozen, unflensed seals had been placed on the umiak that was up on its stand, the seals were carried into the house in the morning. We were sometimes woken up by someone chopping bits off the frozen meat, and it would then be handed out to the housemates.

Dried meat too was eaten communally. When you wanted to eat some of it, it was brought in from a store (*qui*) close to the house. It had already been brought there from a cache (*qimululuik*),[4] and it could be a long business getting anything from there. I think a lot about dried meat these days, because we don't have it at present.

We also ate a few plants. My mother used to gather rose root [*Sedum rosea*] and preserved it in blubber. My mother always insisted on gathering such things for the winter. She also cut dried meat into small pieces and put the pieces in a skin bag filed with train-oil. It was lovely when they were taken out of the bag in the winter. Those sorts of bags were hidden close to the houses with a low wall around them.

Greenland shark was also caught in the winter. You made a hole in the ice, and stuck a pole with a harpoon head of tusk down in it, and when the Greenland shark came to the bait, you stabbed it and pulled it up. You boiled the meat, which was called *akkulugaq*.[5] After it was frozen, you ate it with blubber. You kept some of the meat in the house until it got a bit 'high'. It tasted delicious. Greenland shark can still be caught. There are not so many seals any more, after all. When you had treated Greenland shark meat properly, put it on the snow and then hung it up, it tasted delicious as dried fish.

The kayak season lasted rather a long time in the autumn. They continued using the kayak until the ice closed the waters.

In my childhood and well into my youth there was only a shop in Tasiilaq. I was born the same year as the shop was built. I was born the same year as Pastor Elias, I found out [Elias Lauf, b. 1894, was pastor in Ammassalik in the years 1940-1945 – RP]. All trading in the district took place in Tasiilaq, both summer and winter. Before the war [1939-1945 – RP] we used to get pearled barley and rice handed out at Christmas. That isn't handed out any more.

But sometimes the hunters went to more faraway places to spend a winter there. Some of them went south, others north. Some also sometimes spent a winter at Kangersuttuatsiaq[6]. That was mainly people from Sermiligaaq.

In the summer many char were caught – both those on their way up and those on their way down. There is also a char place slightly south west of us.[7] But on the other side of the fjord, too, below a hill over there, there is a place with a lot of char. It is called *Qittattit erniviat*.[8] When people had caught many fish, some of them were distributed to their fellow settlers. But some of the fish were dried. In former times char were not smoked, and they were only preserved by drying them or salting them.

In earlier times too there were many *ammassat* (capelin). Now there are no more *ammassat* in significant numbers. At several places one could catch *ammassat* when they came to the beach.

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG1A)

13 July 1969

The informant was born in 1911, and spent almost his whole life by the Sermilik fjord. The exceptions were three years in Tasiilaq and Qernertivartivit, and one year at Nattivit between the mouth of Sermilik and Iserteq. His information made it possible for me to analyse the relationship between family relationship and house-sharing.

In the communal house various families lived beside one another. Sometimes there are eight sections of the sleeping platform, sometimes six or seven, or even four or five.

Life would often be merry in such a house. In the winter someone might fetch frozen meat, and people would eat some of it while one person after another told stories. You cut off pieces of the meat that was frozen solid and handed them out. [It was eaten frozen – RP]. In a period like that when it had got cold and the weather was clearing up after snow, you would sometimes be woken up in the morning by someone with an axe chopping some frozen meat on the platform while people were still sleeping. First they cut the pieces of meat out on the floor tiles, and then they began to chop pieces out on the platform without caring about those who were sleeping, who were thus woken up. Even we children were woken by the noise. The pieces were cut out of the frozen seal; but they carried on cutting pieces out, and handed out the pieces to all the occupants. It was an old custom. Food, of whatever kind it was, was shared out among all the occupants of the house. Only in recent years have we stopped that. Now what we do is we put food out when someone comes into the house. If we still lived as several families in the same house, we would also share the food equally. But when we got a house each we only gave it to family members when they came visiting.

The distribution of food didn't only happen with a fresh catch, but also, as I said, with frozen, unflensed

seal, as well as dried meat. People did that with all kinds of food: skin bags with preserved rose root. We could have some of those in a bag of hooded seal skin or bearded seal skin, another bag filled with dried meat, another full of crowberry. They tasted delicious. You didn't take small portions from such a bag; you took the whole bag in at once. You shared out the contents among all the occupants in the house, as you filled the bowl with the contents and took it to your housemates.

Then you bent over a hooded seal stomach filled with good things from the summer, and firm and dry on the surface. You opened it in the middle, and it had to be used as something to add to the other dishes. The women didn't take part in the communal eating, only the men. When the men were full, the rest was distributed to the other occupants of the house. This kind of distribution could then continue later until the contents had been eaten up. The more miserly people did not carry on handing it out until the last piece; the less miserly did hand it out until there was no more. The contents of other bags, too, for example crowberry, were eaten in the same way once they had been taken into the house. There was plenty of food. After all, there were also many seals then.

There was no one who complained over those who didn't share out the last of the things brought in, they had equal shares anyway when the others shared out theirs.

At that time people – compared with today – were good to one another, not least when it came to food. When the hunters came home from hunting, they entertained one another by telling stories, and that's how things went from day to day. There was no one who went around moping. Today people can be miserable to look at, for example people who are drunk; but then no one was drunk.

One evening they might sing songs. The house was big, and there were many people in it. They sang loud.

Another evening people could entertain themselves with *arsaanneq*, the 'pulling game' inside the house. The object of the game was a piece of skin. You removed the skins that divided the sleeping platform into partitions, and the game was played on the platform. It continued on the floor. Some of them stood on the floor and tried to pull others down on the floor. When people on the platform got tired, they were pulled down on the floor, and the noise continued down on the floor. At that time people were strong. After all, they lived exclusively on the strong Greenlandic food. It could also be continued outside. Some people tried to pull the skin down through the house passage while others pulled the other way. You held on to it even when you couldn't pull the piece towards you. It was often a valuable thing you played for, for example seat skin of polar bear, a harpoon head with a foreshaft, a hunting line – that is, various things that a hunter can always use. So you wouldn't let go, even when you couldn't take it from the others. Sometimes they might only pull it away from the others when they had got outside the house. It wasn't unusual for the participants to come out in their indoor trousers and with naked upper bodies, and even with bare feet. There was a great shout when someone pulled it off someone else.

When you removed the skins that formed the partitions in the house, of course you left the ceiling posts standing; for it was those that held up the roof. A beam went down through the whole length of the house and the posts carried this beam. They had such a distance between one another that skins for partitioning could be attached to them, so that each partition had enough room for a family. The sections that were formed that way might for example be eight in number. The skins that were fixed to the posts (and to the back wall) thus divided the sleeping platform up for the individual families. In the family's section you lay on a platform-skin.

The space underneath the platform is not divided up in the same way. That forms a continuous space. But a family's property lies under its own sleeping platform section, although they might go beyond the limits a little.

You could also give skins away. That was not a real distribution; but you could give skins for example to family members, or to strangers, for example skins for soles if somebody needed them. If anyone was short of anything you gave it to them, whether you were related to them or not.

At that time not so many skins were sold to the shop. So in the autumn you could see all the hunters well equipped with sealskin clothes. We did the same ourselves – wore skin socks, skin trousers and the like, because we had enough skins. The less good hunters were less well dressed; but good hunters' families had

good clothes on. Even their children were well dressed. No one froze, because of the skin clothing.

Around the settlement there were often many caches.[9] Each family had its cache. But it could happen that you hadn't filled up your cache and you could then fill it up along with a relative, a brother for example. Then you put markers on the things so you could tell them from the others. But if anyone had so many provisions that they could last until the next spring, they had to have a big cache. In some of them you could stand up.

Two families who shared a cache also lived in the same house. But it was such that whoever you lived with in a house, a family that had a lot of provisions had its own cache, and another housemate had his or her own. But if a family had only gathered few provisions, it could share the cache with another – a housemate.

From a family's cache things were fetched if you fancied something tasty or if there was scarcity so that the children began to get hungry.

You didn't put as much in the actual storage chambers.[10] When something was fetched from the cache, and was not to be eaten immediately, it was often placed under the umiak.

You could use the same umiak as your housemates. Housemates could have several umiaks; but often a couple of families travelled together in an umiak. If it was difficult to sail with all the winter provisions at the same time, you could sail in two stages.

When two families who were to live in the same house used the same umiak, they travelled together.

In some cases it happened when two housemates used the same umiak that the hunters in the two families jointly collected skins for the umiak; but it could also happen that only one got the skins for it.

The housemates could have many caches, and the same man could have several. During the first few years after I had moved here, I had a cache quite close by, and another on the point towards Ikaasattivaq.[11]

I caught rather a lot in the first period here. In the nearest cache I could stand up without bumping my head on its ceiling; but I filled it up with dried meat and dried *ammassat*. In the first period after I moved here, there were still *ammassat*. When we dried them, we didn't immediately put them in bags. We pulled a string through them – we call that *kaportartungu* ['sticking it through' – RP]. We laid them together and pulled a string through close to the tail-fin. We did that when the fish was dry. A string like that can be as long as 5-6 metres. Some rows were shorter. They tasted delicious. The *ammassat* that were put straight into bags didn't taste of anything. But at that time they tasted good, and were easy to chew. They tasted good, and they were crisp when they were not exposed to rain. But if the *ammassat* were not protected during drying from wet weather, they got tough and lost their taste. In the same way you could get tasty dried meat when you protected it well against wet weather. The meat that isn't watched over well during drying gets wet and dry, then wet and dry again, and doesn't taste good.

In the communal house people had their drinking water family by family. Each family had its own drinking water. A married couple and their children shared their drinking water. I haven't seen drinking water that was shared by the whole house.

The blubber-board wasn't shared by the whole house either, although you couldn't say that each family had its own. But the families who didn't have their own blubber-board could borrow one from those who had one. Families in the same house didn't hold things back from one another, especially if the fathers and mothers of the families were siblings. The property of a brother or sister was almost your own property, so you would let one another borrow things. There were brothers and sisters who were not so close, and normally didn't lend to or borrow from one another. But most siblings were very close, and could borrow from one another with no difficulty as if they had shared ownership.

That's how my brother Moses and I are. When I am in his house, his food is mine. When Moses is in my house, my food is also his. That's how we are, and some people sometimes wonder about it. But we grew up together, and the feeling of togetherness continued after we had grown up, although despite everything we each have our own possessions.[12]

I have heard the adults say many times to the children in the communal house: "When you grow up, you should be like this and like that!"

In the spring when you had to move out of the house, you first reached an agreement with the other families in the house. No one moved out without announcing it. If a family for example was finished with its tent skins and was ready to move out, it first

waited for the families who did not have them prepared, and only when everyone was finished did they move out at the same time[13] – although some families might decide to move out into a tent before the others.

When I was a child, no one lived here in the summer. Everyone went to a hunting camp farther out in the fjord, since there were many seals out there. At the beginning of the autumn, for example in September, people moved into the fjord again, and scattered to the various winter settlements, some on the western side of the fjord, others on this side.

When they had thus spread to various settlements, the housemates also moved at the same into the house. For everyone had come out of the house in the spring when they moved out into tents [and had uncovered the house – RP]. So in the late summer they had to expect that the house had been prepared for moving in. When more families were going to spend the winter in a house than the last time, they had to rebuild the house. They had to break down the end wall and make the house longer. In that case they had to wait until this work was finished. When the families who were going to spend the winter together were fewer than the last time, they made the house correspondingly smaller by knocking down the end wall and building a new end wall farther in.

When they built the house, the work was supervised by older people who could no longer themselves take part in the actual work. They gave the young people instructions on how they should do it. The actual wall-building was mainly done by the young people in the house.

It was lovely to move into a house. There was a special smell in the house, just as there was a special smell in the spring when you moved out into the tent. In the summer people lived more in individual families in a tent, and it was very quiet. But when you moved into a house where many other families also lived, there was such a noise of everybody talking that at first you had trouble hearing what was said.

Sometimes too a house was built where no one had built before. The deciding factor in this case is the hunting conditions. At that time people chose a place to live solely in terms of the hunting conditions. Although they often said "This is a lovely place," they meant it was a good hunting place. They didn't choose the place to live because they thought it was beautiful.

People thought right enough that a place where there were good caves for provisions, where there was a river, for example, had good points that were worth considering. But if there weren't good water conditions at the place, you could always use calved ice for water. You can find provision caches anywhere, and you can always easily furnish a cave as a provision cache. I have also myself furnished a storage cache. It isn't difficult when you look for a place where the snow doesn't get deep. Caves that are sheltered from the prevailing wind can be buried under snow. When my cache was buried under snow masses I dug it out with my brother Mathias within two days. The dried meat is too valuable to lose. We had to dig through 40 feet of snow. We had reached far from the place we had begun when in the end we reached the wall of the cave.

For you made a stone wall in front of the cave and the stones had to be laid so close that the dogs couldn't get in. There was only one opening through which a man could get in and out, and it was closed up with stones. We sealed off the holes with *attaalissat*, which looked bluish under the water.[14] For when the holes were not sealed off, snow got into the cave when the wind was blowing. The contents could then be spoiled. When there was no famine at the place, the stores could last a long time. Sometimes the spring came before the provisions were used up. In the first period when I lived here, I never managed to use my provisions up. The winter hunting was so good that you had enough to live on. Both dried meat and dried *ammassat* could then last until the next summer.

In the summer people lived separately in families; but everyone gathered at a place on Ikkatteq. Ikkatteq is an island just beside another island, Ittitalik, and close to the island of Aammaat. It was especially on these islands that people had summer hunting camps. Just outside these islands, others too set up camp at Ikaasakitseq.[15] These islands were also used as winter settlements. There were house ruins on all of them.

People from Iserteq had their own summer hunting camps, especially towards the south, towards Pikiitti and Suunikajik; but some of them had their camps closer to us, at Nattivit, which is connected to the western bank of Sermilik. For example Henning Ignatiussen and his brothers lived there before. I have myself lived at Nattivit. It was a beautiful fertile place with good hunting conditions.

When we lived at Nattivit, my father caught four

polar bears, and my paternal uncle caught one, Our uncle too, my paternal aunt's husband, caught one polar bear. We wanted for nothing. We had food for the whole winter, and the dogs were fed on seal meat.

At the various settlements in my childhood there was no schooling or education. I went to school for one year, when I went to baptismal preparation when I was seven with my family. I was taught by Julius Olsen and Christian Rosing.[16] One of the reasons for this was that my family rarely lived with other families.

When I was a child, my father often shared a house with his cousin Hans Ignatiussen, Henning Ignatiussen's father. That was in Akerninnaq and Pupik. There were houses too where only one family lived. [I cannot tell whether he means only one nuclear family, or that all the occupants of the house were related to one another – RP]. When we lived at Akerninnaq, we were all related to one another. My father and his cousin Hans, and Hans' brother Markus all lived there.

When people lived in a house who were all related to one another, the oldest man in the house had a certain authority over the others.

But if food was to be shared out among the housemates, it was the individual household head who decided that. If something had to be fetched from the cache, it was also the individual father of a family who decided that. If he could not himself fetch the things, he sent someone else for them.

The oldest man's authority when they lived like this in a house without other families could be such for example that he could decide when they should move out of the house. Most household members went to the same hunting camp. Here again it was the oldest man who decided where they should go.

It was also the oldest man in such households who decided when they should move into a house.

But the oldest wife in the household also had something to say in these matters.

Related people stayed together, partly because they liked one another, partly because the less well off people could thus share in the catch and the provisions of the more prosperous ones. For that reason people who were related often lived in the same house, and camped at the same place.

Often a married couple with their children and the children's spouses and children lived in the same house. Usually a couple lived with their sons and their nuclear families. But if a daughter wanted to live with her parents her husband could leave his own household to live with his in-laws. But the couples both of whose parents were alive could live alternately with one or the other's parents. Only if the one pair of parents died would they live permanently with the other's parents, until the other one's father died. Then the man could decide for himself where he wanted to live.

After I had grown up I always lived with my father, except for one winter at Sarpaq when I didn't live with him. There were cases where I would have liked to decide for myself where to live, and felt like moving away from my father. But by this time he wasn't hunting so well any more, so I thought that it would be a pity for him if I moved away. I was the one who was supporting him then. In my childhood he supported me, and he had taught me the hunter's skills until I could manage for myself. He helped me when I could not stand on my own two feet, so I had to help him when I could take care of myself while he was having trouble managing the hunting. He was good to us, and we were well off. That was the situation of the hunters.

It was another matter when somebody had been educated and got a job. When their superiors ordered them to move to another place, they had to do it whether they were sorry for their parents or not. They had to do what their superiors demanded of them.

At that time it was the situation with the hunting families that a son had to move too when the father said "We will live here for the winter", no matter whether he wanted to live there or not. No matter what he himself wanted, the son had to move to the place as the father decided. That was the way it was for all of us. We couldn't decide for ourselves about these things. As long as your father was alive, you had to obey his wishes.

In my youth all the men around here were hunters. There were no communal houses where wage-earners lived. It's true that there were people who held religious services on Sundays, Whether they were paid for that I can't say. Around the time when I myself began to catch seals, the last adult was baptized. That was around 1925.[17] I myself was baptized in 1919, when I turned seven. I was born in 1911, and I have a few memories from 1913.

At that time the only shop in the district was in Tasiilaq. You have yourself seen the old shop beside the road. That was it. All shopping had to be done in

Tasiilaq. People from the district went shopping to Tasiilaq, rarely alone, but usually with a companion. Only when we had unsettled weather for a period did several people go off at once. From here we often went overland on foot. We walked there over the glacier and on. We might paddle there from here in a kayak, and then walk from there overland. Sometimes we paddled to Ikkatteq, and walked from there over Ilittertuaq,[18] especially when the route along the outside of the island was blocked by ice. In the summer when we had a camp close to Ikkatteq, we only had a short trip to the shop. We paddled there in a kayak, and umiaks also went that way.

At that time we supplied ourselves with houses, with clothes and with food, so to speak all our necessities. I suppose the things we bought most of were warm clothes for the winter: woollen socks, knitted sweaters. But it was only rarely that I saw knitting-wool. People who knitted were in fact a rare sight. Until my youth there were not many who knitted.

But at that time the full use of the rifle had begun. As far back as I can remember, people used rifles and shotguns. But in my earliest childhood there were not many people who could use a gun from a kayak. At that time they still used the harpoon for sealing.

The shooting-screen for ice-hunting was very useful, as it would otherwise have been hard to get close to the seal on the ice without it escaping down its hole. Once I caught six seals on one day in June.

In my childhood people caught many seals by peep-hunting. This method was used when the ice had closed off all the waters and before the seals began to crawl up on the ice.

In the winter we mainly caught ringed seal.[19] My father caught seals on new ice, especially with an ice-hunting harpoon, since he used a small harpoon head, the *sammiaq*. It was only rarely that he used a gun. While we lived at Nattivit, I once went with him. He had no gun with him, only an ice-hunting harpoon with a *sammiaq*. Within a very short while he caught five seals, and we went off home again.

I looked around, and each time I looked at him, he was pulling a new seal up. At that time I very nearly ran away. I heard a seal scraping under the ice to make a breathing-hole. I thought that I was going to fall through the ice. That winter the cold was so bitter that the seals often had to break a hole through the ice at the breathing-hole. When I ran to him, frightened by the sound I heard, he made a sign to me to stop, but I just ran on. When I came up to him, he asked me where I had heard the sound. I said "Over there". I had my father's gun with me, and he asked: "Why didn't you go over to it? You can go over to a seal that is digging a hole through the ice without it getting suspicious, and you can easily shoot it."

When snow comes on the ice, you can't hunt any more at the breathing-holes, at least you can't do it alone any more. I have caught seals at a breathing-hole many times when I had a companion with me. Two men walk along, one behind the other, so that the one at the back treads in the front one's footsteps at the same speed as his companion. When they come to a breathing-hole, they stop a little, and when the front one has taken up his position, the one at the back walks on. Hardly has he gone before the unsuspecting seal comes up in its breathing-hole, apparently thinking that the man has walked on from the breathing-hole. When you come alone to a breathing-hole on snow-covered ice, the seal won't come to that breathing-hole. But when a man has a companion, whom he sometimes carries on his back to the breathing-hole, and the companion has walked away, the seal comes up without the slightest suspicion.

For peep-hunting too, there should preferably be two of you. But in the time shortly before peep-hunting passed out of use it was sometimes done by one person who was both peeper and stabber. But in earlier days there were always two men for peep-hunting.

Maanneq was used a lot: a group of men, often housemates, spread out over a seal's various breathing-holes. When it had rained on snow-covered ice, so that the snow had become a new crust of ice over the old ice, you got thick ice on which you could walk around without the seals noticing it. We caught many seals at the breathing-holes. Once I caught a seal at a breathing-hole; but there was no wound on it. It was probably the pressure that had killed it.

In general housemates often went hunting together, especially for the bigger game – those we call *nertik*. And in the summer we did that with all the bigger animals, including beluga, narwhal and walrus. Back at the camp you would know when someone had caught a *nertik*, even when you couldn't see the kayaks. When you heard a song from the sea, for example you heard that the hunter was singing his

grandfather's song, you knew that the man had caught a *nertik*. "The hunters are coming home singing", was the shout. Such animals were towed in by the whole group.

Many times during my childhood I have also seen the hunters drive a polar bear in front of them. You wouldn't shoot at it on such a hunt. You would use the lance on it. Nor would you use the rifle on the harpooned narwhal and beluga, but the lance. I have also participated in these hunts.

When you had harpooned an animal from which catch-shares were to be given, these shares went to those who hit the animal with the lance, whether they were housemates or not. I've heard that in West Greenland 'the catcher' himself distributed the catch-shares to those who were entitled to them. Here those who are entitled to do so take their own share from the animal. The big seals were only cut up by men, not by women. The women did however cut up bearded seals and hooded seals; but animals bigger than those were cut up, as I have said, by the men. Only when the distribution of the catch-shares was over did the women take over the rest of the work.[20]

The houses used to be built up with a wall consisting of turf and stone. When the walls had reached the desired height, the house had to be covered. First you positioned the bearing structure made of pieces of wood. This was mainly driftwood that was used for the bearing construction for the covering. But the driftwood you considered suitable for kayak-building was used for the kayak skeleton. Some of it was naturally also used for the umiak skeleton. Most people used to make the umiak skeleton from driftwood. The rest was used for the house.

House-building began by looking for a place with good turf. You took the turf from there. Then you fetched the stripped turf in an umiak. In some cases, though, you could gather turf from a place that was right next to the house-site. But when there was no turf at the place, you fetched turf in an umiak. You took the turf in large strips and these strips were put on a latticework of wood. When you had placed the turf, you strewed crumbled turf over it. Above the crumbled turf you then laid the outer covering from the summer tent. Those who had lived in the same tent in the summer laid the tent covering over their sleeping platform section. The various tent groups thus laid their tent covering over their own sleeping platform sections. They didn't have shared coverings. Sometimes they laid 'crowberry heather' over the crumbled turf to prevent the tent covering rotting. When the tent covering lay directly on the crumbled turf it rotted quicker, since the heat from the house could collect moisture under it. You could prevent that by laying crowberry heather under the skin covering. When roofing felt became available in the shop, those who could afford it would use that instead of the tent coverings.

The walls from the turf houses that were used last are still standing very well. At Sarpaq just outside Tiileqilaaq, the walls are still intact from the last houses that were used there. They were used after 1930, around 1935 and 1937. At Sarpaq there are many caches that people there used, and which people from here also used. There are also several caches on the other side of the current eddy.

The eddy at Sarpaq is always open; but otherwise all the waters around here are closed by the ice in the winter, apart from the eddy just below the houses here. Last winter it was covered by ice for once, so people could walk on the ice. The ice at both ends of the sound got so thick that it almost blocked off the current in the shallow sound. But just as soon as the current increased again, it was open down there. Sarpaq itself was covered with ice on the same occasion. The cold was also extremely bitter.

The kind of wood that was preferred for the bearing roof construction is *peqissinnaat* or *pingit*, the flexible red wood that is also used for kayak paddles. It is a strong wood. It was also often used for kayak ribs, the kayak coaming and drum hoops etc. The white wood, *akisitteq*, on the other hand, is light, without too many veins, and without too many flaws. We used it in my youth for bird darts, for lances and for kayak skeletons when we wanted a light kayak skeleton. In the winter when you couldn't use the sledge, you had to carry the kayak on your shoulders. If you had to go far from the settlement to get to the ice-edge, you had to carry the kayak on your shoulders. For the harpoon you used red wood, as it was strong wood. The white wood could easily crack. You also used red wood for the sledge. But now old-fashioned sledges have disappeared from here. Only the new type is used today. The sledges of the new type are very light. When I first got a sledge of the new type, I was not sure whether it was solid enough; but it is a solid sledge. It's stronger

than the old-fashioned sledge, and at the same time lighter. Even on deep snow the new sledge drives on the surface of the snow.[21]

In the old times people had dog traces of different lengths, but in equally long pairs. Two lead dogs were given the two longest traces, and then they got shorter in pairs. If for example you had eight dogs hitched, you hitched them in four different lengths. In deep snow it's hard for the dogs to go forward if they all have equally long traces, because then they all have to wade through the snow. Here we often have soft snow. It snows a lot here, not least at Tiileqilaaq. There is not much wind here. In the first few years after I had moved here, there was no wind in the winter, only when there was a *piteraq*.[22] The *neqqajaaq*[23] didn't reach here. We only got hard snow if it had rained. Only in recent years has the *neqqajaaq* reached this area. At settlements with a lot of wind, the snow doesn't get so deep.

To cover the houses you didn't use clay. But I have seen a house – it was Jonathan's house here at Tiileqilaaq – where the covering was sealed with *pujaq* – half-dry, pitch-like train-oil pulp, as well as Markus Ignatiussen's house at Ikkatteq. It didn't drip in those houses. Old *pujaq,* half-dried remains of train-oil drips at old settlements, could gather in layers that are like clay.

While a seal was being flensed all those present, including adults, had a taste of bits of blubber. It was not only meat that was shared out. Boiled gut-casing was also shared out with the housemates. The same was the case with the other offal. People were like that: they wouldn't keep anything to themselves. Everything that was carried into the house, and that could be shared out, was shared out so that everyone could get some of it. If a hooded seal head was boiled, it was laid out and all the men would eat together. This custom is still kept up. In cases of the first catch of a particular species, it was all shared out, and if you had family at the nearest settlements, something was also laid aside for them. When for example you had an unflensed seal at home and met a kayak man from the neighbouring settlement where you had a close relative, you could send a message to the relative: "Say that he should come and enjoy an unflensed seal with us!" When this person, or someone else, came visiting, you fetched unflensed seal into the house, or dried meat from the cache.

After the communal eating you would have a big entertainment, a great song-feast. That is the situation I can remember. Some people held 'pretend' song-duels. Women who participated in such song-feasts also contributed drum songs.

But there were also other forms of entertainment, for example thong games, *assinaaqattarneq*, where only the men tried their strength. The thong was attached to the bearing beam along its whole length. In some cases it was even passed through the wall and fixed to a crossbar outside. It was a marvellous kind of entertainment.[24] I have tried it many times in my youth. The housemates were the spectators.

Ajagaq was also a much-used form of entertainment.[25] There were many entertaining games. Some people were very good at the *ajagaq* game, while others were less good. I can still carve the *ajagaq* game, but I do it mostly to order. After I stopped paddling a kayak, I have had a good secondary income from craft work. People like my work.

If a married couple in a communal house had small and older children, how did the family members arrange themselves to go to sleep?

There were window-platforms, *iippiit*, and the young people slept on the *iippik*. Only the smallest children slept on the family's sleeping platform section. When we ourselves were young we also slept on the *iippik*.[26] The *iippik* would often be very long. In the middle of the front of the room there was a stone elevation that we called *erpertiiva*. Above this place there was often a rack. But the rest of the front wall was furnished with platform planks, and was called *iippik*.

In my youth, besides the big soapstone lamps, there were smaller tin lamps. But in my childhood these were also made of soapstone. They were placed behind the side platform. The floor was lit by floor lamps. With such small lamps the whole room was lit up. It was lovely when all the lamps were lit. Compared with the lighting today their red flames didn't provide much light; but in those days it seemed there was plenty of light from these lamps. All the cooking in the communal house was done with lamp heat, and there was no cooking chamber for heather and scrub fuel in the side passage. I haven't seen anyone using cooking vessels of soapstone myself. In my childhood and youth people used small basins. But I have seen old cooking vessels of soapstone in house ruins. The drying racks on which the cooking vessel

was hung up were strong enough for the heavy weight. The skin thongs that carried the cooking vessel were admirably strong when the cooking vessel was heated up so frequently; but they were also replaced quite frequently.

Several utensils that were used in my childhood have now disappeared. There is a great difference between the daily utensils then and now. In my youth when you didn't have a cooking vessel hanging over the lamp – either during the day or in the evening – you hung a piece of blubber in a container of wood, iron or bone above the lamp, and the train-oil dripped down in the lamp. You didn't have to fill the lamp with train-oil, since the dripping oil was enough. That's the way it was in all households in the old days. When one side of the piece of blubber was all 'boiled' out, you turned it around, and the other side began to drip. Then when it stopped dripping, it was taken down. When the piece had cooled down, you pressed the last train-oil down into the lamp. When the oil in the lamp ran out, you poured the black overflow train-oil from the underbowl back into the lamp again. But some people didn't use the train-oil from the underbowl. Instead they took frozen blubber, and knocked the oil out of it. When you had got all the train-oil out, you poured it in the lamp. In the winter, seal blubber was thick and produced a lot of oil. I have also seen a seal from which the oil was knocked out. They hit it all over without taking the skin off it. They hung it up, and cut a hole down at the back flippers. Through this knocking the oil was pressed out of the blubber and ran down through the opening at the back flippers. In the end the skin was removed and there was no blubber on it.

In the communal house storytelling was one of the most common forms of entertainment. The older people gathered and listened to one of those who was telling a story. But as a child I didn't listen very much to these stories. Sometimes we children did listen to parts of the stories, though. They were about the doings of our ancestors. When there was no other form of entertainment people told stories. My paternal grandmother was very old – you have maybe read Otto Sandgreen's book about Naaja.[27] This Naaja was my great-grandmother's grandfather. My grandmother liked to tell stories about Naaja, the shaman from Innartuaq, who was buried just on the other side of Sermilik. He is supposed to have said to his children that he was very fond of Kangia,[28] 'the innermost part of the Sermilik fjord' in his youth, and that he would like to be laid in his grave there. When he died, his children took his body over to Kangia, close to Tasiilaartik, and his grave lay there. After great waves a few years ago, the grave disappeared. The waves had washed it out to sea. It was very close to the beach.

In the days of the communal houses people kept the dogs tethered. Only in recent years have the dogs begun to be left untethered in the winter. In my childhood the owner of the dog would come out and tether a dog that had worked itself loose, however late at night it might be. All the dogs were tied; for otherwise they would eat some of the various provisions, both unflensed seals and skin bags, or else they might eat the skin on the kayaks that weren't raised up high enough. That's why they were tethered.

If an orphaned child lived in a communal house, he or she had a place on the *iippik*. But if a couple had adopted an orphaned child as their own, it was given a place on the family's sleeping platform section.

An orphaned child who didn't belong to any particular family was everyone's helper. Anyone could give him or her something to do. The orphaned children helped with various things, such as being sent with messages, fetching water, fetching and feeding the dogs, etc. They would also often help hunters who were going out hunting with various things, especially the older hunters, for example to hitch the dogs to the sledge. But they didn't help as long as they were small. It was the big boys who helped this way. They were also given a reward for these small services. They got food either by helping that way, or by helping someone who was making food. An orphan was not given the same care as those whose mother was alive. They ensured they got food by helping.

A widow often had to help too, But she herself would get a lot of help if there were supporters among her closest relatives. A widow who had no close family was not helped in the same way and had to make sure she got food by helping. That's how it was in the time I can remember. Widows helped their fellow settlers and housemates, and in return they were given a reward either in the form of food or skin for clothes. They could for example scrape skins for others.

During the building of a house, others helped if they could. Only the oldest contented themselves with giving advice and could show how the work was to be

done. All the younger people helped to get the work done as quickly as possible, especially when it was so late that one could soon expect snow. For although the tents were meant to be able to tolerate snow, snow on the inside of the house would make it damp and unhealthy. So they tried to get the house finished as quickly as possible.

Before the walls of the house were built, they would dig up so much turf that they had enough. In this too all those who were able to work helped, including the young. We ourselves liked the work of digging up turf. Good turf was particularly nice to work with. In some cases the turf looked good on the surface, but turned out to be full of sand underneath. Turf without sand and without stones could be taken up in uniform sods, and without much effort. Crumbled turf was also gathered all in one go. In those two forms of work I haven't seen any particular division of labour.

I have mentioned that the individual families used their tent coverings as roofing over their own sleeping platform sections. The skin 'wallpaper' on the insides of the walls too would be got in by the individual families. For this they mainly used the hairy inside tent coverings. If you were short of such skin material, you could use old umiak skins as a kind of wallpaper. It was mainly the people who were not so well off who used that kind of skin.

The covering of a kayak with skins was also a shared job. The housemates could help. But if a woman had no others to help her, she could cover the kayak with her husband. I have myself taken part in kayak-covering. When covering the kayak we often worked opposite one another, one on one side, and the other on the other side. If there was no lack of help, the women sewed the skin together while the men tightened the skins together. When the edges of the skins would not reach one another, the men tightened the skins as much as they considered suitable and when they were tightened that way, the women sewed the edges together. Two seams were used, an inside seam and an outside seam. The woman who sewed the inside seam was allowed to begin, and as soon as she had gone some of the way, she was followed by those who sewed the outside seam.

When the work was finished, food was offered and eaten communally. The owner of the kayak was the host. His wife served. Even people who didn't join in the actual work joined in the meal. On such an occasion one might serve dried meat dipped in free-running train-oil or maybe fermented meat.

In the covering of the umiak even more people participated, although this depended on the size of the settlement. But if there were many residents, the work was done by many. It was a lot of work to sew so many skins together, seven or eight bearded seal skins. If you didn't have bearded seal skins, you could use hooded seal skins, or else harp seal skins, which you then sewed end to end. Bearded seal skin is strong, and it can be used for several years. Hooded seal skin is not quite as strong, and can only be used for a few years. When you use the umiak a lot, a covering of hooded seal skin can hardly last more than two years, while bearded seal skin is not worn significantly after two years.

The owner of the umiak did the woodwork himself, while his wife supervised the sewing of the skins before they were pulled over the umiak skeleton. The assembly of the umiak skeleton was normally a job for several men. I have however done this job after my father's death with the help of my wife and my sisters, since I couldn't count on the men's help. It's true there were several men at the settlement; but since I had not made a name for myself in any way, I could not count on the help of the other men. It was hard work. I myself have helped other men with their umiaks; but when no volunteers came, I would not seek their help, and got the help of the women instead. When I had to fix up the umiak for the first time after my father's death, and could only count on the women's help, it was no fun. I also had to compare my work with my father's. I had to replace everything that had been broken. Part of the gunwale and some of the ribs, for example, had to be renewed. It took several people to assemble these parts. The umiak was after all a large craft, so it was slow work to repair it.

The umiak-owner's wife made sure, long before the umiak was to be covered, that enough sinew threads had been twisted for the sewing.[29]

When it had been decided that the umiak was to be covered in the early summer, all the material was organized during the winter. In the same way the mother of the house made sure enough sinews had been twisted when the kayak was to be re-covered in the summer. If you did not twist enough sinew threads in the winter, you would have to get them ready imme-

diately before the re-covering work, and a few times even during the re-covering. But if you had enough material, this preparatory work was done long before the actual job. Then it was only the skins that had to be prepared.

Then when the weather got warmer and was suitable for the work of re-covering the umiak, you could begin as soon as the skins had been made ready. The work was very much easier if you had already got the necessary amount of twisted sinew thread ready[30].

Skin bags that were to be filled up with provisions during the spring hunting were also sewn in the winter, and they were then ready when they were to be used. The twisted sinew threads were ordered according to the purposes for which they were to be used.

The umiak too was sewn together with a double seam, inside seam and outside seam, but on the umiak the distance between the two seams is greater than on the kayak, about 5 cm on the umiak. With this greater distance it does not come apart at the seams so easily. Wherever the seam might come to lie across a piece of the wooden skeleton, one laid a special piece of skin across the wooden piece as protection. This piece of skin is wider than the distance between the two seams. When the covering of the umiak was over, the skin was rubbed with train-oil. You put a piece of blubber on the rock, and the train-oil ran black out of the blubber because of the heat of the sun. The owner rubbed this free-running train-oil across the umiak. You let it dry, and only when this train-oil wasn't sticky any more was the work considered to be finished. But some people repeated the train-oil greasing one more time. If the train-oil felt a little bit sticky it would be hardened when the umiak got into the water. The work of launching the umiak in the water or pulling it up on land was more family work than communal settlement work. Later, when people went over to using wooden boats that were pulled up in the autumn, the pulling-up was a shared job in which everyone helped who was able.

The work of getting the winter provisions into the cache was also done by the household members together.

When the covering of the umiak was finished, this too was concluded with a communal meal. The umiak owner played host. The covering of the umiak was a long task, and you also took breaks to eat together.[31] In the summer some people might begin to boil meat while the rest worked on. The older people might also say to the younger ones: "Go and fetch dried meat and free-running train-oil!", or else they might mention something else with a strong taste. At that time there was no lack of those things.

The first hunting trips in the spring were made on the dog-sledge, and the family came back to the settlement before the ice went away. The owner of the sledge worked with the building of the sledge alone. In my time we too went on hunting trips on a dog-sledge while there was still ice on the sea. But on these early hunting trips we didn't get so far from the settlement. In the spring the hunters wanted to go out and catch basking seals. The dog-sledge is still used just as much. The umiak has passed out of use. The kayak, which is still used, does not have the same importance as before. But the dog-sledge still has the same importance. You could in fact say that the importance of the dog-sledge has increased in recent years, since the winter trips and the winter transport have increased greatly. Since you can even get paid for that kind of work, people have more dogs today. In my youth it was only adult men who had dogs. The young often had no dogs. Today a young man can get himself dogs when he is able to work. In my childhood and youth one had five or six dogs, at most seven. But when I turned 16, I was given twelve dogs by my father. Half of them were adult dogs, half were pups. When I went out hunting for basking seals, I took half of them with me one day, and the other half the next day. So i didn't do their feet any harm. If the dogs had to pull all the time, they would become feeble.

In the communal house one often took the kayak into the house. You took off one gut-casing window, and then you got the kayak pulled in. Sometimes you could take it in through the house passage; but when you couldn't take it in through the house passage, you loosened a gut-casing window and got the kayak in that way. Then you could go to work repairing it. Unfortunately it wasn't only in the summer that the kayak was covered with new skin. It also happened in the winter when the skin was worn thin. Sometimes you only patched the holes; but in the winter when the ice formation got started, patched kayak skins were not quite reliable. They couldn't really take the strain. But as I said the kayak could be taken into the communal house and you could repair or replace the skins. You couldn't do that in the small nuclear family hous-

es. But children's kayaks could be taken into the family houses. I only had a child's kayak for one year. The next kayak I got was full-size.

How many ceiling vents did one have in the communal house?

They didn't have any in my time; but earlier it is said there were ceiling vents.[32] It is said that on some of the houses there were no gut-casing windows; but they had them on the big houses. On some of the houses it is said that there were both gut-casing windows and ceiling-vents that were placed in the middle of the house, above the opening from the house passage to the house interior. On some of the houses they say there was only a ceiling vent, and no gut-casing window; while there were gut-casing windows on others, and these windows were edged with pieces of old kayak skin. The warmth inside the house meant that these edgings on the skins rotted, and had to be replaced in the course of the winter. So you couldn't calculate with just one piece of skin for this purpose. It rotted, and it had to be replaced several times during the winter. In the same way the gut-casing window had to be replaced. People also used gut-casing as a curtain in the tents. Outermost you had the antechamber, but between there and the innermost space you had gut-casing. Gut casings were dried while inflated. The first part of the treatment of gut casing was done either in the winter or in the summer, on the beach, when you filled the gut casing with seawater. When you got the water out of it, you blew it up. In the winter it was treated in frost so it became white. Freeze-dried gut casing was mainly used for the white gut-casing pullovers. As a young man I had such pullovers. They were warm and they were waterproof.

But you had to be careful with that kind of pullover, because you could easily get holes in them. A 'kamik stick'[33] was not used for gut casing. It was softened during freeze-drying. But the transparent gut casings that were dried in the summer, or in the winter without freeze-drying, and were rubbed with a damp cloth and rolled on a bar or stick, were dried on the drying frame. When they were dry they were moistened on the other side and rolled on the other side around another stick, and they were dried again on the drying frame. That was how my grandmother treated that kind of material.

In my childhood old people – and we too for that matter – went to bed as soon as evening came. We had no clocks, after all. As soon as it got dark we lay down. It could happen that when you had slept for a while, you were woken up by some noise. The noise came from people who stayed awake, sometimes until the middle of the night. Then it could happen that you got up again. Then you could sometimes manage to cook food twice before it got light outside. When you couldn't see the sky in overcast weather, you calculated the time by the tides, but when the sky was clear you calculated the time by *Nalaartik*, the star Vega. You could for example hear someone say: "It will soon be light, now it is high tide," and soon after that the gut-casing windows would get lighter. In particular, when you had grown up so much that you had begun to paddle in a kayak, you waited with longing for the light in the morning, especially when it was fine weather, the wind was calm and bird cries came from out on the fjord. On such mornings the guillemots and little auks were the only things making a sound, and this was often a sign that there must be many seals. So you waited impatiently for the coming of the light.

Markers showing where the seals were are used to this very day. When we went off, on a trip across the fjord we could pass a whole row of marker-lines to the place where the seals were, *qammavik*.

When we came to such a place for seals, where another hunter, for example a good friend, was waiting on an ice-floe, we would often go up on the same ice-floe to talk to him, and to wait for a seal with him, until we decided it was best to find another ice-floe on another *qammavik*. Or we might get on to an iceberg from which we could keep a lookout.

When we waited for seals on a *qammavik* in windy weather, we usually turned our backs to the wind. Only when there was no alternative did we wait for the seals with our faces to the wind. Otherwise we always turned our backs to the wind. The seals could smell us, but seals are different. Some dived down, but came up again not much farther off than before, and some simply stayed in the same place and stared at us. Some had their snouts up and looked around, looked at you and then looked away. Other seals, perhaps far off, might hurry down as soon as they saw you so they wouldn't enter your field of vision again. So in recent years it could happen that the only seals you saw disappeared, perhaps the only ones whose skins you could have sold in a month. It was very annoying.

Does that mean that on a qammavik you paddled on

the windward side of the other kayaks that were waiting there?

Yes, we did, but on the ice it was different. When the seals had crawled up on the ice, you couldn't get to windward of them without scaring them. As soon as they could smell you they disappeared. However many seals there might be at the breathing-hole, they all disappeared as soon as you got to windward of them, even those that were far off. So you had to approach them from the leeward side. On the sea in a kayak it is different. The seals don't stay on the surface of the sea, but regularly dive down under the water. So you could approach them without thinking about the wind direction. The seal moves too, and comes by itself. But basking seals that are lying still on the ice, you have to make allowances for them. I have caught quite a few seals at a breathing-hole, but always with a gun. [This paragraph was not a direct reply to the question, which involves West Greenlandic attitudes – RP].

When we waited for a seal in a kayak, with the risk that it might smell us, that is when we waited there with our backs to the wind, it was mostly because of the cold wind. It was to protect ourselves from the cold. Often we had to sit like that a whole day when we had no other possible way of earning a living than sealing. So we considered ourselves, not the seal's sense of smell. When a seal stared at you it wouldn't become afraid, even if it could smell you. Only when it couldn't see you, or was a ringed seal, would it disappear, frightened by the smell. But another seal that had seen you would stay at the surface or it would dive under the water only to come up again at the same place. When I was young I often had to be out in a kayak for a whole day, and my companions did too. Even when you had made a catch, you tried to catch more, and only when you couldn't use the sights on the rifle any more would you go off home. So you had to turn your back to the wind. When you froze, you thought far too much about the warmth back in the house.

When you were at an *ammassat* place[34] and the catching began, the family worked together. The grown-up, unmarried people helped the parents. The father scooped *ammassat* up from the water, and the young unmarried son scooped them up too. The daughters helped to fetch the fish up and spread them out to dry. All the children who were able to work helped too. That's how the work was divided up. Those who carried the fish up from the beach poured them out on the ground, while the drying team spread them out. But some people worked like this: those who carried the fish up spread them out to dry themselves. When they had poured the fish on the ground, they began to spread them out. The father of the household who scooped them up on the beach decided himself when they had enough, or when they needed a break. Then the father might continue scooping after he had rested. He could do that as long as there were enough fish. But when it became clear that the fish would soon disappear, he would continue without caring about his tiredness. I know that well myself. I have no children, so since my youth I have had to work without help. I had to make the best use of the time without caring about my tiredness. When I got busy I could scoop up enough before my wife and any other helpers had carried it all up. Often, to get the fish in the scoop-net, you had to take them with quick grabs. You often had to do that when the fish were just swimming along by the beach. When the fish began to spawn, you could fill up the scoop even with slow scooping. But with such fast scooping you could catch enough within a very short time. When I fished *ammassat* that way, I caught enough fish within two days, and stopped. During the drying, my wife and I kept watch over the fish. We had no one else to help us. Drying, too, was a job for the whole family.

You also had to give some of the fish to widows without supporters. You gave them some that you had scooped up and hadn't used yourself. The widows could get fish from various families, and could also get quite a few fish in for themselves. They could thus gather some winter provisions. They would often come to the *ammassat* place, for example as paddlers. We called dried *ammassat* on a string *amusimalit*, 'the string-drawn'. If for example they form a row 5 metres long, they can last considerably longer than the dried meat of a whole seal. The *ammassak* may be a small fish, but it can be got in large quantities, so that they can last a very long time. If you eat them with blubber, you can get pleasantly full. *Ammassat* and dried meat are excellent winter provisions. As long as you didn't have to live on them alone, they could last a whole winter. In my first year at Tiileqilaaq there were many seals, and *ammassat* came in large shoals. *Ammassat* often came to the beach before my dried *ammassat* from the previous summer had been used up. We

could eat a lot of fresh meat during the winter. We had a lot of Greenlandic food, and we could also buy some shop goods when we went on the dog-sledge over to Tasiilaq.

The work of drying meat at the summer camp was also done through household cooperation. It often took the form that the mother of a group of brothers who were hunters flensed their catch and issued orders. She did this more often than the wife of the hunter [i.e. the catcher of the individual seal – RP]. It was only rarely the hunter's wife who supervised the flensing work. In my earliest childhood it was only my grandmother who supervised this work. She flensed the catch of her sons and sons-in-law.

When they thought about the relationship between parents and children, some people said "When mother dies, or father dies, we will ourselves take over the responsibility for our property; but as long as one of them is alive, he or she will be in charge of it." People often talked that way, especially about the female head of the household.

If you wanted to give away some sort of food, the female head of the family said "Here you are!" – everyone spoke in a friendly way to one another.

Were large whales caught?

No, only beluga and narwhal. I haven't heard of earlier catches of minke whale in the surroundings. But shortly after I had joined the ranks of the grown-ups, one of my relatives, Nikolaj, son of Justuusi at Ikkatteq, caught a minke whale outside their settlement. Nikolaj Maqi also caught two minke whales. I have myself caught one at Tilileqilaaq, and Efraim Larsen has caught one. The minke whale was flensed just like a beluga. The one I caught was much bigger than an adult beluga. It was in fact not fully grown, although it wasn't a young one either. The adults must be big. The same summer I caught a beluga. That was in July, and in August I caught the minke whale I mentioned. In addition there were many seals in that same summer. We had more mattak from beluga and minke whale than we could eat.

The situation with minke whales, beluga or narwhal or walrus was that 'the catcher' first took his share of the breast section. Then those entitled to parts were given their share, and once they had got their share, anyone could flense from the rest and get the pieces of meat they cut from the animal. The hunters who had stopped hunting were given side pieces. If a person who was to have some of the side wasn't present, one of his relatives could cut his share out for him. So the older men got such shares. This also happened with other animals, for example side pieces of walrus with the skin, or of a seal with the skin, even when the old man in question did not know that something had been caught.

The widows also got something. From the catcher's part food was given to the various people. If it was a whale, he gave some mattak, not necessarily meat. If the catch was a large seal, that is, if it was neither walrus nor whale, one gave meat gifts to the various people. In addition a little skin from the breast section was given. It was wonderful to flense free meat, for example of beluga or narwhal. People who didn't get a share of the catch could then get meat anyway. When the beluga or the narwhal was big, you could get pieces as broad as your whole arm's length. Sometimes you'd think you'd got a share of the catch.

The catch-share of beluga and narwhal was for example the tailpiece slit lengthwise. The first to touch the animal (for example with his lance) was given one half of the tail with the vertebrae and half the tail-fin. The next got the other half without the vertebrae. Both the front-flipper pieces also went as catch-shares. From the rest, the catcher got the breast section. The catcher also got the offal. If he wanted the blood, the catcher also got that, and you had to collect it, no matter how busy you were. But if you had plenty of blood, you just let it flow. [The informant did not mention the animal's head as the catcher's share. That was probably the most important catch-share in the old days, when it was believed that the animals would allow themselves to be caught again by the same hunter – RP].

You could also catch a catch-share animal without anyone being entitled to catch-shares. I have myself many times been alone in catching a bearded seal. When I was still hunting from a kayak, I usually caught bearded seal in the summer, but only rarely in the winter. Since I often paddled in a kayak without companions, I was often alone in making my catch. When you had a companion, you couldn't have a seal to yourself. [Here it is uncertain whether he is talking about any seal, or the subject of this paragraph, a 'catch-share' seal, that is a large seal. That *should* be the point – RP]. If there were only two kayaks, the non-catcher got half of the seal, split lengthwise, almost as big as

the first share. When you had got the harpoon into such an animal, you called the other kayaks with an *eertarneq*.[35] I have also once had a catch-share of a polar bear, split lengthwise the same way. There were only two of us. The catch-share of a polar bear consisted only of the meat – the skin was not divided into shares. In general the catch-shares only consisted of meat; the skin was not split into shares. Only the skin of beluga and narwhal and of walrus were cut out into catch-shares, because the skin was not used for something else. Only those skins that could be eaten were shared out in parts, not skins that were to be used for anything else.

When the leading woman of the household supervised the work of cutting up the game at a huntingplace, the various necessary jobs were done by her daughters and daughters-in-law, for example scraping skin and preparing it, or cutting the meat out for drying. The head of the household distributed various jobs – for example, if the seal was big, who was to pour blood into stomachs and gut-casings, and from which seals. The big children helped too, for example with laying meat out to dry, or putting the ingredients in a blubber-bag or preserving in blubber once the blubber had been taken out and dried of blood. On the summer hunting trips no blubber went to waste. It was all put in skin bags.

The male head of the household decided when and where they should go to a hunting camp. When they were finished there, he also decided when and where they should go to the winter settlement. He said in good time that they should go off on such and such a day, and he made sure that everything was put in order beforehand, so that they could be transported quickly. When they had gathered more winter provisions than the umiak could hold, they first took the skin bags and dried meat, and took them to the winter settlement. Only afterwards did they fetch the rest, and then the whole household left the summer camp.

Usually it all had to be transported in two trips this way. Only in a few cases could one take it all at once. It was also the male head of the family who decided on the first transport. Otherwise the head of the family was also busy in the summer with the necessary repairs. If there were also families at the hunting camp without their own umiak, these were fetched afterwards. Often widows went as paddlers to the hunting camp. They also got their share. If they lived in a tent with a family, these widows also took part in the work of the household, and thus also got their share. There wasn't always only one family in a tent. They also took widows with them this way.

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG1-B2)

16 July 1969

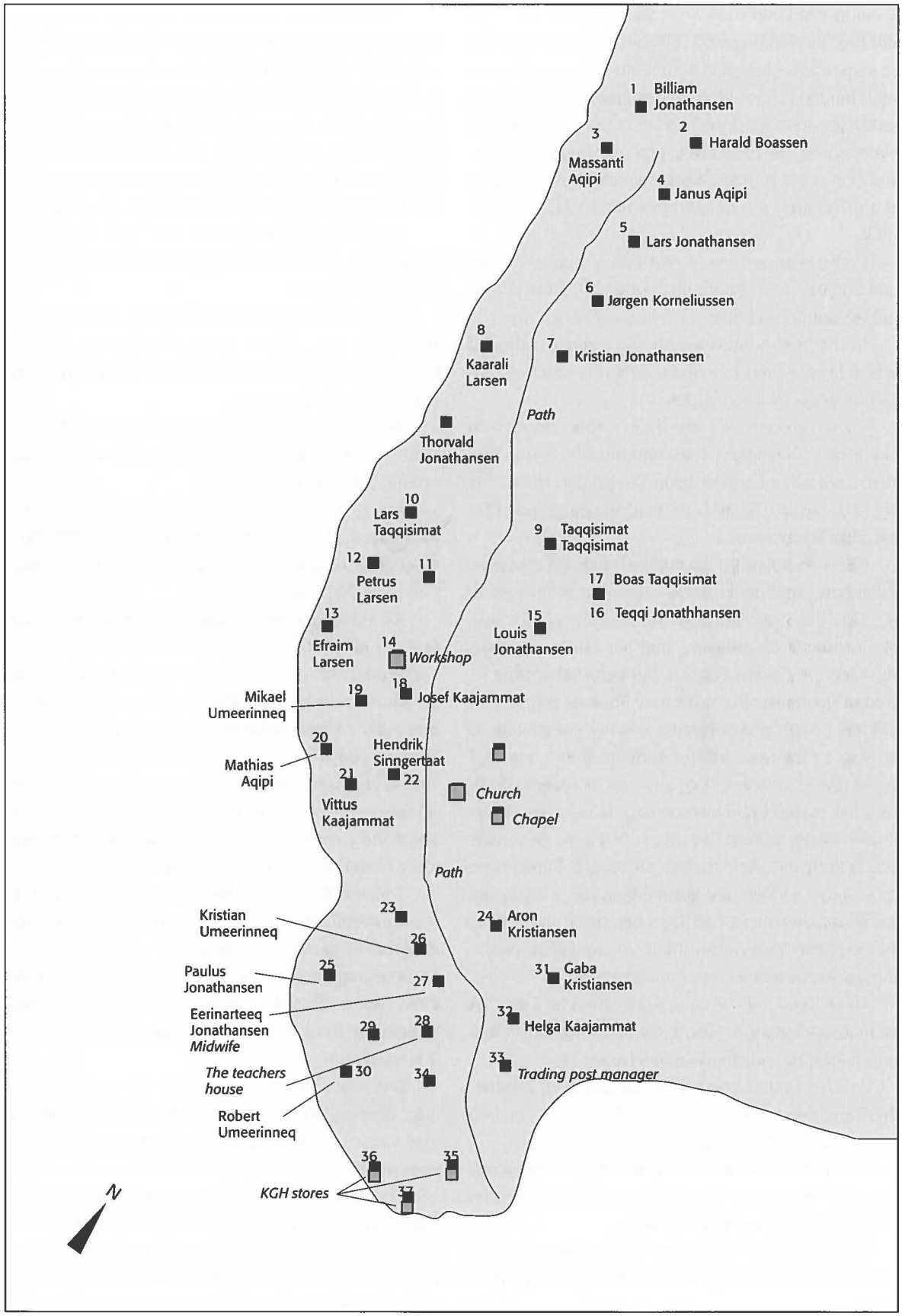
Houses and close family relations in Tiileqilaaq[36]
The numbers indicated in brackets correspond to the numbers shown on the plan of the settlement immediately after these pages. The review of the houses was an idea that arose quite coincidentally during a visit paid by the informant. It appears rather messy, but it is adequate. He did however skip House No. 2 (Harald Boassen), and he did not mention his own house (3) either. The connection between kinship and the distance from the closest family's house has been dealt with clearly by Gert Nooter (1976:72-77). The conversation with my informant took place at House No. 29, and the fact that the location of the house was mixed in with the information can be seen for example from the very first sentence.

The first house, which we cannot see, is Billeam Jonathansen's (1). His wife, Sigrid, is the daughter of my stepmother, Marie, from her first marriage. Her father was my maternal uncle. Marie had her sons who were younger than Sigrid with my father. (She lives in the house with her youngest son, my brother Janus Aqipi (4)). In the group of houses we are all related, including that house down there from which the smoke is rising. That belongs to Sigrid's and Billeam's eldest son, Lars (5). He is married to Asta, the daughter of Elisa Siverthsen.

The house beside that (6) belongs to another relative, my maternal uncle's son, Jørgen Korneliussen. He is married to Ada, a sister of Billeam (1) and Kristian (7).

The next house (7) also belongs to a relative, the son of my father's cousin Helga, married to Jonathan.

Fig. 51. Tiileqilaaq settlement.


1 Billiam Jonathansen
2 Harald Boassen
3 Massanti Aqipi
4 Janus Aqipi
5 Lars Jonathansen
6 Jørgen Korneliussen
7 Kristian Jonathansen
8 Kaarali Larsen
Path
Thorvald Jonathansen
10 Lars Taqqisimat
9 Taqqisimat Taqqisimat
12 Petrus Larsen
11
17 Boas Taqqisimat
16 Teqqi Jonathhansen
13 Efraim Larsen
14 Workshop
15 Louis Jonathansen
Mikael Umeerinneq
19
18 Josef Kaajammat
20 Mathias Aqipi
Hendrik Sinngertaat
21
22
Church
Chapel
Vittus Kaajammat
Path
Kristian Umeerinneq
23
24 Aron Kristiansen
26
Paulus Jonathansen
25
27
31 Gaba Kristiansen
Eerinarteeq Jonathansen Midwife
32 Helga Kaajammat
29
28
The teachers house
30
34
33 Trading post manager
Robert Umeerinneq
36
35
KGH stores
37
N

The house belongs to Kristian Jonathansen. He is the half-brother of Billeam (1). Billeam and Louis, the eldest sons of Jonathan, had another mother, my paternal aunt; but the other siblings were children of Jonathan and Helga. Kristian is the brother of the catechist Boas Jonathansen, now at Iserteq, and Ada (6) who is married to my cousin Jørgen Korneliussen. Kristian is married to Juliette, the daughter of Robert Maqi in Sermilik.

In the next, red house (without a number) Thorvald Jonathansen, Kristian's brother (7) lives. Up to and including this house my relatives live in a row.

In the blue house towards the water (8) Kaarali Larsen lives, who is married to Ada, the sister of Taqqisimat in the next red house.

Then we come to the house that belongs to Taqqisimat Taqqisimat (9). Taqqisimat's father was Alfred, whose father was again Taqqisimat. His wife is called Domedia, the sister of Hendrik Sinngertaat (22) and Elisa Siverthsen.

The next house (11) is now uninhabited. Susanne Mikaelsen lived there until she died last year in April. She was the sister of Jørgen Korneliussen. Her son, Ole, is now in Sermiligaaq, and her other son, Hans Mikaelsen, is now in Tasiilaq, but before that time he lived in the house. But otherwise Susanne has several children. Hans is considering moving completely to Tasiilaq, he has said. A sister of theirs, Karen, married to the shop assistant Teqqi, is now at Paarnakajiit. They live in the big blue house (16). In the second part of the blue house Boas Taqqisimat (17) lives. He is married to Kathrine, the daughter of Hendrik Sinngertaat (22). Boas and Kathrine got married last year. In the red house over there (25) lives her sister, married to the catechist. They were rather a large group of siblings. Susanne almost only had daughters.

Of the two yellow houses, the first, as I said, is Susanne Mikaelsen's. The second belongs to Petrus Larsen (12), the cousin of Kaarali Larsen (8).

A little farther north lives Taqqisimat's brother, Lars Taqqisimat (10), married to Thomasine. The two brothers also live close to each other.

Farthest out towards the water lives Efraim Larsen (13), the brother of Petrus Larsen (12). His wife, Andusa, also comes from Sermilik.

The black house down there (14) is the communal workshop where anyone could make something with wood.

The next house out towards the water (19) is occupied by Efraim Larsen's brother, who has a different surname,[37] although they had both father and mother in common. From this house we can mention other brothers with the 'new' surname. The husband is called Mikkel Umeerinneq. His wife, Malene, is a daughter of Elisa Siverthsen, and thus a sister of Asta (5). Elisa is a sister of Taqqisimat's wife, Domedia (9).

In the house we cannot see (18), lives Josef Kaajammat. His wife died in Denmark in hospital. He has eight children.

The next house of the same kind we cannot see from here (15). There Louis Jonathansen lives, a brother of Billeam (1) and Kristian (7). His late wife, Polunikka, was my sister.

Out there towards the sound live my brother Mathias (20) and his wife Kamilla, the sister of Taqqisimat (9), Lars (5) and Boas.

In the red house beside that (21) lives Vittus Kaajammat, the son of Josef (18). His wife, Kornelia, is a daughter of Elisa, and a sister of Malene (19), married to Mikkel Umeerinneq.

A little higher up lies Hendrik Sinngertaat's house (22). He is a brother of Elisa and Domedia (9). He was born and grew up at Nuuk[38] out there. It was only as an adult, after he had been baptized, and had children, that he travelled down to Skjoldungen. His wife, Nina, is related to Kaarali Larsen (8). Her brothers are Thorvald Larsen (no number), etc. (8, 13, 19, 26, 30). All the people in Tiileqilaaq are related to one another. There are a couple of big families, and in fact no one came from the settlements outside Sermilik.

The next house is Paulus Jonathansen's (25). He is the son of Billeam and Sigrid (1). His wife, Ebba, is the daughter of Harald Boassen (2).

The unpainted house (23) is unoccupied. People dance there. It used to be a catechist's house. Valde Taannaajik lived there, but my brother, Moses, has lived there too.

The green house, the next to the south (29), is now unoccupied. Its occupant, Vittus Sanimuinnaq, died last year in Umiivik. At the beginning of 1969 his widow came here, but she died in May.

The outermost red house (30) belongs to Robert Umeerinneq, the brother of Petrus Larsen (12), and in the house closer to us (26) lives Kristian Umeerinneq, also their brother. Robert Umeerinneq's wife, Dorthea, comes from Kuummiit. Kristian Umeerinneq's wife,

Thomasine, is a sister of Karen (16), the daughter of Susanne Mikaelsen.

The next house is the midwife's (27). She is married to Eerinarteeq Jonathansen, the son of Billeam and Sigrid (1). The midwife is the daughter of the now deceased catechist Gustav Massanti. From 1940 Gustav was the catechist in Iserteq; but he lived here for two years before he died.

Over there lies Aron Kristiansen's house (24). He came here from Sermilik. He is married to Domedia.

The red house beside it (31) is his brother Gaba Kristiansen's. His wife is called Sofie.

The red house (34) behind the teacher's house (29) is empty. It was once the house of the settlement manager. Asa Uuttuanngi lived there, and then Kaarali Kalia from Kuummiit lived there. When it became vacant again, Teqqi Jonathansen lived there first, until he moved into the blue house (16). Now the house is used for storage.

The house we can see part of (33) is the trading post manager's house. A little closer lies Moses' house (32), where Helga Kaajammat now lives. She is the oldest daughter of Josef (18).

As I said, only people who are related to one another live in Tiileqilaaq. No outsider families live here [apart from the trading post manager who is a Dane, and his wife, who comes from Sermiligaaq].

When I moved here [in 1940], Jonathan's house was there where the children are playing now [between the houses (22) and (23)]. My paternal aunt Mathilda lived in a house built with a wall shared with Jonathan's house. From the outside it looks like one house, but there was a wall between them.

Where the red house (6) is now, Pernille, Taqqisimat's mother, had her house. The remains of the third, Otto's house, now lie behind Efraim Larsen's house. There were no other houses in 1940: that year, in the late summer, I built a house (4). I shared a wall with Harald Boassen, who also built a house here. Thus a couple of houses more were added.

Billeam Jonathansen built the next house at the place where the smoke is coming out (5). He moved from his father's house.

The next house was built by my father on a site that is a little north of the last house we can see (4). That was also built of turf and stone.

There was also a turf house on the slope down there. My sister lived there when she got married to Piili. When the latter died, Jørgen Korneliussen built his house on the walls.

The next house was built on the elevation behind the house you can see (9). It was built by Mattiit, who now lives in Kuummiit, but who originally lived here. From here he moved to Sermiligaaq, but he moved again after one year to Kuummiit. When he moved away, Taqqisimat, who got married that year, built his house on the site. That was the last turf house here.

The outermost six wooden houses down there were built in 1957. The next ones built were the houses just like mine (3). They were built with a low roof ridge, and those were the houses up to and including the midwife's house (27). I believe there are fourteen houses. They were all built in one summer.

The house types like the house where you live are types like the teacher's house (29), and the house where Gaba Kristiansen, who is present, lives (31) was built later. That's how the number of the houses grew and is still growing. Now they are building four houses close to your house, isn't that so?

[Gaba Kristiansen:] "Yes!"

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG2B2)

20 July, 1969

Some observations of seals' reactions

At the time when I had begun to catch seals, I noticed that a ringed seal that had just crawled up on the ice was the most anxious and suspicious, whether it was an adult ringed seal, *sakkaq*, a two-year-old, *torsuuatsiaq*, or a three-year-old, *sakkatsiaq*, although the two-year-olds were the most suspicious. But even the *torsuuatsiaq* calms down when it has lain on the ice for a while. In some cases, though, it gets wind of the hunter without reacting. Only when the wind is strong, so that it gets an intenser scent, does it jump in the water. But most *torsuuatsiat* that have lain on the ice for some time don't jump in the water, even though they have got wind of the hunter. If you came across two unsuspecting seals, and shot one of them, it could happen that the other seal looked up; but if the first seal didn't jump in the water, the other one could lie down again. It happens sometimes that two seals have crawled up from the same hole. If you shot one of them, but it didn't jump into the hole, the other seal

would often stay on the ice. But if you only wounded the first, so that it jumped down into the hole, the other one would do the same. Of course it happens that the sound of a gunshot makes all the seals jump down in the hole; but it doesn't happen every time with the *torsuuatsiaq*. But it's another matter with the adult seals. They can come up from the same hole in quite large flocks and lie around it. Even the crunching of the snow would be enough to make them jump down into the water.

At the time when I began to catch seals, there were undeniably more seals. When you fired, they all jumped down into the water, but five minutes later just as many lay around the hole. That was how it was with the fjord seals in particular. They were permanent stocks with their haunts in the fjord. The seals of the outer coast, for example migrating seals around Kangeq, come from other places. If for example the northeasterly storm, the *neqqajaaq*, has made open water, they come there. They react differently from the fjord seals. If you fire at one of them, they all go underwater. Sometimes you'd think there were no seals nearby, especially when there are cracks in the ice. Then when you went tramping off home, and got farther up the fjord, you discovered the breathing-holes, and farther up the basking seals, although you had waited at the ice-crack. Especially when the days get longer, in March and April, there are only seals at the ice cracks in the morning and in the evening around sunset. In other words the seals go down in the ice crack when they have crawled down from the ice.

But in the winter, before the time of the *uuttut*, you could see them coming up in the ice cracks all day long. As long as the seals don't want to crawl up on the ice, you can expect to see them in ice cracks that appear in the course of the winter. It is sometimes so marvellous to hunt at an ice crack. If you observe a seal that comes up at the same place all the time, you can get very close to it if the sea is not rough. If it stared at you, it could just turn its head away, and blink its eyes. On the other hand, if anyone suddenly appeared at close quarters so that it was startled, it would immediately get under the water so as not to show itself again in your field of vision, or so far away that it was beyond the range of your gun.

In some cases there were large ice-floes instead of ice with cracks. When you came in a kayak to a large ice-floe and went up on it, you would often find a lot of seals at the edge, and other seals lying at some openings towards the middle, or at icebergs. It isn't like that any more. There is probably too much they can smell here in the fjord, and the smell of the houses and the smell of motor boats probably plays a role in this. Seals that have seen you in good time are not frightened so easily by the smell or the sound. As long as the seal has seen you from far away, you can approach it in a motor boat at full speed without frightening it. In other situations too, the seal relaxes as long as it has seen you at a good distance. But there are of course differences among seals. In such situations a seal may go under the water and come up again at the same place, even when it has got wind of the hunter. A little while ago we heard about seals that were frightened by the smell, and got under the water so as not to show themselves again within your field of vision. But that isn't true in all cases. Some come up again very close by. In particular a seal gets frightened when it gets wind of someone and at the same time notices someone close by – then it dives down and only surfaces again at a distance. When a seal that has seen you comes up again close by, and then gets wind of you, it quickly goes down, just as frightened seals do; but it comes up again within a reasonable distance. Rather a lot of seals react that way, especially young seals. They are not so easily frightened. But the adult seals too can relax at the time when they have cubs. The same happens in the rutting season when the male seals begin to emit a smell, for example in April. The male seals are not frightened so easily by smells in the rutting season, the female seals at the time when they have cubs. They relax just as much as the other seal species, for example bearded seals.

And then it isn't every day that the ringed seals are as jumpy. That can change depending on the days. Hooded seals and bearded seals are much less suspicious. I have caught five hooded seals that were staring at me. They could stare at you just like the young ringed seals, and they are more interested in their breathing than in the presence of hunters.

Seals can also smell you at the breathing-holes. It is especially at the breathing-holes that the wait can be long when a seal dives down after getting wind of you. It doesn't come up from the same breathing-hole. At ice-cracks a seal that has got wind of you and gone down into the water can come up again somewhere in the same crack, but it can also take refuge in a breath-

ing-hole on the ice, and then you don't see it again. But especially towards evening it can happen that a seal dives down when it smells you, and the same seal apparently comes up in the same ice crack.

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG2B3)

Comments on the table of the Aqipi family's dwellings in the period 1914-1940

I became aware of myself in 1914, while we lived at Innartalik. My parents lived in a house with Paavia's family, and Verner's family, and Peter Pikki,[39] who is still alive and lives in Ittoqqortoormiit, Scoresbysund. He was a hunter. Paavia was rather old. He paddled well enough in a kayak, but only on the small scale. His two sons were fairly young. The eldest of them was gradually beginning to catch seals. The next-eldest boy had no kayak yet. In the same house lived Verner Pappi's family. He has descendants. His daughter Nora is still alive and lives at Qernertivartivit. Verner's children are now all old. His eldest daughter, who is married to Andreas, lived first at Qernertivartivit, but moved a couple of years ago to Kuummiit. So Nora lives at Kuummiit with her youngest son, Ivar, and a daughter, Kathrine, who got married to my cousin, David Kalia, a son of Konrad from Kulusuk. David was the son of my aunt, my mother's younger sister. Konrad is now becoming an elderly man.

As I said, Paavia was then an old man. There were not so many of us and our relatives in that house. Mostly they were outsider families. In my family my father was our only supporter, because both myself and my paternal uncle were too young. My paternal aunt, Mathilde, was also a very young girl.

Among our housemates, Peter was also married, and had two daughters. His father-in-law Paavia had several daughters, and two sons – no, three sons. The youngest, Nuka, was the same age as me. [According to the parish register there were four sons – RP]. As I said, the oldest of the boys had begun to go hunting.

The following winter, 1914-1915, we lived at Pupik. In that house there were two supporters in my family: first my father and then his cousin, Hans Ignatiussen, who also lived in the same house. [Here he corrected this to three supporters, since he thought his mother's sister, Beate Maqi, and her family, including her son Niels, lived in the house that winter – but cf. note 40].[40]

My father's cousin Hans[41] lived as I have indicated in the house. He was married and had some children.

So there were two non-related families, two hunters. They were not baptized yet, but what the two brothers were called, I can't remember. Later when they were baptized, one came to be called Rasmus [before Baptism Aavaartik], and the youngest came to be called Karl [before Baptism Kaattuattak]. The oldest of them was then 'unmarried',[42] and the youngest was married.[43] Later the oldest got married again. They had both lost their wives at the same time, when Nathanael's umiak was wrecked at the mouth of the fjord. On the same occasion my mother's sister, Takkalaatsiaq, died, but as I said so did the oldest brother's wife, Najattaarajivat, Beate's daughter and Nikolaj Maqi's elder sister. All of these died in an umiak wreck. But Nathanael did not die, and my cousin Lars, my aunt Takkalaatsiaq's son, who was still a baby, also survived. The umiak broke in two. It had come from the south to Ittitalik, on the outside of the island. People came to the beach to receive it; but now they wanted to paddle to the leeward side of the island, to pull it up on land there. My aunt and her sister-in-law went on board. When they were about to paddle inside a stranded iceberg, the whole side that faced the beach fell down and broke the umiak in half, and the wave from the calving fell on them. Nathanael's wife and their four children died there, and on board too were my aunt and her little child; but her sister-in-law too had a child in a back-bag. There were only two survivors. Even the dogs were killed by the pieces of ice. Nathanael was thus left alone, and he was not young any longer. That happened in the summer.[44]

I can remember the foreign travellers who came while we lived in Pupik. The first was a nurse, Sigrid Bugge,[45] the sister of the dean Aage Bugge.[46] I was greatly fascinated by her because she was Danish. We also watched curiously when the catechist Julius Olsen came to Pupik. I can remember that an unflensed seal was served on the same occasion. Julius Olsen is also supposed to have said in West Greenland that he missed the East Greenlanders' frozen, unflensed seals.

When the oldest of our housemates put on a disguise to do a 'horror show' he/she looked very scary.[47] He/she put on a skin mask and blackened the edges of his/her mouth and eyes. When we were told that

he/she was coming in, we hid under the skins that we used as bedclothes. That was his/her kind of entertainment. He/she didn't sing songs, but only put on a disguise. The young people were very amused by it, and ran around in the house and out of the house. But for us children he/she didn't look like a human being, but like a mask spirit, a *kiiappak*.

In 1915 we spent a winter in Akerninnaq [1916 in his original list. The error is due to his remembering the household of Beate Maqi's family a year too early – RP]. There were no non-related families in the house. My father was our supporter, and his cousin Hans also lived in the house, as well as Hans's two brothers, Vittus and Markus. Nothing unusual happened, life went on. We ate the usual things, but at that time you could get ships' biscuits and hard tack; but not rye bread, barley and the big pearled barley. When people came from Tasiilaq, from the shopping after Christmas, they would often bring 'Christmas fare':[48] grains, peas, tea, sugar. Then people would drink tea. When the Christmas fare was cooked, we ate it like this: we gathered the peas on one side of the plate, and the grain mash on the other, and only when the mash had been eaten up did we eat the peas afterwards, and felt fine.

There were a number of seabirds around there. When the kayaks had been out catching seabirds, they often came with a big load of guillemot. There were many of them. In my childhood, when we came out in calm weather in the morning, we could clearly hear the cries of the seabirds.

The guillemots were caught with the bird dart and the hunters hunted them communally.[49] When they came to a flock of seabirds, guillemots, and tried to frighten them, they wouldn't dive any more, and would only dip their beaks in the water. From the hunt you took home what you yourself had caught; but once it had been cooked, it was shared out with the housemates. When you didn't have so many seabirds, you cut the birds in pieces before you shared them out. But when you had enough seabirds, the individual family members got whole birds. People had a good time, and in the evening they told stories. The men talked about their hunting experiences. It was nice. When they didn't tell stories, they sang. My father liked to sing and entertain his housemates. Others sang along. Otherwise they might entertain themselves with 'thong-games',[50] and many times they would also play at pulling a piece of skin from the others. It was good fun to watch.

From 1916 until 1917 we spent the winter in Tasiilaq [1917-1918 according to his list, which fits the year of the Baptism, 1919 – RP]. There were many strange outsiders there. We had grown up in Sermilik, and when we saw people in Tasiilaq for the first time who didn't come from Sermilik, it really seemed very strange.

Some of them spoke in a way that was odd for us. In the house there were several hunters. There were both related and non-related families. But we were not short of entertainment in the form of various stories. People from one place talked about events at their place, others about events at theirs. When they told stories in that way, even as a child you couldn't help enjoying them. Some people talked about their dogs and sledge journeys in the winter, boasting about their dogs, about their speed and strength. Some had dogs that weren't very good; but they were quite fantastic according to the owners' accounts. Others talked about their experiences in a kayak. Pretty well all of them were good kayak paddlers, since they were all hunters. They went out hunting any time the weather was right: in a kayak when there was open water, and in a sledge when the sea was covered with ice.

During the two years we lived in Tasiilaq,[51] we went in the summer to a hunting camp. But only close to Tasiilaq itself, for example on Qernertivartivit. We didn't go to Sermilik, but stayed in Ammassalik [fjord]. At that time there were many seals around Tasiilaq. It was not inferior to the rest of the district.

We spent the following winter in Tasiilaq again with the households that had not been baptized yet. Only when the catechumens had been baptized did they travel the following summer to their next settlement. [Most Baptism days were in the spring – RP]. And they didn't want to spend the winters again in Tasiilaq before they felt like it. No one would deny them that.

But during the baptismal preparation they lived in Tasiilaq according to the wishes of the pastor. When the pastor had asked them to live there they lived there until they were baptized. When they were baptized after a two-year stay, they left the place the following summer.

When we were going to spend the winter there for the second time, several housemates were replaced.

When we lived there during the first winter, there were also several households who were in the last year of their baptismal preparation. Then when they were baptized within our first year, they travelled away in the summer. But in the last year we lived there again with several of the first-year residents who began the baptismal preparations at the same time as us. They were then baptized with us, and left Tasiilaq the following summer. But I don't know where they went, for they were people from Ammassalik and Sermiligaaq. Most of our housemates came from those two fjords.

The only family I already knew, because it came from Sermilik, was Nathanael's.[52] But I really only got to know him when I grew rather older. He often lived at Innartuaq.

When we moved away from Tasiilaq, we spent the first winter at Qernertivartivit. For the first time – except for the stay at Tasiilaq – we lived outside Sermilik. Then I was eight years old. In the house there were not so many hunters. There was my father and my maternal uncle [the maternal uncle is otherwise first mentioned in later years – RP], who had gradually begun to go hunting. There was also Verner, who was related to my parents. It was him we lived with at Innartalik. Then there were others to whom we weren't related – Julie's family, the aunt of Sigrid in Tasiilaq. Sigrid and her siblings were orphans who lived with their maternal aunt. The oldest of them [in the family?], Salomon, was a hunter. The aunt, Julie, had a brother and sister: Salomon and a girl called Judithe. Julie had two young daughters as well as a boy of my age, and they had an even younger brother, Kristian. Julie's eldest daughter, Zenia, was married, but her husband died in October. He was a good hunter. Towards the spring many visitors came, some from Kuummiit, some from Kulusuk, and from the area around Sermiligaaq. For Qernertivartivit was just on the way to Tasiilaq. Outsiders came whom I had not seen before, all equally interesting. The adults could say: "Watch out you don't make a hole!" [an expression people use when someone stared too much – RP]. When you were a little shy and at the same time curious, you could easily stare too long.

When we moved away from there, we spent the next winter at Kakalik. That year in May my father's sister got married, and now there were two good hunters in the family: my father and my aunt's husband. In the winter we lived in a house with other households; but in the summer when we went to hunting camps, there were now two hunters in the same tent. My aunt's husband, Aage,[53] caught a lot of seals, and we were not short of anything. Sometimes we were at a camp by ourselves without other hunters. But when we spent the first winter at Kakalik, we lived with the hunter Jeremias Sanimuinnaq's family. He later moved to Ittoqqortoormiit; but I've heard that he died several years ago. He was a good hunter, so there were three good hunters. My maternal uncle, Vilhelm [Kunnak], got a catch now and then too. I and my paternal uncle had at this time not yet begun to catch anything. At Kakalik we had many unflensed seal bodies, hooded seals and bearded seals. We had many ringed seals too. The ice was very firm, and it lay for a very long time in the summer, all the way up until August. While I was a big boy, the ice never completely disappeared. So there were many seals out on the ice. In the autumn the ice came early, and became solid. When you lived at Kakalik, you could either take the kayak to Sermilik, or you could drive on a dog-sledge (into Qeertuassaap Kangersiva, Johan Petersen Fjord). When there were cracks in the ice at this time, there were many seals. There were such a lot of seals! Now we say that there are no more seals. It's true that there are still many seals, but compared with the conditions then we still say there are no more seals.

The following year we lived at Kakalik again. My father caught many seals there. And he also caught some polar bears at Qeertuassaap Kangersiva. From my childhood until I myself began to hunt, we lived there six times.

But we still moved around, and when we left Kakalik, we lived at Ikkatteq. There were two houses at Ikkatteq. The island was not big, but on it there were several place-names; our house was at Akiliaaseq. Our fellow-settlers, Justuusi's family, had their house at Ikkatteq. The distance between our houses was about 100 metres, I suppose. Midway between the houses there was yet another place-name, Puersaajivit; but all of it taken together is called Ikkatteq. In our house the hunters were my father and my aunt's husband Aage. There were no more hunters. My paternal uncle and I were still minors. There we had many unflensed hooded seals: the largest number I ever remember having seen. Justuusi's three sons were all hunters, and his fourth son, who was married to a trained midwife,[54] was also a hunter. Oline the mid-

wife's house was the district's only wooden house outside Tasiilaq. All these hunters were our fellow-settlers. A relative of Justuusi's family, Makkorsi, lived there too. His wife, Marie, now lives in the old people's home in Tasiilaq. Makkorsi himself is now dead. With them lived Makkorsi's foster-mother, who had him with her from the time he was small. Makkorsi stayed with her, and hunted for her when he became a hunter. She was called Kista. It was a rather large house with a wooden floor and wooden walls on the inside. It was the first Greenlandic house around here that had wooden cladding on the inside. But there was no wooden ceiling, there was only the bearing wooden construction. The old man, Justuusi, was rather an interesting person. We called him Qanganisaq, 'the old man'. When Gustav Holm came here, he had been his guide from the area around Ittuluartik. They also called him Aattaaseqarteq, 'the gun man', because he had got a breech-loading rifle as a reward. He kept this nickname until he died. They called him either Qanganisaq or Aattaaseqarteq.

While we lived there many people came visiting from Tasiilaq. They were people who wanted to taste unflensed seal. Some of them were invited. Through visitors you sent for your friends. "Ask him to come and taste unflensed seal with us," you said. That whole winter we were never short of frozen, unflensed seal. Unflensed seals that are ordered in rows beside one another and in front of one another were called *amisiilat*, 'those that look like a school of seals', because they looked like a school of harp seals; but they were all hooded seals.

We couldn't get permanent work with the Trade (the KGH). Only when a ship came could you go to Tasiilaq to earn a little wages unloading cargo, and when that was finished you went back to the settlement.

After we had lived for one winter at Ikkatteq, we spent the following winter at Kakalik, and the following winter again. My father and my aunt's husband were there. Then there were some people to whom we weren't related, Rasmus and Karl, with whom we had lived in Pupik [Akerninnaq according to his list – RP]. Their nephew Aron, the son of an older sister of Rasmus and Karl, lived there too. The sister was a widow, but her sons were grown up and caught seals. Towards the spring we mainly ate dried meat. When the sealing slackened off at the end of the winter, we mainly lived on the previous summer's catch. When that ran out, we only looked for fresh meat. At that time there could be shortages. So we might catch Greenland shark through a hole in the ice, and we gathered seaweed from the beach. We ate Greenland shark boiled fresh, or when it had got slightly 'high'. Then we could bury the remains in snow patches and keep them until the next winter, so that nothing went to waste. When it was prepared properly, it was clean, a little red at the skin, and very delicious to eat with crowberry.

When we left Kakalik, we spent the next winter at Nattivit, I think. There were no unrelated families in the house. On the platform there were three sections, my father's, my grandmother's and my aunt's. We had a wonderful time there. Throughout the winter we could eat polar bear meat, meat from unflensed seal and fresh seal meat, and all the food that had been kept from the summer. It wasn't because the place was known as a bad hunting place that we had gathered so many winter provisions, but because we lived in such isolation, and there were only two hunters. If a bad winter came, we couldn't count on the help of others. You organized as much as possible of skin bags, plants preserved in blubber and all sorts of things, so that it was ready to use for the winter. But there were so many seals that we fed the dogs seal meat for the whole winter. We loosened the frozen seal with the ice-pick, and threw it to the dogs, and we did that all winter. We could eat polar bear meat whenever we wanted. It was a rich place. We had visitors that winter. From the Iserteq area people came in February to us at Nattivit. They had run out of ammunition, and especially lead for bullets. My father had enough and gave them some lead. One of them, Aalut, said that on the way to us they came to three polar bears that the dogs had stopped. Since they had no lead for their rifles, they killed the bears by strangling them. They said that it was easier to strangle a polar bear than a dog. When you got the noose round the head of a dog, it wriggled about to get away. But a polar bear that had got a noose around its neck set all its legs against the ground and stood perfectly stiffly right up until it was dead. In all the cases I had heard about the strangling of a polar bear, people said the same. If they wriggled like dogs, it would be impossible to keep hold of them with their enormous strength.

While we lived at Nattivit, outside the house we

could see three polar bears that my father had caught. He caught the first in November. Opposite the house there was a little island, and behind it there was a sound that wasn't visible from the house. The polar bear came from this sound. The ice was new, and not very strong yet. The polar bear came towards us and went behind a hill. We ran towards it, and when it stopped just off the beach, my father shot it from land.

Later, in January, he came one morning from the lookout hill and said "There is a polar bear just nearby." There were two seal bodies that we had put out to lure the foxes. It was eating the bait. When we looked, it stood very close by and ate the bait, and it faced out towards the fjord when it was going to swallow. When the men ran towards it, it heard their footsteps, and ran down to the beach. We got closer and saw it on the ice, which was snow-free. There my father shot it, and it went towards land, and only when it came up on the land was it killed with a shot. It was large and fat.

When my father discovered the next polar bear, which was also big, we went up on the lookout hill, and from there we could see it coming towards us – from the direction of Iserteq. When it disappeared behind an iceberg, my father and my aunt's husband went towards it. There was a lot of snow, and it was difficult to drive in the sledge. So they went on foot. When they got closer, it heard them, and looked around the iceberg. Then it started running with its side to us. The snow was thrown behind it like a blizzard. But at regular intervals it stopped and did something with its feet. My father said afterwards that it was because frozen snow hung on its feet and bothered it.

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq (69ØG3A1)

20 July 1969

When it had passed a small island, not far from land, it ran back to the island and came to the broken pieces of tidal ice. When it reached the tidal belt with the broken pieces of ice, it reared up on its hind legs and by wriggling it sank between them, the two eye-witnesses said. For the polar bears had a certain ability to squeeze through. A polar bear that I had discovered at Sarpaq, and which I should thus have caught, got away from us by crawling forward over ice that wouldn't carry an adult human being. It could stretch all the way out and crawl forward using its hind legs alone. Polar bears can squeeze through the ice, or manage to get over thin ice. When the polar bear that my father and Aage were chasing disappeared behind the island, we thought that it had escaped. But it had hidden under the ice, and when it came up again at the same place, they shot it dead. We were still standing on the lookout hill when the two appeared again without anything with them. But they had left it on the ice. When we heard about this, I went with my uncle and Aage's younger brother, put the cut-off pieces in skins, and pulled them home over the ice.

The fourth polar bear my father caught was also one he shot close to Nattivit. But I didn't see it alive. He caught it while sledging. At home we went for a walk over the ice. Before we went back, we saw the sledge coming back with a load. It turned out that my father had come across a polar bear, which the dogs had stopped at an iceberg. Then he shot it and brought it home.

My paternal uncle also 'caught' a polar bear that was hibernating [that is, he was the first to discover the polar bear or the tracks that led to its winter lair[55] – RP], and my aunt's husband also caught a she-bear with two large cubs. My father and paternal uncle got catch-shares. The she-bear had large cubs.

When we moved away from Nattivit, we spent the first winter at Ittitalik, out at the mouth of Sermilik. That is a small island near Ikkatteq. The distance from Ittitalik to Ikkatteq is about from here to Sarpaq, perhaps less. We lived there again without unrelated families.[56] We often visited Justuusi's family on Ikkatteq. Justuusi was still doing fine; but he was very old. I had gradually begun to go hunting.

In June my father caught a bearded seal with a foetus in it. One of Justuusi's sons got the foetus as a catch-share, and we brought it to the house. When we got there, people said "Look at Qanganisaq, he's on his way home with a big animal in tow!" – "He has a whole island behind him," we said. We used to say that when someone was dragging a big animal. When he came home, we discovered that it was a hooded seal he had in tow. Before evening we were back home again.

Ittitalik was a good place. I still remember the place in the early summer, because we had a good period there from May on. There were many seals. At the beginning of June we began to paddle out in a kayak. Who thought about sleep in the morning? If

you slept too long, you simply discovered that the other hunters were already out. Out there I haven't seen any kayak man who went out before me in the morning. When you were out at that time, you found seals that didn't react to sounds and smells like other seals. When they went down under the water, they came up again around the same place. Then you could choose between ringed seal cubs, young hooded seals or adult hooded seals. At that time all kinds of seals were in those waters. Often you got two or more seals. I was often out hunting with Axel Bianco. Now he is one of the older men at Ikkatteq. In his young days he lived in various places, but since he moved to Ikkatteq, he has stayed there. He was my good friend, a son of my father's second cousin.

During the day he used to say: "Come and wake me early in the morning!". When I went into his tent in the morning, he would be fast asleep. It was before the sun began to shine on the mountains. I would tell him that he had to get up, and when he didn't react I would have to shake him. Then he would open his eyes and close them again. But when he himself had said that I was to wake him, I continued until he was wide awake and got up. When a seal came up in front of one of us at the hunting ground, we would say: "Let's see whether it comes up again." That way we tried to show consideration for each other. Only when the seal came up for the second time was it harpooned. That was nice.

In August we were still on the hunting grounds out there. It was only towards the end of August that we sailed farther up the fjord to our next settlement. We only spent one winter at Ittitalik. My father moved around a little to see how good the various settlements were. After the only winter at Ittitalik, we didn't live there again. There was a poor autumn period around the time of the ice cover. From September into November the sea was rough, so you had to hunt seals inside the islands, or fish. There were fish there. It was there that I first caught a cod. When you hadn't tasted cod before it tasted really nice. Cod is a big fish compared with sea-scorpion and char. Who would have expected that in later periods we would eat most cod, and earn money from it? We were the same group of people when we lived at Ittitalik, as at Nattivit. It was a household.

When we then lived at Tiileqilaaq, we lived in the same house as Jonathan's family. Among us it was my father and his brother-in-law who hunted. They each had a section of the sleeping platform, and my paternal grandmother had hers. Then Jonathan had his section, and so did Jonathan's sister Apollonie who was the same age as my paternal grandmother. All the older people were descendants of Naaja, a shaman from Innartuaq.[57] Naaja was the great grandfather of both my paternal grandmother and Jonathan. They were all children of Innartuarmiu's grandchildren. Innartuarmiu (Naaja) is said to have had six sons.

When we lived at Tiileqilaaq with Jonathan's household, we didn't go hungry either. I had begun to catch seals. That was where I got my kayak. My paternal uncle had also begun to hunt, besides my father and his brother-in-law. Jonathan and his son Louis hunted too. There were many seals, and all through the winter we went short of nothing edible. There were also many guillemots.

Jonathan had his permanent winter settlement at Tiileqilaaq. Before that Nathanael's family, and Hendrik's wife's parents, also lived at the place. In some years they lived with other hunting families. Jonathan's first wife was a sister of Paulus (Hendrik Singertaat's father-in-law), and they often lived together. But when we lived there, there were not so many of us. Jonathan's sister was old, but she still sewed. She held her sewing out to the side, and looked at it out of the corner of her eye. There was something wrong with her eyes when she grew old.

While we lived there, in May 'Peter Priest' came. He was the pastor in the district at that time.[58] While he was there, I shot a seal from the house exit. When it was pulled up, I took the skin off, and they used the body as food for their dogs.

In the spring when we lived there, I caught my first basking seal. I caught a total of twelve that spring. But before that I had caught seals from a kayak. Towards the spring we went away through Ikaasattivaq[59] to Attereq[60] near Kulusuk. We were there for about two weeks. My little sister, Marie's first child with my father, was to be baptized. She died later. She was born in February, and only at the end of June did we go off to get her baptized. Now the children are baptized much earlier. Children were at that time only baptized by the district pastor, and he only travelled around once a year.

After the child had been baptized, we spent the following winter in Tasiilaq. My father wanted to spend a winter there again. That was in 1929/1930.

Let us just return to your winter at Kakalik in 1922.

When I was 11 years old, in 1921-1922. My paternal grandmother, my paternal aunt and my own family. Then there was my father's cousin, Kristiane, married to Juda. In addition there was Kristiane's mother, Kathrine, an older widow. And then there was also Kathrine's[61] brother, the hunter Gaba and his children. I believe there were five. They were more or less related to one another. That winter Gaba died. He was out in a kayak when a *piteraq* broke out before he got home. He was the only one of the hunters who was visible from the settlement, and he was then very close to the settlement. When the storm broke, we couldn't see him any more. The other hunters were farther away and couldn't be seen from the house. They all came home together, except the one who was visible from the house. My father and Juda came later. Aage only came home towards midnight. We could only tell the time by our senses. We had no watches. Aage had been on the other side of Sermilik, and had to paddle hard across the fjord to get home. He was a fantastic kayak paddler. He said that he capsized twice, each time after he had been hit by a breaker. But he righted himself both times. The waves can be violent in the middle of the fjord. Aage had two ringed seals in tow, one on each side, when he started off home. He wouldn't throw them away. But they twisted and twisted round, and at some point he discovered that they were both gone. The sea made so much noise that he didn't notice that both came loose. He reached land at Kinginneq,[62] close to Kakalik. In the snowdrifts he discovered a small inlet, and at the first attempt he got ashore. He rolled his line around the kayak, and stuck the kayak down in a snowdrift: he had assumed that he was out of all his difficulties once he had come ashore. But he discovered that he couldn't walk against the wind, and had to crawl forward and follow the depressions in the terrain. Only when he came to a small inlet just south of the house did he realize where he was. Just after that he reached the house. We children woke up when he was talking about his trip. But we waited in vain for the other man.

My brother and I were often out early in the morning. We had a sledge and a pair of skis that we used frequently. The following morning I was woken up by people crying. It was Gaba's wife who had become a widow, and her children who still couldn't manage for themselves, and Gaba's sister, Kathrine. When I went out of the house and looked around, it was perfectly calm. The fjord was smooth as a mirror all the way to the opposite bank. When I looked up, I saw the blue sky without a hint of cloud. It was all over during the night. Only later did I realize that a human life can be over at any time, either through illness or something else. When I came into the house again, I listened to the crying that filled the whole house interior. My family was silent in its recognition of their grief. They knew the dead man very well, and at that time you showed your grief intensely and for a long time. The dead were missed. Then there could be calm for a while. But when a relative came one day, people would gather and mourn again: that's the way people were then.

Gaba left some children. Three were confirmed. His son, the only son, had begun to catch seals. Then there were two unmarried daughters. But shortly before this Gaba had caught a she-bear with two cubs all on his own, and it was a great help to those left behind that they could sell the skins.

That winter my mother died in March. It was especially a pity for my younger siblings. My paternal grandmother had me and my youngest sister with her. My father had my brother, Moses, and my sister Polunikka, with him. If my father lay on one side in the evening, the child on the back side got jealous of the other one, and began to cry. Only when my father lay on his back was it quiet. They both missed my mother, and clung to my father. Sometimes my father got sad out of pity for the children. During the day we missed my father when he went off in a kayak, and we were always happy when he came home.

After the death of my mother I can remember that when the women came back from berry-picking we waited to get something, especially if my grandmother and aunt weren't with them. Although among the other households something was shared out, motherless children still had to sit and wait for someone to give them something. It was nice when somebody gave you something to eat. When you are grown-up yourself and are visited by children, you often have to give them something; for you have to remember how it was for you as a child. Of course it didn't happen every time that they gave the children something; but I suppose it happened most times. That winter our settlement was afflicted with sorrow, both in and outside my family. That's why I used to say later: "Who can for-

get our mother's hugs?" As adults we can't help feeling sorry for orphaned children, as we can remember how we ourselves felt. When we lost out mother, we felt terrible, so we feel sorry for the other motherless children. That winter we were in mourning, and for a while there was also scarcity. Late in the winter, in February or March, my maternal uncle Vilhelm caught a walrus. He had actually gone to visit another settlement. But shortly afterwards he came back. On the way he had surprised a walrus and shot it dead. After tying it to the ice, he came home to tell us. It was wonderful. Now my uncle is an old man. When I see him, he often says: "If I hadn't caught that walrus then, you would probably all have starved to death."

We were in Tasiilaq in 1930. That was where we got used to shop food, which later became a large proportion of our food. We drank a lot of tea, but not much coffee yet.

That year an English expedition team[63] came to spend the winter around Ammassalik. They spent some days in Tasiilaq. The Norwegian Schellerup sailed for them.

It was good that housemates would not keep all their things to themselves. If they had not shared, even with unrelated families, many people would have had a hard time in the winter. But housemates, also those who were unrelated, shared all their food out with everyone in the house, and often it came at a time when it was sorely needed. When nothing had been caught for some time, and a family fetched food from the cache, everyone in the house shared in eating it. The youngsters too got their share. Families with small children and relatives also got their share equally with others.

In the house we lived with my stepmother's, Marie's, nephew, Hans Sanimuinnaq, and his mother Paula who was a widow. Of her two children, my namesake, Massanti Sanimuinnaq, was the same age as me. He had also begun to catch seals – so had his elder brother Hans. They also had a younger brother, Jakob Sanimuinnaq, who was still at school. Now he is the catechist in Kulusuk. There was also Jakob's big sister, Susanne, whose later married name was Mikaelsen. She died here last spring. But at that time she was a young girl. We lived in the same house as them. On our side there was my father's section, my paternal grandmother's and my paternal aunt's. My paternal aunt was then a widow. Then, as I said, there were my stepmother's nephews, the children of her elder brother. Opposite us there were two houses.

In one house there was a family where the father and son were hunters, and Erik and his son, Poul,[64] who could also catch seals, lived there too. In the second house Tiiliu and his son Ulrik lived. Ulrik was the same age as me, and he too had begun to catch seals. In Tiiliu's house there were two sections. In one division lived the widow Lea, who was the widow of the catechist Nikatius at Ikkatteq, the oldest son of Justuusi. There was a fourth house, occupied by a household. That was the old widow Monika's. Her daughter was married to Aron, and her son, Edvard, was also married. In the house Monika's unmarried son, Kaaleeraq, also lived. They lived from hunting, and didn't look for work as day labourers. They suffered from scarcities now and then. The men were not the best of hunters either.

At that time I sometimes tried to get work on land. After snow, for example, we might shovel the snow away from the pastor's enclosure, for which we would be paid by the parish, or outside the colonial manager's house, which meant we could earn something from 'the Administration'.[65] There was that kind of work. When the pastor or the colonial manager had run out of coal, we fetched the coal to the house in baskets that we carried on our backs. We were given money for it. A day's wage was not much, sometimes up to one *krone*. The hourly pay can't have been very much. It was there that I tried for the first time, as I said, to work on land. When a ship came, I also got work unloading it. People went there from the settlements to get work. We did a lot, and I worked there right until the ship was ready to sail. That winter I didn't do much hunting. There was not much opportunity. I can remember that in that winter I caught 87 seals, and on a trip to Akerninnaq I caught another three. When you were a young hunter, hunting was always a wonderful occupation. But there was not much to catch close to Tasiilaq.

In May I put the kayak over my shoulders and walked overland to Ikkatteq. I missed Sermilik and the hunting there, so I went off to live with the hunter Jokum Bianco. My father said that they were going to the hunting camp at Amittivartik[66] when the ice went away, and later they would travel through Ikaasattivaq to Tiileqilaaq. I was not used to the hunting conditions around Amittivartik, and had little desire to go hunt-

ing from there. So I took my kayak and stayed at Ikkatteq until my family came back to Sermilik. I lived in Jokum's house while I waited for my family to come back to Sermilik. Around the first of July people came from Tiileqilaaq to Ikkatteq, on their way to Tasiilaq. They said that my family had come to Sarpaq. At that time an inward-blowing fjord wind blew during the day. So I slept during the day, and in the evening, when the wind had died down I paddled up the fjord. Inside Akerninnaq I looked for tern eggs on a small island. The next morning I reached Sarpaq after sunrise. It was wonderful when I came back to my father, my paternal grandmother and my siblings. It was perhaps not such a long time I was separated from them; but it was the first time I had not seen them for such a long time, and I enjoyed it a lot being with them again.

Since I had not slept that night, I was rather sleepy. In the afternoon I undressed and lay down to sleep. After a while I woke up and heard someone talking about narwhal. I got dressed quickly and went barefoot out of the tent. My father was not yet out in a kayak. I was rather confused, and had to rub my eyes. It was only outside the tent that I could see clearly. My father had just got into a kayak, and was paddling to the east behind the island in the Sarpaq current. I carried the kayak to the beach and went off after my father. There were not yet any more kayaks close by. I paddled as hard as I could, and just before I reached my father, the narwhal appeared in front of him, and went to sleep. I kept still at the edge of the beach while my father approached the animal. When he harpooned it, it whipped up the sea around it. When my father threw his harpoon bladder, it was dragged along on the surface of the sea, instead of being pulled down. It was so shallow that it couldn't pull the bladder down. But slowly it was pulled down, and disappeared under the water. Before long the animal came up twice, without the harpoon bladder coming up. It was only when the narwhal came up for the third time that the harpoon bladder came up to the surface. It was not a common thing with narwhal that the harpoon bladder was not able to come up before the animal went down again. It was only when four harpoon bladders were attached to it that it had trouble pulling them down. For adult narwhals had much more endurance than the young ones. When it had come out into Sermilik, we used the lances on it, and killed it in the end. It was a big one with a long tusk. When the tusk was pulled out, we measured it. My father's kayak paddle was a long paddle; but the tusk measured the length of the kayak paddle and the length of the throwing board plus the whole arm up to the shoulder [presumably 3-3½ m – RP]. The root was closed. We call such a tusk a *qaqivisilik*, 'one with a depression at the end'. The point was broken off. It must have been quite a tusk in its full length. Narwhal tusk was much sought-after by the hunters. It was wonderful that my father caught an animal with such a tusk. It was material for the harpoon foreshaft. At that time we used the harpoon a lot, and we enjoyed using it. That same summer, in August, I myself caught a narwhal. At first I thought it was a beluga. Farther up the fjord is the island of Akunnequt,[67] which we can see on the map. There is a seagull cliff close to the island, and it was in at the seagull cliff that I caught it. I was in there in a kayak on a hunting trip. When I caught my first narwhal, I was 19 years old.

At Sarpaq we were all related in the same house. In the second house there was also only one household, Apollo's.[68] Apollo and his son, Josef, caught seals, and so did Apollo's brother, Levi. Josef had begun to catch seals, but his younger brother, Ignatius, could still not catch seals. Levi caught seals too, but he also often caught narwhal. Now he lives in Tasiilaq – he was a good hunter. The same summer, when they came from the hunting camp and were on their way to Sarpaq, he also caught a large narwhal on his way there. Its tusk had been broken off right up at the head. But the root was thick. I don't know what had happened to break the tusk off at the root. Perhaps it had got it stuck in a rock fissure. Narwhal were caught that summer, at Tiileqilaaq too.

Jonathan's family, Paulus and his family, and Alfred, Taqqisimat's father, with his family, all lived there. There were rather a lot of people at Tiileqilaaq that summer. That year Paarnakajiit[69] was settled for the first time. Paulus and his family lived there the following winter. They had to build the house from scratch. They lived there for a few years, two or three years. Later very many people died there. There was a lot of illness in December, and later we heard that many of them had died. They were Paulus and his wife, the oldest in the house, their daughter and her husband as well as their still-small child, their daughter-in-law and her small child, and another daughter's husband and their child. There was hardly anyone left

in the house. The oldest of the children, Eli, survived. He put up a tent inside the house. Later when they were visited by two young men, Harald Boassen and Petrus Larsen, these two found him, the only one of Paulus's children who was well.[70] A sister of Eli's, Talitta, was also alive. She is now the widow of Mikael. Then there was Thorvald, who is now the skipper of the m/b *Knuth,* the son of Eli. The four brothers and sisters were alive: Eli, Talitta, Hansine and Eerinarteeq. Two daughters of Talitta were also alive; the rest were dead. There was no one to take care of the sick either, since the only one still well was a young girl. They said that Hansine was covered by ice. The cousin, Petrus Larsen, heard a sound from her on the window-platform, and thus discovered that she was still alive. "There isn't much chance of staying alive," she said. Moisture from the gut-casing window had run down on to her skin blanket, which was covered with a shell of ice. Some of the ice was melted by her body heat, so that she lay in a soaked bed. She is still alive and lives in Kuummiit. The elder brother's tent inside the house was also covered with frost, and the interior of the house was covered by frost that looked like snow. They had lived on nothing but the contents of the skin bag, for that was the only food that was in the house. Several of the family members got even more ill from eating it, and soon died. Such a skin bag was not good for people who were ill.

At that time we lived at Pupik, and we were doing well; but my paternal grandmother[71] died there. We lived there without any other families. But not far from Pupik, at Akerninnaq, Kunuusi's family lived. I was married myself then, and with us lived my paternal uncle with his family, my paternal aunt with her family, my father with his family, and my paternal grandmother to begin with. My brother Moses also lived there. We were four men, all hunters. We lived at Pupik for five years.

We moved from there to Tiileqilaaq, and didn't move any more.

But in between, in 1938-1940, I lived at Tasiilaq, and in the course of 1940 I moved to Tiileqilaaq.

All the time we moved around we stayed together in my family, and lived together all the time. At that time I was a hunter. I can call myself that. But hunting was not always easy. After the death of my uncle I was the only hunter for the whole family. [The father stopped hunting, and Moses became a catechist – RP]. Sometimes I only came back from hunting late in the evening. When the weather was good, I didn't go home before the darkness fell. Even if I had already caught more than one seal, the journey home could be slow. But often I was lucky in my hunting. There were very few times I came home empty-handed.

Massanti Aqipi, Tiileqilaaq

This conversation took place on the basis of a list that Massanti Aqipi had already drawn up of the Aqipi family's various dwellings from 1914 until 1940. The list is translated in the following. The years given indicate when the family moved into the house, and they lived there until the following spring. Wherever there are discrepancies with the conversation above, the information in this list fits better with the other available sources.

1. 1914, Innartalik. One house with two hunters within my family, as well as two outside the family, a total of 22 people. The house was divided into five sections. We lived mainly on seal meat.
2. 1915, Pupik. There was one house. Three hunters within the family and two outside the family. The house was divided into seven sections. [Two sections mentioned here, according to the census, were occupied by ten people, presumably unrelated families].
3. 1916, Akerninnaq. A house with four hunters within the family. The house was divided into four sections.
4. 1917, Tasiilaq. One house with ten hunters, each with his family. The house was divided into ten sections. All the hunters were good hunters.
5. 1918, Tasiilaq. One house with ten hunters, each with his family. In the house there were nine sections.
6. 1919, Qernertivartivit. One house with four hunters, two within my family, two outside. There are five sections in the house.
7. 1920, Kakalik. Three hunters in my family, and one outside. One house with four sections.
8. 1921, Kakalik. Six hunters [corrected from five, otherwise it says], three hunters within my family, one outside. The house had five sections.
9. 1922, Ikkatteq. Two houses, in one my household with three 'families'. There were three sections in

the house. The house was a turf house. In the second house there were six sections, each with one hunter as supporter. The house was a turf house. Another house belonging to the midwife. A married couple without children lived there. It was a wooden house.

10. 1923, Kakalik. One house with seven families, three of these my family, and four of the other family. There were seven sections in the house.
11. 1924, Nattivit. One house with my family. There were four sections, and a total of 14 people.
12. 1925, Ittitalik. One house with one household. There were four sections, and a total of 15 people.
13. 1926, Tiileqilaaq. One house with my three families and two others. The house was divided into five sections. There were 16 people in all.
13. 1927, Kakalik. One house with eight families in eight sections, 27 people.
14. 1928, Kakalik. One house with the same eight families in eight sections.
15. 1930: Tasiilaq. [There seems to be some confusion in this list, since 1929 is missing, and from other information it appears that the family only spent one winter in Tasiilaq.] There were four houses. First house: Four hunters, father, paternal uncle, myself and my brother, and two other families. Five sections in the house. Second house: Two families in one house without sections. Third house: Two families and a widow from another family. Fourth house: Four hunters' families in three sections. All the houses were turf houses.
16. 1931, Sarpaq. Two houses. First house: One household in five sections. All the men were hunters. Second house: One household with three hunters. Four sections.
17. 1933-37, Pupik. One house with six families in five sections.
18. 1938-1939, Tasiilaq.
19. From 1940, Tiileqilaaq.

NB: If one looks at the official censuses, there should be several houses in Pupik from 1932 on. From about 1930 people began to live in 'household houses' instead of communal houses. The informant first and foremost spoke of his own housemates. Almost all his information matches the censuses, although information on other families may be incomplete.

Field note with Massanti Aqipi as informant. Tiileqilaaq, 17 July 1969

In earlier times, when you were hungry, you lived on mussels and beach plants. When you couldn't get anything else, you killed a dog, so the children could get something to eat.

In emergencies you could boil the leaky skin-border that the holes had made useless for any other purpose. You boiled it in train-oil. That made the piece of skin soft. Old kamik soles could also be used for the same purpose.

Otherwise you could fish for Greenland shark. Shark fishing was done on the ice. You made an oblong hole, about 2 x 4 m. You killed a dog, stuck a pole through it so that blood flowed from it, and you used it as bait. When the Greenland sharks came, some of them were harpooned.

You cooked shark meat five times. Each time, all the water was wrung thoroughly out of the meat before it was boiled in new water. After this preparation it tasted delicious.

Otherwise you could dry the shark meat, and that tasted good too.

Ebbe Josvasen,[72] Tasiilaq (69ØG3B2)

31 July 1969

When I became aware of myself, we lived in a tent. I have tried to count how many of us there were. There was my cousin, Paulus Larsen, and his wife Mathilde. She was my cousin, she was my mother's niece. Before he was baptized my father was called Angajeqqaajat, although it says 'Angajeqqaavat' in the parish register. He died of a stomach ailment. At that time my mother had no siblings any more. Her siblings died in 1824[?].[73] When my father died, and my mother had no one else to support her, she travelled to her niece (sister's daughter). There she was accepted as a member of her household, in a tent as well as in a house. The house was built of turf and stone, with woodwork to carry the roof, covered with sods, crumbled turf and skins so that it would not leak. In the house there was warmth in the winter, even in storms, snow and rain.

My mother had three children, two girls and then myself as the youngest. We did not have our own sup-

porter. We couldn't buy clothes or food as we can today. Only with the help of a great hunter could we keep hunger away. We had to have some of the great hunter's catch in both summer and winter. I grew up with my cousin Paulus Larsen. I was very small. My sisters were young, but at least of confirmation age. I was an 'afterthought', they said, because once when my mother was pregnant, she fell into a hollow, and then gave birth to two stillborn twins, both boys. It was sad, so I grew up almost as an only child. When my mother was expecting me, she was excited about whether I would be a boy or a girl. My mother was not baptized yet. I was born in Sermilik, at Savanganaartik[74] close to Ikkatteq. My father was a fine great hunter, I have heard. He was said not to be as tall as me, but stronger.

When I had begun to paddle a kayak, one of my friends, an old man called Aanta, said to me: "Why can't you manage your kayak?" He had seen me paddle my kayak without getting up much speed. He had an image of my father paddling a kayak at full speed, without caring much about whether it could stand the pace. So I thought that my parents were perhaps so strong because they lived on seal meat. In my youth I too ate rye bread and drank tea; but I didn't smoke tobacco. When I tried for the first time to take snuff and smoke a cigar, I was 23.

The family with whom we lived had ten children. The two brothers of the father of the household were also there. There was also their sister, who lived with her husband in the house.[75] This sister had two children, Louis and Billeam. In our own family there were four of us: two sisters, myself and my mother. So many people stayed together. If anyone was to travel anywhere, we went together.

One of the first things I can remember is that we lived in the same tent. But sadly my cousin, the mother of Louis and Billeam, died. She died in childbirth when she was having a daughter. I missed that cousin very much. We lived there in the months of May, June, July, August and September. Then, as I said, we lived in a turf house. There were three gut-casing windows. My mother had made the middle one from bearded seal gut. I grew up there with no other knife than a blunt, unsharpened kayak knife. Those sorts of knives were in the shops around 1916. I used it to carve wood or bone, and when I tried to carve, Jonathan would often give me something. This Jonathan was a 'reader'. He read out the Gospel at services and made sure we were taught. But I was unlucky with spelling in the 'ABD' [ABC or reading primer]. I know that today it is called the a-i-u. One day when Jonathan was trying in vain to get me to read, he had to give up on me, and I cried quietly, so the tears ran down my cheeks. Later when I myself became a catechist and taught at the settlements, I gave a beginner paper and pencil and asked to him to copy out. Then I discovered that he was sitting crying. Later he finished school and he has left the area. Now I have heard that he is in Nuuk. In childhood we have various difficulties, and that is the kind of thing that makes you wiser later.

Back to the tents. Those of us who lived in the same house belonged to three tent groups in the summer. I can't mention every member of the household. I can't remember them all. Now all the oldest ones are dead. When three tent groups were to live in the same house, the house would be big. There could be ten sections on the platform. The various sections had good relations with one another. In the house they lived as Christians and heathens mixed together. In that I can see the embodiment of the words of the Bible: "Love one another!" Heathens and Christians lived in among one another from September until May/June. But there was peace between them.

Josef Kaajammat,[76] Tiileqilaaq (69ØG2A)

17 July 1969

In earlier days people who were related to one another lived in the same house. But in the same house there also lived people who were not related to the others. The occupants in such a communal house were not the same from year to year. A family could live at one place in a house, and then at another place the next year. Thus the family could move around. You would often choose a place at a certain distance from the previous place, but with good seal stocks. When you moved from a place, it wasn't because you noticed a deterioration in the animal stocks, but rather because you looked for another place that looked even more promising. But some families lived permanently at a particular settlement, where they lived in the winter year after year, because the place was good for the winter

hunting. If they were unlucky one winter, and for example suffered scarcity, they moved to another place where the hunting potential was better. If the new place then turned out to have better hunting, you didn't return right away to the old settlement. You spent the next winter again at the new place. That's how our ancestors chose their settlements, it was said. When you experienced scarcity at the new place, the following winter you went to another new place, where in the first year in particular you had to try it out, to find out how good a catch you could get from there when you had tried it; then you could decide whether you wanted to live there the following year.

We lived at Ikkatteq, farther out in Sermilik. We lived out there while we were growing up. We often suffered scarcity out there while my father, Apollo, was hunting around Ikkatteq. When he had trouble there supporting the family, he began to look around for a place in the region where the hunting was better. Then he moved farther up the fjord. That was in my earliest youth, around 1930. We moved in here. After a hunting trip he said one day that since his youth he had heard about Sarpaq as a place where no one went hungry. After a winter at Tiileqilaaq, he moved to Sarpaq. That was in 1930.

There he discovered that the rumours had been true, that no one went hungry at Sarpaq. At that time I myself began to go hunting, and I lived there for some time.

Then I moved to Imaarsivik[77] towards the south, and I looked for a place with solid hunting, a place with good seal stocks. I discovered that there were good seal stocks there – not better than at Sarpaq, but not worse either. We looked for places with good sealing, because the shop goods and shop food played such a small role in our daily life. It was the sealing that was important.

In 1942 I went back to Sermilik. My catch was unchanged as long as we lived at Tiileqilaaq. After a winter here I moved back to Sarpaq, for there I had caught most seals, and my father lived there too. Then I couldn't paddle a kayak any more, and I went back to Tiileqilaaq. My father was still an active hunter, but was becoming an old man.

My best time as a hunter was around 1940. My father used to say that when he was the same age, he lived at Qeertaalaq.[78] He lived there with his family, and with his siblings and his mother. When he lived there, they never went hungry. He lived at the same place for many years together. They preferred to live in the old-fashioned way. They were not Christians yet. When he was not young any more, the pastor came one day. They still lived there; for they were unwilling to leave the place when there was such good hunting there. Then he heard that people would be going to receive instruction from the pastor [implying that his family too should receive instruction – RP]. So he left Qeertaalaq, and he moved with his whole family to Tasiilaq, and we were with him. His mother and siblings were with us too. He could not leave them there. After the baptismal preparation and the Baptism,[79] he didn't move back to Qeertaalaq, his favourite settlement. He moved to Iserpalikitseq.[80] One day he was driving in his sledge from Iserpalikitseq to Qeertaalaq. At this time he felt that his earlier heathen life no longer played a role. He got so far that he could see the place. The mountains were just appearing out of the morning mist. At this sight he was so moved that he couldn't even get himself to drive down on the ice.[81] Once he had left his favourite settlement, he missed it almost like a person. Now he sat on the ground so that he could look out over all of his old hunting area. But he was so overcome by inner agitation that he turned around without doing any hunting. He said that he never again went to that place, because he had missed it like a person. So said my father, Apollo.

That's how our ancestors were. They would not leave a settlement where they had good hunting, but lived at it for many years in succession. My father said that, and added that in the old days people chose a settlement in the same way. If a hunter's parents were alive, he lived with them. If he had siblings, he also lived with them at his favourite place. You could only call it a favourite place when you had experienced that there were such good hunting conditions there that there was no danger of scarcity. Then you remained there all the time, and only left it to go to hunting camps. Such a household with a permanent settlement did not live permanently with other households. Another hunter would have another favourite settlement, where the hunting conditions were also good, and he would live there with his household. At such a good hunting settlement, where a hunter lived 'permanently' with his household, another household might occasionally spend the winter with the permanent household, in the same house.

The outsider family would of course ask the permanent family first. The permanent family would say yes, among other reasons because the hunting could be unreliable if the head of that family was the only hunter, and with another kayak hunter he could count on help if a dangerous situation were to arise. That was why the hunters who used the same hunting ground were very closely attached to one another, as if they were related to one another. That's the way it was in the old days.

So that was a household that often had a 'permanent' settlement. But for a hunter who did not have his relatives with him – in the old days – enemies could also be a risk for him. A hunter who did not have close relatives would thus have to build up his strength. When he had built up such strength that he was no longer afraid of others, he could more easily live by himself at his favourite place, even if he had no male relatives – no brothers – and while his children were still small.

But other households moved from place to place year after year. They also left the places where they had good hunting. These would often be families with an umiak. They were always looking for a good hunting place. They said, "This is a good place, but there is also good hunting at another place. There are good seal stocks, and they should be exploited." There were thus many people who didn't stay in the same place. They moved with their whole household. They used the same umiak, they lived in the same house. That's the way it was in my childhood too. A household could for example go down in its umiak to Umiivik,[82] because Umiivik was well known for good hunting then, and they say there is still good hunting at Umiivik. When the household had spent one winter down there, the following year they went back. Not least when a shop came to Tasiilaq, people returned to the area around here. When you had changed your way of living, you went back to the area where there was a pastor. This was especially true of the older folk. Sometimes they were in Tasiilaq long enough to go to Communion before they travelled just as far away. When you had a good place, you went back there, even though it might be very far away.

When you went back to your settlement, and you were to spend a new winter there with new fellow settlers, you often changed the size of the house. If there were more of you, you made the house longer, so it was intended for six or seven households.

Once you had spent the winter there and experienced the hunting conditions, the 'permanent' household would stay at the place, also in the following winter, while the other families moved to a new place. And so before the next people moved in, the house would be made correspondingly shorter.

The most frequent and most serious complaint you could hear in my childhood was hunger. There were not so many shop goods, and you couldn't afford shop food as much. You lived on seal meat, so you also looked for the places where you could best get yourself seal meat. Some households knew practically nothing about hunger. Others had to get through long periods of hunger. There were differences between them. At places with good hunters you normally never experienced hunger, also because they could economize with their winter provisions. They dried the meat from the summer catch and put it in the cache, the *qimululuik*. They didn't touch the cached provisions until a time of scarcity came. In the same way they wouldn't touch unflensed hooded seals before there was scarcity. Such an unflensed seal can't be eaten by one family alone; but they invited their housemates to eat with them, including those who were not related to them, so that everyone ate some of it and got a festive atmosphere out of it. But they only took it when they had nothing else. When there was no scarcity, they saved them up, because they couldn't get fresh meat when the stocks of unflensed seals ran out. During the winter people managed with the daily hunting, and only when things were hard did they take dried meat or unflensed seal. Then everyone in the house ate it, even those who were not part of the family. If you had neighbours, they too were invited in to share in the meal.

It was also such that if, for example, people were hungry in Akerninnaq, while people at Tiileqilaaq still had unflensed seal, a person who came from Akerninnaq to Tiileqilaaq was invited to eat meat from unflensed seal, even though he might not be related to people at Tiileqilaaq. When he went back he would take some of the meat home with him. You wouldn't let somebody come in vain.

Only families without fellow settlers could think of eating unflensed seal without sharing with others.

You could hear people say: "Thanks to dried meat and unflensed seal we didn't starve." When one economized with these things, it could happen that one was unable to get them used up before the spring hunting came again. But some people did go hungry, as I said, although not for the whole winter. When the hunting for basking seals began, they got over the hungry period. Our ancestors were able hunters. They had no guns, but they caught basking seals with harpoons.

In the communal house, where the various families shared out their catch, there were also a few families who would not share out as much as the others. If anyone would not share so much out, someone else might remark: "Look at him who doesn't want to collect relatives!" The others who offered food in the same house might say something like that. In East Greenland the head of such a household is called *neernanngitseq*, 'one from whom you do not get shares', because he wanted to keep it for himself. But most people were not like that. The housemates didn't care for such a person. But when the others shared out what they had, this person would still get his share. A *neernanngitseq* was such, however, that when he had caught a seal, he ate some of it with his housemates, but he ate the rest only with his own family. Nevertheless, no one would get their own back on the man, and you still shared food with him, just as you shared with the other housemates. That's how they lived in the old days, it is said.

As long as both the mother and the father were alive [and they lived in the same house – RP] they decided what was to be done with the son's catch. Even in the cases where the son was married and had children, his parents alone decided what was to be done with the catch. So one always asked one's parents what was to be done with it. If for example you came home with a freshly caught hooded seal, you would ask: "Is it to be cut up or kept as unflensed seal?" – "It's to be kept," the father might answer for example. Then the children would keep it as unflensed seal, as the father said. Another time the son might ask the same question. "It's to be cut up, we could do with some fresh meat!" the father might answer. The it was cut up. Only when the parents died would the son and his wife begin to make decisions about the son's catch.

Did you also have to ask your parents first when you wanted something fetched from the cache with the dried things?

No, [not always]. Now I will explain it in more detail. I have myself experienced that sort of thing.

A hunter could be hunting, for example without his father being with him. A young man only began to go hunting in earnest when his father couldn't go any more. He became a good hunter when the father had retired. The father still decided what was to be done with the catch. But the son and his family did the necessary work. If the dried meat was to be put in the cache for example, they collected it, packed it etc. Then finally the cache was closed properly. But people were different, and some, when they felt like it, wanted to fetch something from the cache without asking the father or mother first. Others asked their father or mother first: "What about fetching something from the cache?" The parents would usually say yes for the sake of their children or grandchildren.

There were also differences in this sense: when dried meat had been fetched from the cache, the hunter's wife would share it out without first asking for permission, even when she was still very young. But others left the sharing-out to their father or mother. There were great differences there. But these rules of living have disappeared today. They have passed out of use. In the old days, that is in earlier times, you obeyed your father's or mother's decisions about the catch, because those two had the authority over it. It was said that our ancestors lived this way; but I too experienced such conditions myself. When I got married and had children, I was already a hunter; but my parents were still alive. When I came home, I couldn't eat any of the catch unless my mother gave it to me.

When a hooded seal was brought into the house, the owner would say "Go on and eat!" to his housemates. When it was opened up, everyone would share in it, that is all the men. Women didn't participate in the communal meal. Only when the men had finished eating was the rest cut up and shared out to the others so that they all got their share. You didn't keep it for your own family. When you opened up the belly of the seal you took all the meat on that side. Afterwards the offal was pulled out and cut up, and in the end the meat on the back was eaten. Women without a husband or supporter got their share just like other women. I have seen that myself. Most people did it that way. But, as I said, there were some who, apart from the first general sharing, would not share their

whole catch. But they say there were very few who were less willing to share their catch.

In the same way, if the dried meat of a whole hooded seal was brought into the house, it was also distributed among all the housemates, both adults and children. It might be the father or mother who shared it out; but there were differences. In some cases it was the hunter's wife who shared it out. The husband's job was to fetch it home. When it had been brought in, his wife took over the further treatment. When the men had eaten unflensed seal together, and went away from it full, the owner's wife came forward to do the further distribution and serving.

I sometimes still miss such situations, where no one would keep all the food to themselves, but where people shared it out among the others too.

Plant food from what we in East Greenland call *torteernat*, 'rose root' (*Sedum rosea*), is actually the wife's 'catch'. It was preserved in blubber. But it was also eaten like all the other things. When the skin bag with the blubber and rose root was brought into the house, the men would eat some of it. Only when they had got up, would the wife who had 'caught' it go to the bag and take charge of the further distribution.

But it was like this. If the woman who had filled the plant bag was married, and wanted to bring the bag in, she would first ask her husband: "What about bringing it in?" And the husband would obey and bring it in. A married couple shared their property. If a husband wanted to bring an unflensed seal into the house, he would also first ask his wife: "What about bringing it in?" – "Yes, certainly," she would reply.

And when the husband wanted to fetch something from the cache after the mother was dead, or if the mother no longer took part in deciding over that part of the household work, he would ask his wife: "Shouldn't we fetch something home?" – "Yes, certainly. Just fetch it home!" They agreed on all those sorts of things. In this respect the husband and the wife didn't have separate areas. They shared this authority. If a husband fetched anything without first having said anything to his wife about it, he risked being criticized by her. In the same way a wife who had food brought in on her own initiative risked criticism from him. It was only when they agreed that they could take any pleasure in managing their food supplies. My father, who was very old and was from the 'old' days, saw things that way, and so did my mother, who didn't die until I had my own children. It was probably an old rule.

I've seen house-building. When everyone was to live in the same house, all the women did the building work. The wall-building wasn't the men's work. They would be out hunting. When the wall was finished, the women fetched sods. The men would still be out hunting to gather winter provisions; for house-building was a late summer activity. Only when you had gathered enough sods did you clean out the inside of the house, and lay the bearing construction for the roof in place. It was only then that the husband and wife would lay the sods on the woodwork together above their sleeping platform section. Afterwards the women, without the men, would spread the crumbled turf over the sods. When they were done, the men would look to see if it was all finished, and in that case the men would say: "Now we'll move in!" Then came the husband's part of the work, and he spent one day on it. The pieces of wood for the bearing construction were laid on by everyone together; but the further covering of the individual platform-places was done family by family above their own section. The outer covering of the summer tent was then laid across the platform section by the family that was to have that platform section. That's how the whole house was covered.

But not much wood was used in such a house. The lamp-platform was made of wood. I never saw stone tiles on the lamp-platforms; in earlier times people had used flat stones for it. But in the time that is only known from the legends there had been houses where only a man and his wife lived in the house. You called them *kiserngaat*, 'those without family'. In such house ruins you can see such lamp-platforms of stone. They say that these people were very strong. Some of the house ruins of the legendary people are still standing as a kind of evidence.

People often changed the size of the house. If housemates travelled away to another place, and for example only two households were to live in the same house, they would make the house smaller. Then the next year if new families came who wanted to live in the same house, they built the house bigger. Of course you could also build a house where no house had been built before. If you had investigated the hunting potential of the place and considered it promising, you could build a house there from scratch. Since the men were

kayak hunters, they often decided on the location of the house in terms of the landing conditions for the kayak. Thus you made allowances for the hunting conditions and the landing conditions, but not the water supply, since in the winter you used snow for your water supply. Even if we were to lack fresh water in the place in the summer, we could manage with melted ice from pieces of calved ice.

Storage caches were no problem either. From here for example we use the storage caches at Sarpaq. Caches should always be a good distance from the house, and within the 'necessary' distance there were always suitable rock caves or hollows. With this procedure you could economize better with the provisions. Only the frozen provisions were kept by the house.

The housemates who moved in at the same time in the late summer also moved out at the same time. The women sewed a new outer covering for tents from new skin[83] when the time for moving out approached. When everything was ready, they moved out at the same time as the others. When you had to uncover the house on moving out, the work was done by the men. In fact one did not remove the sods, one removed the skin coverings that covered the house, and when one travelled away the sods [and the woodwork below them] were left on the roof of the house. You took the outer covering off for example if you were going to spend the next winter at another place, had to build a new house, and needed the woodwork. Only then did you remove the woodwork over the house, and you took it with you to the new place. I have myself experienced that. The first time we were going to spend the winter at Tiileqilaaq, my father said "The woodwork for the house is on Ittitalik at Ikkatteq. We need that." So we paddled out there and brought it here.

I know a good deal about the *ammassat* fishing. If there is a man in the house, it is him who scoops them up at the *ammassat* place. The wife's part of the work is to lay out the fish to dry. When it was dry, they did the rest of the work together. For it was their 'insurance' for the winter. All those who took part in the catching helped. Only single people may work alone. You continued working together until it was all in the cache. But this work, from the scooping to the caching, was only a collaboration within the family. You didn't expect other families to do your stuff for you. If a cache was big, two related families might work together to fill it.

At the summer hunting ground too, the household worked together. The female head of the household probably had the biggest job. If a hunter had a wife and his mother, his wife would do the work in the tent, while his mother would prepare his catch. She cut the meat in slices for drying, and made sure the rest was boiled. In the summer you didn't boil any of a big seal before you had prepared what had to be dried. Only when that was done did you boil the rest. Only small seals, for example young ringed seals, were not cut up for drying, but boiled and eaten with your camp-mates if you had any.

The covering of the umiak with new skins was shared work for the settlement, where the women, also those outside the household, took part in the work.

It was also the umiak owner himself who gathered material for the wooden skeleton, and worked on it for this purpose. When he has to assemble the skeleton, his wife helped him with it, but otherwise she left the work with the wooden skeleton to the husband. In a few cases when the man thought he could manage the assembly himself, he did it without help from others. But otherwise it was not uncommon for other men to help the husband if he needed help. In particular you could count on friends to help. That wasn't uncommon in my childhood either. In the old days one couldn't count so much on help, because there were some people who were enemies then. You couldn't count on help from everyone. If a man had killed another man, the son of the man who had been killed had hostile feelings towards the killer. But I haven't experienced such times. But my father had experienced it. His father, Kaajammat, had been killed, and my father had enemies. My father had trained his strength, because he had enemies. In his childhood he was afraid of his enemies. When he became aware of himself, he was fatherless. He knew nothing about how his father died. It was only when his maternal uncle, Sinngertaat – Hendrik Sinngertaat's grandfather – told him about it, that he realized that his father had been killed by two men, Tupajanngitseq and his brother. It was not until then that my father became aware of how his father had died. Sinngertaat said to his nephew: "Train your strength!" – My father felt when he heard these words as if his uncle was saying "Make sure you get yourself killed!" In fact it was for his own good that the uncle explained it to him. Those who had killed

one's father or brother became one's enemies. Such children had to train their strength. My father did too. When he grew up, he could say to himself that as far as strength was concerned, he could manage two men at once. Some were friends, others were enemies. Some held a singing-contest against their enemies. When the singing-contest continued, enemies became friends, and they no longer needed to be afraid of being killed by their original enemies.

But we were supposed to be talking about the umiak. The women in the settlement shared in the sewing together of the skins. When the sewn skins were put on the umiak skeleton, the men put them in position on the skeleton. I have seen that myself. The work was supervised by the umiak owner and his wife. The wife often took care of the husband's things and the man also took care of the wife's things, if they were not inside the house.

The umiak owner served food and drink for those who helped; but during the actual sewing work not much was eaten. For the wives were busy. They sat beside one another and sewed skins together. Each had her part of the umiak. The sewing itself was done as with kayak covering, with an inner seam and an outer seam. Tent skins were not sewn the same way, because dry skins were used for sewing tent coverings. In that case the seams were beside and above one another.

I have myself experienced some of what I have talked about; but other things I have only heard from my father. He was an able man and a keen hunter in his prime. Last year I heard on the radio that the story of my father's early life was told according to a book by Otto Sandgreen. But my father didn't himself tell it to him – I did. Otto Sandgreen had then written a book about it.[84]

In earlier days people from here spent their summer hunting life near Ikkatteq. 'People from here' means people from the upper reaches of the Sermilik fjord. That was people here in Tiileqilaaq, Innartuaq, Qipa, Kangertuatsiaq, Akerninnaq and Kakalik.[85] People from all these places went summer hunting out there at Ikkatteq. There were in fact seals everywhere, the times were different from today. But everyone was after hooded seal meat, which they could dry for the winter. Around here, so far up the fjord, not so many hooded seals came in the summer. There were in fact a few here, but not as many as out there around Ikkatteq. Sometimes we stayed in here throughout the summer, and hunted seals in the area; but in August you could feel the difference, although you could be lucky enough to catch hooded seals hereabouts. In my childhood my father lived almost permanently at Ikkatteq, and in the summer he caught many hooded seals.

In this part of the fjord, around Tiileqilaaq, people got together quite a bit in the winter, and enjoyed the gatherings greatly. But it was not an everyday occurrence. After all you also had to go hunting in the winter. Some people only went visiting when they suddenly got an urge to enjoy the company of other people; but others came visiting to get something to eat. When it was rumoured that people at such and such a place had enough food, while there was scarcity at your own settlement, certain people came visiting, and they never came in vain. In my own time most winter visits were made with a dog-sledge, and only in a few cases did people make visiting journeys on foot. According to my father's stories most winter visits in his time were made on foot, and only in a few cases did people come with a dog-sledge. My ancestors were good walkers. My father said that. I have myself seen Justuusi from Ikkatteq. Without skis he walked from Ikkatteq to Sarpaq to catch seals from there.

He waded in the snow up to his knees. When he had caught a seal there, he also went back to Ikkatteq with the catch in tow. He was home before the sun had gone down. That's how people were then. We usually say that people were like that because they didn't catch colds, and because they didn't smoke tobacco.

My father was no weakling either. Once he walked to the shop in Tasiilaq from Qeertaalaq, and after buying what he wanted he returned and reached Qeertaalaq the same day before sunset. But he was lucky, with hard snow, he said. When he got back to the Sermilik ice, he ran on to Qeertaalaq. He could also outrun a polar bear in his young days. But he said that there were some men that he couldn't keep up with over short distances; but on longer runs he was a match for all others. But he was not the only one who could outrun a polar bear. They used to say that in his youth he was very careful not to show others his strength, because his enemies must not be aware of it. Only when he was out hunting alone did he use his strength. That is how all the hunters in East Greenland were earlier. They used their strength during hunting,

especially when no one could see them. Most had presumably trained their strength in the old days, because you never knew how people would act towards you. But even if you had gained a lot of strength, you couldn't feel safe if you didn't know anything about our ancestors' traditions. If you didn't know anything about magical spells and procedures, you were defenceless. You had to make an effort to familiarize yourself with these matters. My father used to say such things. You never knew what people might get up to. Some people would practice evil in secret. When you knew the magical situation, you could also react to people's attacks.

People in Sermilik gathered in the summer. When they came to the hunting grounds, there were many tents on these islands. At the end of August and at the beginning of September they would then travel to their respective settlements: to Kakalik, to Qeertuatsaaq, some to Akerninnaq, some to Tiileqilaaq, others to Innartuaq, and others again to Qipa. Others again stayed out there with Justuusi and his family, and we were thus left at our settlement. There was also a strong *neqqajaaq*, a 'northeasterly storm', and powerful offshore storms. But my father had no desire to leave there. It was not until the following summer that people came again from other places. Sometimes they camped on Aammaaq, and a little farther north on Ittitalik they also camped. A little outside Ikkatteq lies Seerarmiit, on the same side as Ikaasakitseq.[86] From the time before I was born most people had preferred to come to these islands outside Ikkatteq.

While people were on these islands, many song-contests were arranged. My father said that. There were feasts during these song-contests. Once in his childhood Akkernilik came – he was later called Mikkel – from the north for a song-contest. In the morning things began to happen. People talked together. Akkernilik was not ready yet, and Sinngertaat went and began to put on his hunting clothes.

Then the singing-contest began. There were two kinds of songs at a song-contest. In one kind there is no text – that is called *timaa*; in the other kind there is a text, and that is called *pisi*. When Akkernilik got to *pisi*, he began to talk to his opponent about the dead. His opponent was Ningaavat, Laavaat's father. When he got excited, he stopped singing and said "It was you who didn't help your son-in-law. That was what people said." While they lived at Qernertivartivit, people had heard shouting from the north. "Then it was said that you came out of the house to find out whose voice it was. It was Qaartuluk's voice. But you thought that it was Kunnitsi, of whom you were envious. But why did you leave him to his fate on rotten spring ice? Is it not true that you left him to his fate?" he asked. The opponent couldn't reply to this question, because he had in fact neglected to help his son-in-law. But Akkernilik kept on asking until Ningaavat said yes. Then some of the audience began to cry. Then there was someone who took a rifle down on the beach. It was Ningaavat's son, Laavaat's brother, who wanted to shoot Akkernilik. But someone took the rifle from him. The adults cried. That was the only violent song-contest my father had attended. It was very scary, because there were so many people listening at the place that one couldn't shoot at the man without at the same time hitting several others. That time the singing-contest was not festive; but other song-contests were quite different. There was a party. Now and then something embarrassing happened in a song-contest; but this event was quite different, because the singing-contest rules were ignored so much.

During the day there was a festive mood; but towards evening, when the singing-contest was to begin, you put your best clothes on. My paternal grandmother used to say that it was during the song-contests that you could see the finest clothes. She was blind in my childhood; but she said that the kamiks weren't as beautiful any more while she could still see. People no longer gave them the same ornaments as before. There were very fine ornaments when she was young.

There was also trading when people gathered at the summer camps. It would often take place in the time before the singing-contests. Here it was called *avalariartiittut*.[87] My father said that too.

When I begin to talk about something, as a rule I cannot remember so many events; but once I have got started, the events that my father and grandmother talked about begin to come back.

When people came to a singing-contest in their fine, new clothes, some of them of course became shy. There would also be remarks about these things. When there were such shouts during the singing-contest, those to whom the shouts were addressed would be on the point of bursting into tears. Of course it was worst for the one who was being 'sung at' at the time,

and people pointed at him from all sides. Then there was fun at the place.

In earlier days Tasiilaq was not a meeting-place. That only began in my childhood. When people had given up these song-feasts as a result of Christianity lessons, they began to meet in Tasiilaq. There would also be a festive mood there. It was peaceful there, and no one was afraid of anyone else. Everyone gathered there. In the time I myself have experienced, I have seen people particularly happy when they gathered at Tasiilaq. That was while the old pastor, Christian Rosing, was in Tasiilaq. But before that time people didn't gather in Tasiilaq. It was only when people became Christians that they gathered there to go to Communion. At that time I saw the young catechist Julius [Olsen]. When I was in Nuuk last year, I met him, by the way. He and Christian Rosing were the centre of attention at this assembly. Now Julius Olsen's contemporaries here have long since died, and he didn't really seem so old. There are only two left of the adults from my childhood, at least at this place: Helga and Marie. At that time people from Sermiligaaq, Kuummiit, Kulusuk, Tiileqilaaq, Iserteq and Ikkatteq gathered in Tasiilaq. Many umiaks came – all the good hunters had an umiak, and a lot of kayaks came. They all had dried meat and other Greenlandic food for the feast days.

But not all families in a house had an umiak, only some had an umiak. For example my father had no umiak. There were also other hunters without an umiak. If such a hunter without an umiak was to go off to a new settlement, another man would lend him his umiak.

In the summer when a household was to go to a hunting camp in an umiak, they would often take female paddlers from outside the household with them. When the umiak owner and his household came to the camping-place, they put the tent up. Only then could the family without an umiak borrow the umiak to transport themselves and their things to the hunting grounds.

Sofie and Nikolaj Maqi[88], Tasiilaq (69ØG4A2)

1 August 1969

Nikolaj Maqi was mentioned several times in Massanti Aqipi's accounts. But he was also known as one of those who preferred to live at good hunting grounds, even though in the end it meant that the family had to do without fellow settlers. After some years without fellow settlers in Kakalik and Akerninnaq, the family lived for a few years in Tasiilaq. Then the family started moving out beyond the core area again – to Umiivik in 1960, where they lived in isolation, 175 km south of the core area's southernmost settlement, Iserteq. Later other families followed their example. When I had the conversation with them, they had lived as elderly people in Tasiilaq for eight years. They were being visited by a grandchild who was born during the last stay at Umiivik.

When did you come to Umiivik?

That boy there was born in Umiivik.[89] Now he is eight years old. We moved with our sons, Janus and Tobias and their families. Piipa was also with us, she was married to Ingemann, to be mentioned later. Now she is in the hospital. She is the second-youngest of our children.

[Sofie:] Shortly before Piipa was born, Nikolaj sat moping. I said "What's the matter?" – "Who will help you with the childbirth?" he asked. – "I'll manage that myself", I said.[90]

When the child was to be born, I said to the oldest of the children, a girl: "Stand behind me!" She did so. "Take the child when it comes," I said to her; for my childbirths usually went quickly. I got in position, pulled the muscles together twice, and said "Where is it?" – "She's lying on the platform," she said. – "Take it up!" I said. "Is it breathing?" – "No!". – "Then put it in cold water, and take it up again!", I said. She did that, and said, "It didn't help." – Then I said, "Do you dare suck on her nose?" She did, and the child began to breathe.

[Nikolaj:] "Then I brought an unflensed hooded seal into the house."

In Umiivik you didn't have to go hungry. When we went down there, there was a house down there

already, intended as a hunter's house. The house was very big, only a little smaller than the trading manager's house here. With the cooking room there were four rooms.

Normally no people came from the outside. But in the autumn we had a visit from travellers from Skjoldungen.

We came to the place that was called *Sikuiuitsua*. There were large icebergs, and flatter pieces of ice were frozen in there. That's why there were many polar bears. At the end of the winter we drove there in a dog-sledge. The sea was open just outside. It was quite odd.

We moved into the house when we went down there in the late summer of 1960. It was only the following summer, when we were fetched by 'Miki' (m/k *Ejnar Mikkelsen*)[91] that we left the house.

The seals were bearded seals and hooded seals, and otherwise only ringed seals. There were no narwhal; but there were polar bears. There were in fact also many salmon (true salmon, *kapisilik*, *Salmo salar L.*). When we were out in a kayak, we could see the dark bodies jumping. But we never caught them. There were also cod; but we didn't fish, and caught seals instead. There were no mussels on the beach; but the whole beach was full of seaweed. The land was quite bare. There was only a little vegetation around the house-ruins. Otherwise there was no soil. The actual rock had such a rough surface that we felt as if we had bare feet as soon as the kamiks got a little worn.

I don't remember how many seals we caught down there. I have in fact written it down, but I can't remember it now. [According to the catch lists 823 ringed seals, seven harbour seals, 47 bearded seals, 34 harp seals and four hooded seals were caught, a total of 916 seals – RP]. We moved to Umiivik from Tasiilaq. We were to live down there for one winter.

We locked up the house in Tasiilaq thoroughly. But Iliarsaajik's family had lived there anyway while we were away. Unfortunately the house burned down that winter. When the doctor and the pastor came down there, we heard about it, and that a new house had also been arranged for us. When we came back, the trading manager showed me the new house.

Down there we caught many more seals than we could catch up here, and we also caught many bearded seals. There were a lot of animals to hunt down there. When we came to the ice-edge at Sikuiuitsua, seals were coming up incessantly. Others swam in under the ice. We could always see several seals at once. If there was a shop down there, the seals could be exploited much more.

We had no spring hunting ground or summer hunting ground, since we only meant to spend one winter down there.

From that time people came each year to spend the winter down there; but they always came back the following summer. Down there Iinuli[92] and his family now live, as well as Tuuluaat and Buuarsi.[93]

Now that there are also people in Pikiitti, I wonder if there is any contact between the two places?

Perhaps it's too far away. There are many glaciers between them; but perhaps there is still contact between them.

There were many seals. When we went up on the hill behind the house, we could see lots of seals swim around offshore. When we came back here, it was a bit strange to look out at the fjord without seeing even one seal.

I took three ice nets with me. But no real ice cover came. So we didn't use them. If we had put the nets out in good ice cover we would probably also have caught a lot of seals in them. We had no opportunity for breathing-hole hunting either, since no proper ice cover came. We caught the seals from the ice-edge.

After our time families who spent the winter down there didn't have bad hunting either. They all had excellent hunting.

As far as shop goods were concerned, we had already supplied ourselves with plenty, and managed that way. But in March Janus, Ingemann and Iinuli,[94] who later spent the winter down there, went with a dog-sledge to Iserteq. Our tobacco ran out before we travelled down from there. Otherwise we were not short of anything.

Coal was brought to us with the schooner – otherwise we could find excellent firewood in *arpiisiviit* 'whale caches',[95] and we had enough ammunition.

The children were taught, and religious services were held. Ingemann was responsible for that; but when they were away at Easter – they had taken a trip to Iserteq – I held the service that Easter Sunday.

We could listen to the radio. We got news that way.

In the end we did in fact miss Tasiilaq, especially when the tobacco ran out. But when we came here,

where there are not so many animals to hunt, we also missed Umiivik.

Earlier, before our time in Umiivik, there were also people who spent the winter at Umiivik now and then. That was a long time ago. We were the first to live down there since the hunter's house had been built. From earlier times there were stories about how there had also been famine at Umiivik. There are a lot of graves in Umiivik. It must have been occupied in ancient times. In Paatsaajivit,[96] where we lived, there were also two house-ruins – no, there were three. In Kialeq there are also two house-ruins, and a little south of Iliarmiit there is also a house-ruin.

There are still some people who would like to try to spend the winter at Umiivik. In fact I myself would like to try it again; but Sofie says we have grown so old that we had better stay here.

Besides the house-ruins mentioned before, I have also seen one – it is said to be Kaattatik's[97] house-ruin – in Ikaasaartiva. It is also said that he had another house site at Suunikajik near Iserteq. There both he himself and his son are said to have had their own separate entrances. That's how the story goes.

After we had been in Umiivik, each year people came to Umiivik. People also came rather later to Kangersuttuaq.[98] Last year our son too went to Nuuaalik,[99] where he spent the winter.

In Kangersuttuaq people had also spent the winter occasionally in earlier times; but it was only in recent years that people spent the winter there every year. In earlier time several years passed between each wintering. But those who spend the winter there are replaced by others each summer.

Winterings around Timmiarmiit – apart from the earlier occasional winterings – only took place in recent years. We have ourselves spent the winter once at Skjoldungen, a strange place with many animals to hunt and very fertile soil. In that area there were also many eagles. Among the seals there were many speckled (harbour) seals.

When we moved to Umiivik the *'Miki'* sailed us to the place. To save extra expense we agreed that we should only be fetched when it was to bring supplies to Skjoldungen.

I myself am from Sermilik, and for many years we lived in Sermilik with our children; but otherwise we lived alone.

There I was sometimes caught by the *piteraq* while I was out on a trip. But I had learned enough to find my way home. At that time we lived at Kakalik. In the last period we moved to Akerninnaq, when it was depopulated. People on shopping trips from Kakalik[100] to Tasiilaq couldn't find a house on the way, and the trips became too long. Then we moved to Akerninnaq.[101] There I caught several narwhals. Now the narwhal has gone from these parts.

Lasarus Mikaelsen, Iserteq (69ØG3B1)

24 July 1969

A large proportion of the population of Iserteq has Mikaelsen as its surname. The slightly isolated location of the settlement means that there are close kinship relations. But since Iserteq was still a good hunting settlement when things began to decline at the other hunting places – not to mention the fact that one of the Mikaelsens had many daughters – a fair number of young men were attracted there. Lasarus Mikaelsen is however from the first families in this area, which began to be a continuously inhabited place at the beginning of the twentieth century. His account of the forms of cooperation suggests that he is describing a young community.

In earlier times people paid keen attention to their hunting; for they lived from it. They hunted from kayaks and on the ice.

My grandfather, Ingemann, was a keen and able kayak hunter, an able man. Once, while he lived at Pikiitti, where people live now, he was out on a kayak trip when a *piteraq* broke. At that time the *piteraq* was very powerful. When he came to a shallow area, the foam from the waves was lashed up so it looked like smoke. But he came to an inlet a little east of the house. From there he wanted to go home, but was forced back by the storm again. He couldn't go against the wind. So he got into the kayak again, went out of the inlet and paddled home. He used to say that he could always get home if he had his paddle in his hand, if he could breathe by turning his head backwards. I have seen his kayak. It was so narrow that the hair on the thighs of his skin trousers was worn off.

Once he had harpooned a bearded seal when his arm was entangled in his harpoon line. He held the

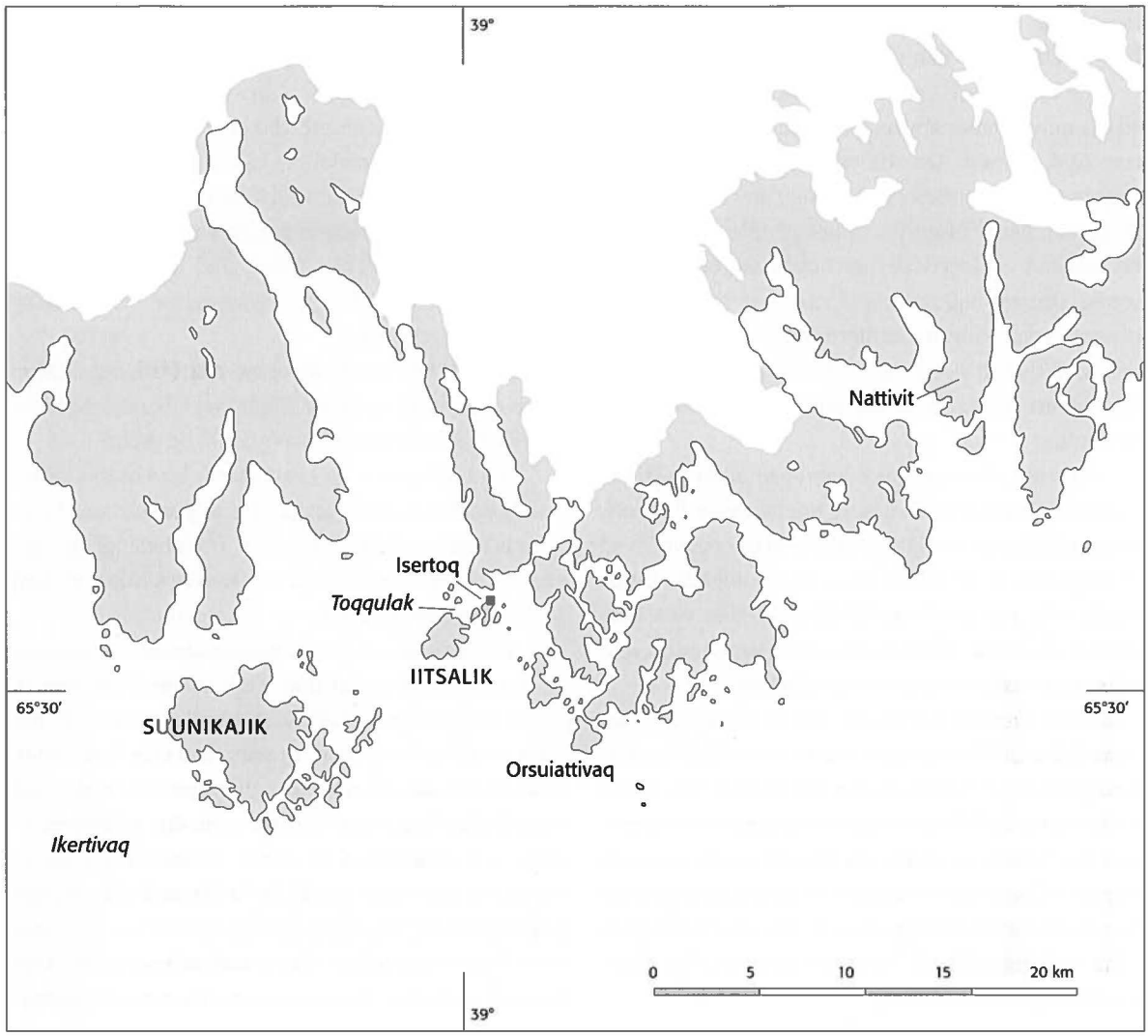


Fig. 52. Ikertivaq near Isertoq.

paddle firmly in his other hand, and sat himself up in the kayak. He said that the only thing that really hurt was his shoulder. It felt better when he stuck his hand under the cross-thongs. When the bearded seal came up again, he killed it with a blow over the head.

This Ingemann preferred Toqqulak as his settlement. That's where we grew up. We formed a household that consisted of a tenthold. We usually lived there, although we sometimes also lived in other places. After my first boyhood, though, we always lived on Toqqulak, but here at Iserteq lived Peter's father, Nikodemus, who had also gone to the place because of its hunting potential.

At some settlements there could be hunger during some periods, but not at Nikodemus's. In the summer he dried all his catch, and in the autumn he collected everything – not even the seal's blood went to waste. In his childhood he was an orphan. That was probably why he was so careful with his catch.

Then Rasmus, my wife Karoline's maternal uncle, came and built a house at Iserteq. Karoline had a large family here. Now they lie in the churchyard up there, including her grandmother Nuliarpak. This Nuliarpak had been on an umiak trip to West Greenland. She was alive in my childhood, and she could speak West Greenlandic. Her sons, Rasmus and Karl, were the eldest of her children. I haven't seen her eldest daughter, only Silpa and Orpa who was called Miarti before she was baptized. They used to live farther north, but had come here because of the good hunting condi-

tions. I can myself remember the quantities of seals that you could see then scattered over the fjord.

The day before yesterday I said, "Now a proper *piteraq* never comes any more". In my childhood there were real *piteraqs*. On the other hand we get more *neqqajaaqs*[102] than before. The seal stocks have also declined greatly. In earlier times people didn't go in the autumn to Ikertivaq, and only stayed close to Iserteq. But we had unlimited numbers of seals, and we never went short. In earlier times we didn't use net hunting either. It's only in recent years that net hunting has become the most important kind of sealing in the winter.

In earlier times people often lived on Suunikajik; but just around here there were not many settlements. People often lived at Nattivit. But usually people lived on Toqqulak, more often than on Suunikajik. Some people had also lived on Iitsalik; but that was long before I was born. There had been a great famine, and some people had resorted to cannibalism.

In the summer we used to go to Tasiilaq to take Communion. After Communion we went back to continue gathering provisions for the winter. You dried and dried meat. When it froze, for example in September, you began to gather unflensed seals, bearded seals etc. They were arranged in order, row on row. They would often be kept close to the *mingiisivik*, that is the storage place for food that wasn't to be taken into the house immediately.

At a hunting camp the household worked together. Then when they were to move into the house in the autumn, everyone helped – regardless of family relationships – to get it ready. When people, for example from two tentholds, came to their prospective winter settlement, they worked with the building of the house until it was finished. Then when it was finished and covered, they moved in, sometimes when the first snow fell. [RP: *"Even though it was already finished?"* – The informant: "Yes," and he continued:] When they didn't have enough wood for the construction of the roof they could use the poles from the tent.

The turf houses were warm. True, the house passage was not closed,[103] and you only had the lamps for heating. But when all the lamps were lit, it got very warm in the room.

When the number of the occupants changed, you also changed the size of the house. When I lived on Toqqulak, the house always had the same size. But when the household got smaller, the house became correspondingly smaller. When three siblings [with their families?] were left, the house was not covered any more [i.e. was no longer used].

I don't know if you have heard about Uulappi, my maternal uncle. There were three children: Frederikke, then my mother Karen, and Uulappi was the youngest. They lived in the same house separated by the platform sections.

People slept on the sleeping platform, but if there were too many, some of them slept on the window platform. Brothers and sisters could lie there.

In a big house – for example the size of this house – they used the whole of this side where the house passage is for the window-platform. If for example we say the house passage is here, the rest of this side was used for the window-platform.

The covering of the house began with the placing of the pieces of wood that were to keep the roof in place. The sods were laid on this latticework. Over the sods crumbled turf was strewn, and this was sometimes covered with crowberry heather. When this had been done, skins were laid over it all. The whole procedure was established in detail without great variations, so the work could be done without anyone supervising it. You followed the procedure you had seen since childhood. The building was erected by women and men. The women mainly worked gathering turf and building up the wall, as they laid the turf in place, while the men were busy placing the stones that were to lie in the wall. You repaired one end of the house. In my childhood we cleaned the wall from the bottom up, so that it became even. Sometimes you would think the sides of the walls had been cut with a knife. It was able people who did that sort of thing.

In the house you shared the food with the other households in the house. If for example you caught a seal and wanted to eat it, or if you ate an unflensed – that is a preserved – seal, you would eat it with the housemates, both your own family and other families in the house. You ate from the front of the seal first. All married couples got a share. Then you took the side pieces, and you measured them and cut them out in suitable sizes. The pieces where there was most meat went to the closest family, for example to one's parents. I know that pretty well.

When for example an unflensed seal was brought

into the house, the men went to work eating it, and only when they were finished was it the women's turn, and the pieces were shared out to them. In the same way fresh meat was shared out, but also dried meat that had been fetched from the cache.

If there was more than one house in a settlement, and dried meat had been fetched from the cache, was it then only shared out with the housemates, or did the other houses share in it?

Yes!

If for example a person came from a settlement and said that there was famine at his settlement, you would immediately fetch an unflensed seal in, and others would fetch dried meat. The guest would be well entertained. That was a fixed rule. When the guest was to go home, he took food. Fellow settlers who lived in other houses than the guest's also got their share.

If a household of several generations lived in a house, it was the eldest couple who were placed in the middle of the platform, that is if they lived between their own children and their children's spouses, and not just any old relatives.

People in the middle of the platform in this age group had a good deal to say, for example they might get the others to do some job they wanted done. They could send people for some of the food provisions. If they were to move to a hunting ground in the spring, they could also decide on the time and place. In addition, they could announce in the morning that such and such a job was to be done in the course of the day. They made sure that skins were sewn together for skin bags; and also that they were filled with blubber. When they came back to their winter settlement, they also made sure that things were put in order.

To be more specific, it was the oldest wife, the mother of the hunters or their wives, who decided about the food and the housework, while her husband decided about the hunting life. For example, when they should move out of the house, when they should move in, where they should go, etc. If a guest came from a place where there was famine, it was the eldest who gave him the food that the visitor could carry.

If visitors came from a place where there was no famine they didn't send anything back with the visitor, but ate with him and enjoyed the company. If a son, a daughter or a daughter-in-law wanted to give anyone something, he or she first asked the eldest, especially if there were hard times at the settlement. Otherwise they didn't bother too much about asking first; but if things were to be fetched from the cache, you asked the parents first.

In the house you had various kinds of entertainment, not least the drum-song. Especially if a lot of people lived in a house, there could be singing entertainment each evening. You have seen *assinaaqattartit,* children and young people who did thong-gymnastics. In the house people often did *assinaaqattarneq*. That was their form of play. Adult men and very young people often took part. It was nice to watch.

The hunters were often admirable. Their hunting was often done in ways different from today. During hunting trips in the autumn for example a storm might break before the hunters came home. At that time there were very great storms.

The kayak suit was made of skin, excellently worked. The kayak gloves were also of skin. You used only new things: as soon as they got a little worn, they were replaced by new ones. But I had my kayak cape for six years. I have also used the same kayak skin for six years. My gloves were replaced regularly. But if the kayak cape was well rubbed with blubber, it could last a long time. The same goes for the kayak skin.

As for the food provisions, unflensed seals were placed on the ground such that the dogs would not eat them. If the cold did not come, the unflensed seals were covered at both ends with stones. The dried things were placed in a cache, which was built such that the snow would not cover the dry meat. On the inside of the stone wall all the holes were sealed – this was also to prevent animals getting in. Even in strong snowdrifts the snow did not get in. Each family had its cache. If you had so much dry meat that there wasn't enough room for it all in a cache, you had to arrange another besides the first.

When dried things were to be put in a cache, the transport was organized by the whole family together, but normally without the help of others. You would usually have the cache at a good distance from the house. In the late summer you took the things in an umiak to put them in the cache. But some of the provisions were kept at the house. In the course of the autumn, while one could still use the umiak, one took several trips to put the rest of the winter provisions in

the cache. But some of the things I was familiar with in my childhood have changed a lot.

Ammassat fishing was also done as family cooperation. You scooped the fish up on the beach, you spread them out on ground that wasn't sandy, and you watched them as they dried. When they were dry, you passed a string through the fishes. It was usually the husband who scooped *ammassat* up, while the women spread them around. It was then the one who was scooping up who decided when to begin, and when to stop. *Ammassat* were put in the cache like all other dried meat. They were strung like beads. For the string you used a strip of skin that was cut out as a very thin thong. You pulled the string through with a bone needle. But here around Iserteq there are not many *ammassat* that come to spawn. I have seen this in Tiileqilaaq, at Sermiligaaq and at Kuummiit.

Normally, housemates moved out of the house on the same day; but in some cases some of them would move out of the house before the others wanted to, and one could travel away at various times. People who lived far away would move out on the same day. But people who lived at this settlement could sometimes travel away one after the other. Some of them travelled as early as towards the end of April. But most moved out of the house on one and the same day, and then moved the house covering, especially when they had to use it as wood for the tent. Then they had to have these pieces of wood with them.

When you were about to move out of the house, you agreed in advance when you were going to leave the house. You could then talk about where you wanted to do the spring hunting. If some people didn't want to go to the same place as the others, they could go to their own hunting ground. Others would then choose another place. It was only if a place was known for its good spring hunting that they would travel to the same place.

In summer hunting people's hunting camps were fairly well concentrated. From here people often went during my childhood to the south. At Kulusuk and Sermiligaaq they often went north. At Tiileqilaaq in Sermilik people also went to a place south of them. There were good hunting conditions there.

In earlier times everyone from the Sermilik fjord, as well as people from here, gathered at Ikkatteq in the summertime. There were perhaps not so many people in my childhood; but they were keen hunters and gathered there. They enjoyed the company a great deal. When someone arrived at the place, they were greeted with salutes from the rifles.

I have heard that when a song-duel was to be held at such hunting camps, people came from the surrounding camps. If for example anyone from Sermiligaaq challenged someone from here to a song-duel, other umiaks came with the challenger to the place. When the opponent then sailed to the challenger to reply, other umiaks would go along with him in the same way. Song-duellers were friends, but at the same time they were opponents, so it was nice to have people with you who could take your side.

When people had first arrived at their settlements in the autumn, they held big gatherings. But otherwise individual visitors could come in the course of the winter.

In the winter the settlements around Iserteq were isolated from Sermilik, for example. For unlike the conditions today, in the winter we heard no news from other settlement groups. It was not until the summer that there were contacts again between the various groups. In earlier times there was also so much wind in the winter that people were not keen on making long journeys in the winter.

Hereabouts there are settlements that you can describe as belonging to the same group. There are for example Suunikajik, Iitsalik, Iserteq and Nattivit. Among these there was visiting in the winter. It was often individuals who went visiting that way. Some of the visitors spent several days doing it, for example a week, especially if bad weather arose. In good weather there would regularly be short visits. It could also happen, if the hunting was poor at one place, and you heard that it was better at another place, that visitors went there to go hunting from there.

Inside a house, where the various households were separated by the platform sections, each nuclear family had its own lamp. A household also had its bucket for drinking water. But in households that consisted of families in the direct line of descent, you would often content yourself with using the grandparents' water bucket, although each nuclear family had its bucket. The urine tub too was something each household had separately. Various interested parties also had the blubber-board, which was also owned by the household.

The space below the umiak lashed upside-down

was used by the umiak owner's family. On the stand the paddles were placed in order, and various things, the tent covering and similar things, could also be put there. If you were expecting bad weather, you might put dried meat under the umiak, so you had it close by, but still such that you wouldn't be eating it all the time. If the weather got better, you could tie it all together again, for now you could get fresh meat again. Only when the weather got bad again, and they began to economize with the fresh meat again, would they fetch some of the meat under the umiak. It was dried meat. In unsettled weather it happened often that they only boiled meat once during the day, but ate dried meat for the other meals, for example in the evening. When you had enough food, you could nibble all day long.

But the hunters were like this: when they were going out hunting in the morning, they took nothing to eat, and they didn't take any food with them either. If they were to be out all day, they didn't take so much as a little piece with them. The hunter was not to have a 'supplement' to his catch. I observed this rule. During my best years as a hunter I could for example paddle out in August in a kayak in the morning at sunrise, be out the whole day, and I would only get something to eat when I came home at sunset. Then I had to go off again the following morning at sunrise. That's what our ancestors did too.

When you were on a long journey in an umiak, you also travelled long stretches during the day. You got up in the morning, often before sunrise, knocked the tent over, and carried the things on board. Then you paddled in the umiak until sunset, and then you set up camp. Sometimes we would take a trip down to Timmiarmiit[104] and its surroundings and back. It was only to hunt that we went on such trips.

In the communal houses the platform is divided into partitions by the posts on which stretched skins are hung. Under the platforms there were none of these dividing-lines of skin, so that the whole space below the platform was continuous. Nevertheless the posts formed boundaries for the sections belonging to the individual families under the platform. So you put the family's things in under the family's sleeping platform section: skin things and extra bits of skin that weren't ready to be thrown away were placed there.

In the time of the communal houses the dogs were tethered, that is in the times I myself have experienced, in the winter too. If a dog made a noise without good reason, it was often punished, because you didn't want to frighten the seals that might be in the vicinity. When a hunter had to go out hunting in the morning, he might say to his son: "If the dogs begin to make a row, you must shut them up!" because he was afraid they might frighten the seals nearby. When all the hunters had come home in the evening, the dogs were fed, and then they were allowed to make a noise. But during the day you didn't want them making a row. If a dog barked, the owner could say: "Shut up!", and they would immediately shut up. Now things have changed. It doesn't help any more that the owner tells them to keep quiet. They still don't do it. And now the dogs are always hungry, unlike the old days. Now there are not enough animals to hunt.

Could a couple of housemates share an umiak?

Hunters with a small tent, the worse-off hunters, often went with another man's umiak, and thus went to another hunting ground where the umiak owner wanted to go. On the way they helped out, for example with the paddling. When they came to the new place, they helped out, just like children.

The man who thus travelled with another man might help the umiak owner with skins if the umiak owner didn't have enough skins for the covering. In the same way the umiak owner could help the other man if the latter didn't have enough skins for a tent, or if he needed skins for his kayak, and had not caught the necessary animals yet, and the umiak owner was the first to catch the proper animal.

The hunter himself worked on the skeleton for his kayak. When it was to be covered, he tightened the skins with thongs, so that the sewing of the skins could be done by the family's female members. A kayak with a tight covering did not suffer so much wear from thin ice as one with a slack covering.

Normally a man made his own kayak. But fathers made kayaks for their young sons as long as the sons couldn't make them themselves. But in time the son would learn to make his own kayak skeleton. When they had learned it, they began to make their own kayaks.

It was normally the umiak owner himself who dealt with the umiak skeleton. But if he only had a short time to do it, another man could help him with it, also in the event that the umiak owner did not have enough skins for the covering. There was often this

kind of cooperation so that the two umiaks could travel together and thus make the journey safer.

For the assembly of the skeleton, too, cooperation was necessary. The width of the gunwales was also too much for one man to cope with. When you had lashed it together at the front and back, the thwarts were positioned and lashed in place. Then the skeleton was placed with the bottom up. When it was finished the skin covering could be put on it. So that the wooden skeleton wouldn't bite into the skin, it was rubbed with blubber. When the umiak was being covered, everyone who could and who wanted to helped, especially with the tightening of the skin. Umiaks were never covered in the morning or during the day – not until the evening when the sun was in the west, so that the skins would not dry too quickly.

For the umiak covering two parallel seams were used, an inner seam and an outer seam, just as with kayak covering, but with a greater distance between the two seams than in a kayak.

The outer covering of the tent was also sewn with an inside seam and an outside seam, but with the difference that in the umiak and kayak you didn't stick the needle through the skin. The sewing together of the skin coverings of the tent was a job shared by the family's female members.

When you had helpers outside the family, you served them food. For example when the umiak covering was finished, the umiak owner gathered the people and offered them various dishes that he had. The umiak owner served food many times for his helpers as the work progressed.

This kind of voluntary help continued with wooden boats, for example motor boats. When the boat had to be pulled ashore or launched in the water, people came along voluntarily and they did the work together.

If someone was going out on a hunting trip, he would often ask around to see whether others wanted to go with him. Here there are no longer as many seals as before. But down at Pikiitti people have been living for some time, and they have motor boats; but the fjord there is so big that the stocks haven't changed.

People at Pikiitti are the best off in our part of the district. They feed their dogs with seal meat. They don't have so many seal nets; for they have good opportunities to hunt in another way.

How can it be that the communal houses passed out of use?

People probably lost interest in them. I can say that peaceful conditions often disappeared when people began to drink too much. In nuclear family houses a family could keep the peace more easily.

When the kayaks were watching for seals, the man often turned his back to the wind. When other kayak men had to pass these waiting hunters, they could come past them on the windward side just as well as the leeward side; if for example it was ringed seal cubs, they were not so easily affected by the smell. Only the bearded seal is so shy that you can't come to the windward side of it without it diving down in fright. It isn't always that hooded seals react to smells either. But you have to be careful with the harp seal.

In breathing-hole hunting the wind could also play a role sometimes. In a slight wind you had to walk quietly and tread on the ice while the seal was breathing, especially when it breathed quietly. In a strong wind you could get more easily to the breathing-hole without being discovered. Now only rifles are used for breathing-hole hunting.

The *sammiaq* is a small (*c.* 5 cm long) harpoon head for breathing-hole hunting.

Good peep-hunters always hit the seal in the breast. But the breathing-hole harpoon point (*sammiaq*), and the peep-hunting harpoon (*itsuartiit*) have passed out of use in recent years.

For hunting basking seals you made allowances for the wind. If the wind was weak, you tested its direction with hair or down. But if there was a stronger wind, you didn't need that kind of aid to tell the wind direction.

When several men were out hunting, and one of them noticed a basking seal, he was allowed to be the first to approach it. If another man discovered another seal, he too was allowed to catch it. If you discovered a seal at sea, the first to see it was allowed to shoot at it first. If he missed, another man was allowed to shoot. If the same seal came up again and the first man again missed it, another man was allowed to fire at it first. A seal was actually supposed to be 'caught' by the first to see it; but when he wasted his chance, another was allowed. If a man on a motor boat hunt noticed a seal before the others, he was allowed to fire the first shot. If he didn't hit it, the others were allowed to shoot at it.

But there are differences among people. Some people ignore others' first rights.

It's another matter with the polar bear. It belongs to the first to see it, no matter who kills it.

There are also other factors with *nertik* from which catch-shares are given. They were often killed communally. With regard to the distribution of the catch-share, the order in which they wounded the animal played a role, the only role. It makes no difference if those entitled to catch-shares are housemates or not. The catch-share rules are the same.

In former times there were not so many char stocks around here, all the way to Nattivit. The river at Nattivit was once partly covered by the inland ice. The water around here is also muddy. But at Nattivit there are char in the river. Here people made char barrages, *sapulit*, with stone dams in the tidal zone, and when the water went down, people, related or unrelated, used the fish-spear. Anyone 'caught' the char that he or she had hit with the spear. But of course there was a distribution when you were to eat the fish.

Among the birds, the seabirds were hunted, for example the black guillemot. Several people often went seabird-catching together. If for example a guillemot appeared, several kayaks might compete to see who could hit it with the bird dart. But at the birds' feeding grounds, too, people hunted together. Each hunter took home the birds he had hit with his dart. But otherwise the same happened as with the seals – everyone was allowed to eat some of the catch.

The skin bags were stored close to the house, with a wall around them.

In the winter, when a kayak needed repairing, it was taken into the house in the time of the communal houses. If its skin covering got bad, it would be repaired inside the house. You often had enough skins already. That can't be done in the nuclear family houses, because they are too small for that. But in time people got winter kayaks that could be taken on a dog-sledge. They are shorter, but wider than the ordinary kayaks. They are used in the winter, and are easy to transport, even over uneven ice. Such a kayak is not much longer than the dog-sledge. Thus people again had a kayak that could be taken into the house if it needed repairing. Many people thus have two kayaks. I myself have no kayak any more, since I can't get the help to cover it after the death of my wife. I am in fact still able enough in a kayak. In my house the women are too young to manage such jobs. So I had to give up having the kayak re-covered. But that is partly because my eldest daughter, who is married to Vittus Nikodemussen, now lives down at Pikiitti, and thus can't help me with it. Her little sister, who is now 15 years old, has had five seals this year. She lives with her elder sister in Pikiitti.

Opponents in song-contests that took place earlier never used to live at the same settlement; for the opponent was not supposed to know your song in advance. So one party came in the winter to the other party's settlement in a dog-sledge. People went with him to be present at the event, and when he then drove home after the singing-contest, the audience drove away with him. Some of them had their wives with them.

There are still walls standing from houses from the time of the communal houses on Toqqulak and Iitsalik. It is only at those two places in our area you can see them. At all the other places the walls have fallen down. I have also lived in a communal house myself on Iitsalik, when my mother was still alive – her name was Karen. When we came back after a stay at Skjoldungen, we lived the next winter on Iitsalik with Massanti Sanimuinnaq's family. That was before Massanti and his wife had children. But Massanti and his wife had their own house. The houses lay some way from each other, and you can still see their walls. There were no platform-sections in either of them.

Extracts from notes from a conversation with Timotheus Mikaelsen, Iserteq, 23 July 1969

The houses at Pikiitti were built of wood. The material was taken from the former American weather station, where the houses had gradually been knocked down by storms. Ingemann Bianco and his mother each have a house with two rooms. The others have a house with one room in each.

There used to be a sledge connection between Pikiitti and Iserteq in the winter. You either drove on the sea ice or on the inland ice. People at Pikiitti have never been short of the necessities, as they can shop at Iserteq.

The children at Pikiitti get no real schooling. Ingemann Bianco held church services at Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

There is a small medicinal depot at Pikiitti.

There are four 'permanent' families at Pikiitti. Besides these, in the springtime there have been visiting hunters. There is for example Boas Nuko, who came to Pikiitti in April. Next year Boas wants to build himself a house near Pikiitti, unless he prefers to build a house with Timotheus on Orsaajiit, 'Dannebrog Island' on the south coast of Ikertivaq.

The winter ice is still said to be pretty firm at Pikiitti. They are said to have driven dog-sledges until about the 15th of July this year.

Boas Nuko, Iserteq (69ØG3A2)

24 July 1969

On 23rd July 1969 two kayak men came from the south to Iserteq. They were Boas Nuko and his foster-son Rasmus Sanimuinnaq. Two days earlier they had travelled north from Pikiitti, which is 80 km south of Iserteq. They said that the inside archipelago route was still closed by the winter ice, since the winter ice had not gone away. They were first sailed by motor boat from Pikiitti to Nukattikajik, 'Ørsted Island', and from there they had to paddle in a kayak out around the archipelago. Some of the trip took place in fog and over new ice. This was evident from Boas Nuko's kayak, which had severe scratches.

Ingemann Bianco was the first to move to Pikiitti. Later came Harald Haraldsen, Vittus Nikodemussen and Otto Haraldsen. The four families now live permanently at Pikiitti. I myself go down there each spring. I usually go off in April, and in June-July we usually return to Iserteq.

They first moved to Pikiitti in 1967, I believe. That was Ingemann Bianco and his brother Gideon Bianco. They lived in the same house. Not until 1968 did the other families mentioned move down there.

I have long wanted to move to the area down there, and now I want to build a house over the walls of an earlier house. It's true I have a subsidized house here. But it isn't easy, because I live from hunting alone, and for that I use a kayak and dog-sledge, and I can't catch so many seals as those who use a motor boat. But in fact that isn't the main reason. But since a weather station was built at Orsuiattivaq[105] the seals have been noticeably avoiding Iserteq Bay. On the whole the hunting conditions have deteriorated in recent years. That is the reason why people have been more interested in settling in the area south of us in recent years. We people from Iserteq only have seal skins as trading goods, and it is to get better sealing that we would like to move south.

There are no turf houses at Pikiitti.[106] They moved the Americans' houses and used the material for new houses. These houses were at Apuseeq. The material was transported in dog-sledges.

The hunting area at Pikiitti is extensive. It goes all the way down to Umiivik, and we can use the whole area in good weather. What we particularly need to look out for is ice-floes.

In the summer the population go to Iserteq, partly to trade, partly to be with their relatives. You usually stay there a month's time or more.

There are storage rooms which were built for the houses. There are no caches. They are not really used any more here. They were used by our ancestors.

The houses – the Americans' houses which have now been used as the new houses at Pikiitti – were still standing in 1951, shortly after I had moved here from Kulusuk, when I was on a trip south. But now there are no more standing. They had been knocked down by the storms. Down there the *piteraq* is very strong, and when the storm that blew down from the inland ice was pressed together, the houses could not withstand it.

When my parents-in-law were alive – my father-in-law was Samuel Mikaelsen, who died last year – we often went south on a hunting trip, and we would often be away for some time.

Since I moved to Iserteq in 1951, I have only once stayed at Iserteq from the winter until the summer. All the other years I have spent some time at Pikiitti, except when I was at Kulusuk for a year.

Here we know about the hunting conditions at Pikiitti in advance. I myself know about them from my earliest hunting life, although I have not spent a whole year down there. It was mainly in the spring that I was down there, but in the winter I have been at Pikiitti on short sledge journeys.

Thus we knew in advance which places were suitable for settling. When, like me, you are a kayak hunter without a motor boat, you try to build a house in a place where the seals come close to where you

live, and where there is a good landing place for the kayak. The four families who live at Pikiitti have a motor boat each, and they have chosen a place with a good boat harbour. They are Ingemann, Harald, Vittus and Otto. Ingemann has himself bought a hand winch for hauling the boat up. In addition the motor boats are moored at the front and back with wires. They only use rope for mooring during their hunting trips; but at home they always use wires for mooring, even just for a single night. Although the wind can be very strong down there, I do not expect that anything will happen to their motor boats. They have also learned how and where they can best be moored.

At the settlement there is fresh water, which however dries out in the winter. But that's no hardship, since you can always melt snow. When the water in the bucket is getting low, you just put more snow in it. When you're a hunter, and you only have seal skins as trading goods, you have to choose your settlement first and foremost in terms of the hunting conditions.

The hunters themselves procure their various supplies. They get little help from the KGH (the Royal Greenland Trade Department). I have talked several times to the trading manager in Tasiilaq about a small emergency depot. I often go to Tasiilaq as a member of the municipal council, since I joined the municipal council in 1963. But the trading manager thinks that the place is too small. We want an emergency depot, because the place is so remote. Later I talked to him about it again, and he asked whether the hunters could sell seal meat. I said that I had not talked to the hunters about it, but expected that they could, since they had a lot of seal meat when I went on hunting trips, for example in October. I didn't know how it was going; but later it was making good progress. A schooner came and bought a lot of seal meat, or took seal meat with it that was sold in Tasiilaq, where the hunters' receivables were noted. The hunters had ordered some goods, and these were thus paid for with their receivables, and were sent when the schooner came for more seal meat. But considering the dangerous route, they must have an emergency depot, especially with motor boat fuel and ammunition. When they came up here on a dog-sledge, there were often places with open water on the way, and there was a lot of snow. It is hard to transport that sort of thing by dog-sledge. They came themselves with a motor boat four times in the autumn when the field ice was no trouble any more. In the summer, when the winter ice had gone, there were many ice-floes in the waters. This means that one sometimes runs short of motor oil. Now people are a little concerned about whether they have enough fuel. In Ikertuaq there are always ice-floes, and Kattortooq[107] lies between Umiivik and Pikiitti, not too far from Pikiitti.

The schooner that comes from Tasiilaq usually comes a couple of times in the autumn. When we others have come back from Pikiitti, and I have to go to Tasiilaq, I will talk to Chemnitz[108] about it, and in connection with the settlement I would like to found – about getting the schooner to call at the place; for if we are lucky, we will presumably have something to sell. It could also bring what we ourselves wanted to buy, since the place is right on the route to Pikiitti. The place where I want to build a house is not too far from Pikiitti, between two and three hours' sailing from Pikiitti. [The informant points to Aaluit, Sneedorff Island, as his future settlement.] Only my family will be living there.

Now I myself have no motor boat. I used to rent a motor boat to come to Pikiitti each summer, and at other times I went down there with a dog-sledge. There can be difficulties renting a motor boat in the summer. But I considered it was important that they were informed of the results of the municipal council's meetings, and could express their wishes. After I was replaced,[109] no representative of the municipal council came to Pikiitti.[110] But of course it is possible that the present member gets information from those who come to Iserteq. After all, the members of the municipal council, as has also been emphasized, should travel around to the settlements in their constituency. I was once criticized about the expenses for the rental of a motor boat from the treasurer's office. But I gave an account of my view of the matter – that is, that I also had to represent the small places and maintain contact with them. I don't know whether this view is correct, but that's how I have understood it. When there is to be an election, election material is sent down to them. Some days ago, when Vittus Nikodemussen was sailing for me, we also talked about how desirable it was that Pikiitti was represented in the municipal council. I still get such inquiries. "If for example a dispute were to arise, and we have no municipal bailiff, who should we go to?" he asked. I said that one could always go to the person who teaches the children or holds the

church services. "In that case the teacher at the place will have mediated in a dispute, and you will have an argument for your wish to have municipal representation and a municipal bailiff."

On the sledge route from Pikiitti to Iserteq it is only over Ikertivaq that there is often open water. But that is rarely a problem at the time when the municipal council is supposed to hold meetings. Even from Pikiitti you can easily keep up your membership of the municipal council. I have arranged my trips such that after a meeting I spent a few days at Iserteq before I drove on to Pikiitti. But normally I made the trip once with a dog-sledge, and once with a motor boat. Then we talked about which regulations had been adopted, and which new laws had been passed. In earlier times not much was done about the regulations about the protection of animals. But in recent years, when there have been quite a few changes, the hunters in the remote places have not had much chance of knowing about them, if their municipal council member does not inform them about them. In this way they might risk breaking the new regulations and exposing themselves to legal prosecution. The new member has however informed them of the new regulations. Such matters make it necessary for their municipal representative to take a trip to Pikiitti. I have myself, while I was a member of the municipal council, taken several trips to Pikiitti. I really don't know very much about the way things are going. But these regulations were handed down to us, so we had to inform the others about them.

The reason why Ingemann Bianco left Umiivik, as far as I know, was that there are very strong storms at Umiivik, besides the fact that Umiivik lies even farther away from Iserteq than Pikiitti. Pikiitti is in fact an excellent hunting place. As regards those of Pikiitti's inhabitants who came from Iserteq, I suppose one must say that they have accepted the consequences of the decline in the seal stocks here in the Iserteq hunting area. In my view this deterioration began in the last half of the year in which Orsuiattuaq was founded as a weather station. The place lies at the mouth of the fjord where we live, and it is situated such that the seals have to swim past it to swim into the fjord. The autumn seals that come from the north must swim along the side where the station has been built. The seals are quite shy in the autumn, and not so many have come after the station was established. [Orsuiattuaq was established in 1960.]

[Here I will note the development of catches of young and adult harp seals at Iserteq and Iitsalik in the decade from 1954/55 to 1965/66. The figures come from the Catch Lists: 1954/55: 24; 1955/56: 8; 1956/57: 38; 1957/58: 19; 1958/59: 84; 1959/60: 46; 1960/61: 34; 1961/62: 46; 1962/63: 55; 1963/64: 67; 1964/65: 20; 1965/66: 11. Nuko is right in saying that there appears to be a decline after the establishment of the weather station; but it was after an interval of several years – RP].

Some polar bears were caught at Pikiitti. In the course of the year three polar bears were seen at Pikiitti. However, they had to give up hunting the third, since they were prevented by the ice. In April, after we had come down there, Ingemann caught a bear. In May Vittus caught one, and in June he discovered one, but couldn't get to it. The three inhabitants who came from Iserteq – Harald Haraldsen, Vittus Nikodemussen and Otto Haraldsen – are cousins.

While the ice was still solid, travellers came once to Pikiitti from Umiivik, from where they went on to Iserteq. They were going shopping.

In 1964 we went from here to Umiivik to see how much the hunter's house down there needed repairing.

People at Pikiitti lack hunters' huts, and they want them; but so far they have not been able to manage the economic side of the matter. When you are on a hunting trip, you live in a tent. But during a *piteraq* tents don't provide much protection. In that case you have to dig yourself down in the snow.[111] Even without a storm, a strong snowfall could cover the tent entirely. A hunter's hut that was on the other side of Ikertivaq [Køge Bay at Pikiitti] was knocked down by a *piteraq*, and has not been raised again. It is really desirable that a hunters' hut is built towards the south so that the travellers can find shelter there in the winter.

There are many house ruins close to Pikiitti. Many of them are on islands, and you find a lot of seal bones under the ruins. People who have had their hunting grounds down there still remember them – at least Peter Nikodemussen remembers them at places that are uninhabited today. My parents also spent a winter before I was born down there to the south. It was in fact only for a while – not so terribly long ago – that people did not spent the winter in those parts. But now they have started exploiting these areas again. There is

no doubt that these winterings will become more common.

Those who moved from Iserteq to Pikiitti – but not Ingemann Bianco – still intend to live at Pikiitti. When Ingemann goes north,[112] his house will be used by people from here. Thorvald Boassen will also leave Umiivik, which will thus probably lie uninhabited.

My foster-son and I will probably settle down south. Now he has become a good hunter.

The narwhal doesn't frequent Pikiitti. Only once have I seen a narwhal in Ikertivaq [at Pikiitti?], while we were on the way to Iserteq from Pikiitti. The most common seals at Pikiitti are ringed seals and harp seals. There are also more harbour seals around Pikiitti than at Iserteq.

They also use nets for sealing at Pikiitti, but not as much as here. The inhabitants there have tried fishing, but have only caught Greenland shark, not other fish, except that I have caught sea perch in June; but we haven't repeated the experiment yet. We haven't seen so much of char. I have also found a place with Greenland halibut stocks; but there is no spawning ground for *ammassak*. It has been said that people once caught cod down there. But since no one continued with the cod fishing, no one knows any longer whether there are fish in the surroundings. They mainly hunt seals.

When I came to Iserteq from Kulusuk, I tried to fish at the time when there were normally fish around Kulusuk. I tried it from a kayak, and paddled my catch ashore. People really looked at me. When I went out to the fishing grounds again, and lowered my line, several kayaks came up. After that time we continued to fish a little when there was an opportunity to do so. I have tried to find new fishing places around here. I once spoke to Chemnitz – that was during my time on the municipal council – about trading Greenland shark meat; but he urged me to look for Greenland halibut stocks that could be traded. I tried several places, and caught something too, and since then we have always been able to catch Greenland halibut here.

There are also birds. On the way from Iserteq to Pikiitti you can find all species of seabirds that come to Greenland. There are mostly black guillemots. I suppose that is where the place has its name from: the seabirds' breeding island [East Greenlandic explanation – RP].

When you paddle from Iserteq to Pikiitti in a kayak without having nay trouble with the ice, you can be there within a day and a half. If you leave here towards evening, and continue day and night, you can be there the next evening.

Interview with Joseas Sanimuinnaq, Iserteq, 28th July 1969

Boats with a motor and their use

The informant is a nephew (brother's son) of Massanti Sanimuinnaq, Iitsalik. He lived at first at Sermilik. He moved to Iserteq in 1957.

When he moved to Iserteq the area was rich in game, especially seals. Things went well for him, and in 1962 he got a motor boat: he has sailed a good deal with it, and has reached down to Apuseeq south of Umiivik. The conversation took place shortly after he and his son had been on a trip to Suunikajik, from where they came home with two ringed seals.

Concerning the motor boats at the place he said that there were four at Iserteq, not counting the motor boat whose owners now live down at Pikiitti.

1. Henning Ignatiussen. He more or less always takes someone from his family with him.
2. Joseas Sanimuinnaq. In the summer he sails with his son. In the autumn he usually sails with someone else who has a kayak with him – usually a new man each time, not a relative.
3. Massanti Sanimuinnaq. He lives on Iitsalik, but is counted as living at Iserteq. In the summer he mostly sails alone, in the autumn he takes various men from Iserteq with him on his trips.
4. Boas Jonathansen, the catechist at the place, who had recently come from Tiileqilaaq. He usually sails with his family.

There are also several boats with an outboard motor, belonging to the following:

1. Ole Siverthsen, the trading manager at the place, quite new there. He mainly sails with his sons.
2. Gaba Ignatiussen. He sails with his sons.
3. Emil Kukko. He usually sails alone.
4. Timotheus Mikaelsen. He often sails with a son.

[Boas Nuko and Rasmus Sanimuinnaq, who had come from Pikiitti, when they had to go back, were sailed by Gaba Ignatiussen and Emil Kukko. Boas Nuko remarked that motor boat owners were very kind about offering help.]

Joseas Sanimuinnaq thinks that in a hunting district it would hardly be worth it to have motor boats larger than 22-footers. Apart from that, larger motor boats would be impractical as they are pulled up on land in the autumn, at Iserteq usually in November. The previous year the ice cover came rather later, and motor boats were not pulled ashore until shortly before Christmas.

In earlier times volunteers helped when a motor boat was to be hauled up on land. More or less all the men participated. But the previous year the municipality acquired a jack winch. With this apparatus one man can pull the motor boat ashore as long as another steers the movements of the motor boat.

People now preferred to hunt seals directly from the motor boat, because it is done more quickly that way. When one hunts from a motor boat there are in fact no rules for catch sharing. The first to see a seal is also allowed to shoot first. One only shoots at the seals that appear in front of motor boats. The chances of getting hold of the seals that come up behind the motor boat are too small.

In fjords with ice-floes, the seals are not frightened much by motor boat noise.

In the summer people prefer to hunt seals from a kayak. Then the seals are lean and easily sink in the water. In the autumn when the seals have grown fat and float more easily on the water, it is easier to use the motor boat for sealing, usually in October-November.

Here at Iserteq Ikertivaq the salinity of the sea surface is very low, since it is meltwater that floats on the top. So the seals easily sink to the threshold for the more saline water. It is difficult to see them when they float about one metre below the surface.

When the motor boat has a red colour on the bottom, this often frightens the seals, and they swim far away under the water.

As regards the hunters' association, where he is the chairman of the local branch, Joseas Sanimuinnaq explains that its activity at the moment was very poor. Something had been stolen from the association's cash box. Normally the association's main activity had been the administration of the use of hunters' huts. The individual hunters' associations are organized on a local basis. There was no real cooperation with the other local associations in Ammassalik Municipality. There had been no meetings of the representatives of the local associations from the whole district. There were thus no contacts either with the hunters' associations on the west coast of Greenland. The hunters' associations have shown no initiative in regulating the hunting, nor have they engaged in real hunters' politics. The efforts to move out to new hunting areas were thus also mainly made outside the hunters' associations.

Extracts from a conversation with Gertrud and Massanti Sanimuinnaq, Iitsalik, 25 July 1969

Massanti Sanimuinnaq was born in a communal house at Iitsalik, but the family left the place before he could remember anything. He has lived at various places, for example at Umittivartivit[113]*, and later at Pikiitti, where his father died in a kayak. Later they moved to Iitsalik, and there their first son, Hans, was born, who is now the depot manager at Sermiligaaq.*

Iitsalik lies about quarter of an hour by motor boat from Iserteq.

The family lived in a turf house until 1955: that year a doctor came and explained to him that his house was too small to be healthy, and that he should get a bigger house. He hesitated, but was persuaded to do it.

Now that he has grown older and does not have the help of the children any more, it has become difficult to keep up the payments on the house. The house and the related economic obligations bind him to the place now. Several times he has suggested that they should move to a more remote place. But his wife is doubtful, since they are now not so young any more. She would also like to live near their daughter, who is now a midwife at Iserteq.

Iitsalik is much exposed to the *piteraq*. For that reason his house has to be anchored with steel wires. When the *piteraq* is blowing, there is a lot of draught in the house, but otherwise they do not have any problems with the heating of the house.

His wife, Gertrud, was born at Aammaat near Ikkatteq in the summer. But they do not know her birthdate. While she was still a child they lived at Kakalik. There her father died during a *piteraq*. [Her father, Gaba, died on 12th January 1922 at Kakalik – RP].

Massanti, born in January 1912, was baptized before he was seven (1917). He said 'yes' himself, but he can remember that at one point he gave the wrong answer. Gertrud (b. 1910), was baptized later, in 1920.

Gertrud and Massanti have five children. They have three sons, Hans, Ole and Gaba. There are also two daughters, Rosine, who is a midwife at Iserteq, and Paula, aged 21. She lives at Iitsalik, and has always lived there. Only Gertrud, Massanti and Paula live in the house now, as well as Paula's little daughter and Rosine's daughter.

Iitsalik has not been inhabited for many years. Shortly before Gustav Holm's expedition (1884/85) people lived at Iitsalik. One year they had so much surplus that they covered the caches close to the home with dried rib sections of bearded seal. The following year there was famine and some people with Kunnak at their head ate human flesh after they had cut up the body on a rock. After that time many years passed when no one would live at Iitsalik.

But on Iserteq Island some families occasionally lived. This was mainly Nikodemus. He lived at various places: down at Umiivik, at Skjoldungen, at Pulaqqavik,[114] at Timmiarmiit[115] and at Uummannaq.[116] At Pulaqqavik he found a tent where all the occupants were dead. He thought that they must have been Kunitsarpik's family. [Kunitsarpik left after a song-duel with Aattaaritaa. The whole family disappeared – RP].

From the area around Iitsalik journeys were made in the old days to West Greenland, where people could buy tobacco and iron goods. From earlier times there is a story that refugees from a smallpox epidemic had come there from West Greenland. That was probably in the days of the Egedes. The refugees died a little south of Ikertivaq. Whether some of them got farther north, I do not know. No one knows their names.

When Massanti moved to Iitsalik, there were many animals to hunt in the surroundings: ringed seals, harp seals and bearded seals. In addition Massanti has killed a total of 62 polar bears. His brother, Hans, has also caught several polar bears, including one whose one leg had been cut shorter. On another occasion the brother also caught a pregnant she-bear, the only case Massanti had heard about.

From a conversation with Nina Sinngertaat, Tiileqilaaq, 16 July 1969

Nina Sinngertaat was born in what was at that time the only house in Tiileqilaq, a communal house. In her childhood her family spent the summers on Ikaasakitseq at Ikkatteq.

After her marriage to Hendrik Sinngertaat they lived at Skjoldungen. When Skjoldungen was depopulated in 1964 they moved first to Kuummiit with the other settlers. But she preferred to live at Tiileqilaaq, because both she herself and her husband were from Sermilik. He was born on Ikaasakitseq at Ikkatteq.

Looking at the ground plan of a turf house and a subsidized house (Type 3) she said when directly asked that she was satisfied with the arrangement of her new house. In the new house it was not more difficult to flense a seal indoors than in a turf house, because the wooden floor could easily be washed clean. You could not do that in the oldest turf houses, where there was an earth floor.

In connection with the subsidized houses a shed has been built that can hold what one earlier had to put under the umiak. The kinds of food that one earlier had to keep in a cache close by could now also be kept in the shed.

Extracts from a conversation with the trading post manager Ole Siverthsen, Iserteq, 28 July 1969

Pikiitti, south of Iserteq, was settled this time round when Ingemann Bianco moved there, probably in 1967.

From the neighbouring settlement, Umiivik, there is not much connection with other places, neither with Pikiitti nor with Iserteq.

People from Pikiitti sell their skins to the KGH shop at Iserteq. After people had come to Pikiitti, the KGH's purchases of seal skins at Iserteq increased.

Ingemann Bianco's share of the skin sales amount-

ed to over 200 skins a year, while the others contributed 100-200 skins a year. Before their move to Pikiitti they sold rather less than 100 skins a year each.

At present there are five families from Iserteq at Pikiitti. Next year it is expected that this will increase to six families, perhaps even seven.

Greenland Halibut has been found in considerable quantities at Pikiitti; but people consider the price too low, and prefer to catch seals.

Not very many skins are sold from Umiivik to Iserteq. People from Umiivik trade directly with Tasiilaq when there is a boat connection with the place. But practically all skin sales are done from Pikiitti through the shop at Iserteq.

Notes

1. A communal house was a house occupied by several households.
2. In East Greenland one could hear from the kayak men's song both what had been caught, and who had caught it.
3. East Greenlandic mask play with certain roles.
4. These caches would often be several kilometres from the house.
5. Fresh shark meat contains a toxin that is removed by boiling the meat several times and wringing the water out between two boilings. When it has lain in snow for several days, or is dried, it can be eaten without any risk.
6. This is a fjord north of Sermiligaaq.
7. By the river at *Kuugarmiit* on Ammassalik Island.
8. The place is on the western side of the *Sermilik* fjord.
9. The provisions gathered in the summer were placed in a cache on arrival at the settlement – cf. Appendix 2, note 4. A wall was built at the mouth of the cave or hollow to prevent animals from removing the provisions. One had to economize with the provisions, so they were kept a good way from the house. When you fetched food from the store, some of it was put in a cache outside the house, while some of it was taken into the house, and could then be used by the household.
10. These stores are often called caches.
11. *Ikaasattivaq* is the sound behind Ammassalik Island.
12. This is not really a case of a property right, but a usufructuary right involving the whole family. It is thus more a matter of the informant being considered part of the family, than as the owner of the food provisions. For example he must not give any away, or fetch anything from the cache himself.
13. When the roof covering of the houses is removed on moving, everyone should preferably leave the house at the same time; but some people may be allowed to leave it before this, for example if their tent wood had not been used to prop up the roof.
14. Moss, *'attaalissat'*.
15. The two islands are in the same island group at the mouth of Sermilik.
16. Two missionaries. *Julius Olsen* (1899-1972) was the missionary at Ammassalik from 1913, probably until 1921. *Christian Rosing* (1866-1944) from 1904 until 1922.
17. The last adult Baptism took place in 1921.
18. The same as a sledge route, the *Sermilik road.*
19. Ringed seal are called 'netsides'.
20. The principle that the man procures meat for the family, and the wife makes it useful, is thus preserved.
21. Cf. the description in Chapter 3 of this work.
22. *Pileraq/piteraq* is the strong winter storm from the heights.
23. Northeasterly wind, which also often comes as a storm.
24. On the suspended stretched thongs one did gymnastic exercises.
25. Cf. Jens Rosing 1963: 'The Ajagaq Game from Ammassalik'. *Folk,* Vol. 5.
26. Young, unmarried men slept on the window-platform, while young girls slept farthest back in the family's sleeping platform partition. The mention of *Bibeane Aqipi* and *Beate Maqi* as the two girls on page 64 of the main work, *Saaruat* and *Nakiiki,* is supported by this information. But in that case there had been several marriages between *Innartuaq*'s and *Akorninnaq*'s families, without the hostility between them ceasing for that reason.
27. The book was published in Greenlandic in 1967: *Isse issimik ki gutdlo kigúmik,* and was later published in Danish in 1987: *Øje for øje, tand for tand* ('Eye for eye, tooth for tooth'). As mentioned, the book was written by *Otto Sandgreen* (1914-1999).
28. The inner part of the Sermilik fjord.
29. To sew boat skins together one uses twisted sinews.
30. Skins for boat-coverings must be sewn while soaking wet, since they then become more elastic, and they must be fully sewn before they dry. But they cannot therefore be sewn in freezing weather, since it is outdoor work. The repairing of kayak skins was done indoors in the winter in communal houses. When the communal house passed out of use, many people got two kayaks, an ordinary one for summer use and a shorter one for winter use. This could then be taken into the house for repairs.
31. As indicated, the sewing must be done in the course of one day.
32. The roof vent, *qingaq,* is an opening in the ceiling that ventilates the interior. It can be closed with a piece of skin or cloth.
33. When a kamik is dried, it gets stiff, and it is then softened with a 'kamik stick', a *kammiut.*

34. An *ammassak* (pl. *ammassat*) or capelin (*Mallotus villosus*) is a small fish related to the smelts that spawns at the beach in large shoals and is caught with a scoop.
35. An *eertarneq* is a signal calling for help, either because one has harpooned a large animal, or because one has got into difficulties. One sticks the paddle in the water and shouts for help along it.
36. The figures in brackets refer to the house numbers in the following settlement plan. This description shows that closely related people prefer to live close to one another.
37. Their father, *Umeerinneq* (*c.* 1853 – *c.* 1915), was baptized with the name *Lars*. I do not know the reason for this special distribution of the surnames of his children; but since those who are called Larsen are the youngest, it is possible that they were born after the father was baptized (thus following the old Danish naming custom where Larsen = child of Lars).
38. The place was not identified, but is clearly in Sermilik.
39. *Peter Píke* (1892 – *c.* 1975), married to *Paavia* (Poul, b. around 1869) and *Cecilie*'s (b. *c.* 1873) eldest daughter, was a co-supporter of the family. His parents died early.
40. Here there is a discrepancy between the informant's written notes and his oral comments. Since *Beate Maqi* (b. around 1869) and her family were at baptismal preparation in *Ammassalik (Tasiilaq)* this year, his written notes must be more reliable; that is, the Aqipi family lived together with the Maqi family the following winter.
41. The cousin *Hans Ignatiussen* (b. 1886) lived with the Aqipi family several times.
42. *Rasmus Aavaartik* (b. 1889) was then a widower with no children.
43. *Karl Kaattuattak* (b. 1891) was also a widower, but since he had a small child, he married again fairly quickly.
44. This tragic event is mentioned in J. Petersen 1957: 120.
45. The nurse *Sigrid Bugge* (b. 1891 in West Greenland), was in Ammassalik in 1916-1917; cf. *Meddelelser fra det grønlandske Kirkesag* no. 104, 1967.
46. *Aage Bugge* (1895-1979) was dean of Greenland from the 1930s until 1945.
47. 'Pronominals' have no gender in Greenlandic, so the entertainer could well be a man.
48. 'Christmas fare' was the KGH's free distribution of the goods mentioned (plus coffee) at Christmas. It was discontinued around 1950.
49. Swimming guillemots have difficulty taking off, and must therefore fly up against the wind. They are thus easy to catch with a dart if you come from the windward side.
50. Cf. Appendix 2, note 24.
51. Two years' baptismal preparation was the norm, but catechumens were admitted once a year.
52. The same *Nathanael* (b. around 1874) as in Appendix 2, Note 44.
53. Like Peter Píke, *Aage* (1898-1928) lost his parents early.
54. The midwife may be the reason why the Aqipi family chose the place for this winter. That winter there was an addition to the family.
55. In East Greenland it is the one who first sees a polar bear who is recognized as its 'catcher', whoever kills it.
56. This winter too a child was born to the Aqipi family.
57. Cf. Appendix 2, note 26.
58. *Peter Rosing* (1892-1965), pastor in Ammassalik, 1922-1932.
59. The sound behind Ammassalik Island.
60. A spring hunting ground on Kulusuk Island.
61. *Kathrine Sinngertaat*, with whom they again lived in Ammassalik in 1929-1930.
62. *Kiinneq*, about 1 km north of *Kakalik*.
63. The Watkins expedition. The Englishman *H.G. Watkins* (1907-1932) travelled in the Arctic several times. In 1931 he came to Ammassalik, and again in 1932. He died in a kayak in East Greenland.
64. These people were not identified.
65. I.e. the Greenland Administration.
66. A point on Ammassalik Island at the mouth of the Ammassalik fjord.
67. *Akinneqit*, an island where Sermilik divides towards its two heads.
68. *Apollo Kaajammat* (1885-1962).
69. About 25 km farther in than *Tiileqilaaq*, on the same side of the fjord.
70. These people were not identified. It was difficult to get permission to study the parish register. I only had a short period under supervision.
71. In the period 1933-1937.
72. *Ebbe Josvasen* (1909 – *c.* 1995) was a catechist at Qernertivartivit around 1960.
73. Ebbe Josvasen's father, *Josva Angajerqâvat*, died in 1912, 34 years old. Ebbe seems to be talking about the time around 1915. The year 1824 was clearly a slip of the tongue; but it cannot be 1924, since the mother's sisters were clearly dead when Josva died in 1912.
74. This ice is about 5 km north of *Ikkatteq*.
75. The man was *Jonathan* (b. 1883) from *Tiileqilaaq*.
76. *Josef Kaajammat*, b. 1916, son of *Apollo Kaajammat*; cf. Appendix 2. note 68.
77. Imaarsivik is near Skjoldungen.
78. *Qeertaalaq* I could not find on any map. But the settlement *Qeertartivatsiaq* is on the south east corner of an island of the same name. From there one can reach *Qeertaalaq* by sledge very quickly, and it is probably on the same island (cf. Sandgreen 1987:400).
79. The family was baptized in 1917.
80. *Iserpalivitseq* lies on the southern side of *Qeertartivatsiaq*, some 2 km west of the settlement of the same name as the island.

81. There is a hint of an intense experience on *Qeertaalaq* several times, without any specification of its nature. Cf. note 84.
82. A place in the southern district.
83. For the summer tent.
84. With reference to the main figure *Kukkujooq/Apollo Kaajammat* (note 68) who during his stay at *Qeertaalaq* was training as an *angakkoq*, there are several hints of an intense experience. This experience was not specified, but it was hinted that for the same reason he would not live at the place again. This experience may have been related to his 'familiar spirits' in the sense that he did not want to experience it again as a newly-baptized person.
85. Of these place-names, *Kangertuatsiaq* has not been localized.
86. Both localities are a little outside *Ikkatteq*.
87. People who laid things out.
88. *Nikolaj Maqi* (b. 1900) is the son of *Beathe Maqi*, mentioned by *Massanti Aqipi*, for example in 1915-16.
89. It was a grandchild who was present during the conversation about the stay at Umiivik in 1960-61.
90. *Nikolaj Maqi* and his family often lived without other fellow settlers, also before they came to *Umiivik*, for example at *Kakalik* until 1947 and at *Akorninnaq* until 1957.
91. The KGH's cruising vessel, called after East Greenland's inspector, *Ejnar Mikkelsen* (1880-1971), popularly called Miki.
92. Around 1968 *Enos Bianco* lived down at *Uummannaq* in the southern district. When the family was struck down by an accident, he found it easier to look for people in southern West Greenland.
93. *Boas Nuko* at *Iserteq*, Tuuluaat was *Thorvald* at the same place.
94. Some of these people lived for several years at *Pikiitti*, and Iinuli, *Enos Bianco*, as indicated, lived farther south.
95. In several places there are old storage places for whale blubber, although the big whales were not caught in historical times. They indicate whaling in prehistoric times.
96. Therkel Mathiassen (1936:50) mentions *Paatsaajik* (Pât-sâjuk), where *Nikodemus* (b. around 1878) lived; but there was no map reference. The other localities do not seem to be mentioned.
97. A legendary hero known in both East Greenland and West Greenland, but also in Arctic Canada. His various experiences have been localized to many other places than Iserteq.
98. Better known in the West Greenlandic form *'Kangerlussuaq'*, at 68° N, on the east coast.
99. At the so-called *Dead Man's Point*.
100. From the 1930s until 1947.
101. From 1947 until 1957.
102. Cf. notes 22-23.
103. The house passage was lower than the floor of the house interior, the so-called 'cold trap'.
104. In South East Greenland at about 62°30' N.
105. A weather station at the entrance to *Ikertivaq*.
106. They came from a weather station during World War II.
107. A sound often filled with ice-floes, which explains the name.
108. *Aage Chemnitz* (b. 1927) was the trading manager in Ammassalik around 1970. Later he became director of the KGH.
109. *Boas Nuko* was a member of the Ammassalik municipal council in the period 1963 to 1967. The district board was replaced by the municipal council in 1963.
110. *Pikiitti* belongs to the Iserteq constituency.
111. I.e. they dug themselves into a snow hole.
112. *Ingemann Bianco* had at that time said that he would move to the northern district. *Nikodemus* lived in the area around *Skjoldungen*, and in 1932 he met people from the Sixth Thule Expedition when he lived at *Paatsaajivit* – cf. note 115, Appendix 2.
113. This is on the western side of *Sermilik* across from *Tiileqilaaq*.
114. On the Skjoldungen Fjord.
115. On the east coast at 62° N.
116. It is a little farther south.

Appendix 3

The use of East Greenlandic place-names

While I have used the ordinary Greenlandic spellings in connection with Upernavik Municipality, I considered it best not to use the official spellings for the place-names in Ammassalik Municipality. I prefer to use the principles of the 'new' Greenlandic orthography (from 1973), and look first and foremost at how these place-names would be read in Ammassalik. On a number of maps of Ammassalik spellings have been used that are based on the name first being translated into West Greenlandic, and partly – and only partly – adapted to South Greenlandic pronunciation. All these things lead to a rather inconsistent way of spelling the names. There is an adaptation to the pronunciation in some French uses of local place-names, but without consideration for how the East Greenlanders themselves would read the name.

It seemed to me to be most consistent to stick to the way the names are pronounced, and to write them such that an East Greenlander would read them in the 'normal' way. It must be admitted that here too uncertainty has arisen, inasmuch as East Greenlandic pronunciation has changed, at least over the last forty years or so. In the 1960s there was a rule that preserved u/o as u/o when it appeared in two consecutive syllables, e.g. in *Isortoq*, although *Isertoq* could also be heard; but in the 1990s this rule changed, so that only the last of such syllables kept u/o as u/o, for example *Isertoq*. This older rule is still intact at *Ittoqqortoormiit*/Scoresbysund, but the pronunciation in Ammassalik has become *Itteqqortoormiit*. It must be emphasized that the stop /t/ is always non-assibilated, no matter whether it is followed by /a/, /u/, /o/, /i/ or /e/. Before the last two of these /t/ is assibilated to /tˢ/ in West Greenlandic. Here I follow the idea of observing the pronunciation in East Greenlandic, which is more consistent than that of West Greenlandic as far as the articulation of /t/ is concerned. It should be unnecessary to stress this, but many people think that the East Greenlandic /t/ should be written as a voiceless /d/ before /i-e/, because it is still pronounced as /t/ in /ti/, /ta/ and /tu/ as in West Greenlandic /ta/ and /tu/, while /ti/ is read as /tˢi/ in West Greenlandic. So I must disregard the fact that /t/ can easily be misread by West Greenlanders. The often-used spelling *Pikiitsi for *Pikiitti* shows that it is first read in West Greenlandic, and then written for West Greenlandic readers with the wrong pronunciation.

In addition I have deliberately tried to use East Greenlandic forms of known localities, e.g. Kangerdlugssuaq/Kangerlussuaq, that is *Kangersuttuaq*. There are so many such names, which are actually designations of landscape formations, in Greenland that some dialect forms can be used to try to mark their location. Such inauthentic place-names are part of the local communities' frame of reference and can be used in societies consisting of local communities alone, but are poorly suited for use on a country-wide basis. Not that the East Greenlanders are much better than the West Greenlanders in this respect, it is only *Tasiilaqs* and *Immikkoortoq/Immikkeertoqs* that there are many of, but fortunately there are not many such 'namesakes' in this work.

The place-names are given here in alphabetical order, and older spellings are given, as well as spellings in certain other works.

In this book	*Geod. Kort* **1968**	**Gessain 1969**	**Robbe 1994**
Aammaat	Ângmât	–	–
Akerninnaq	Akornínaq	–	Agernarnaq
Aluk	Aluk	–	–
Ammassalik	Angmagssalik	Ammassalik	Ammassalik
Aputiteeq	Aputitêq	–	–
Iitsalik	Îgssalik	Inisali	–
Iittuarmiit	Inugssuarmiut	–	–

In this book	*Geod. Kort* 1968	Gessain 1969	Robbe 1994
Ikaasak	Ikerasak	–	Igaasa
Ikertivaq	Ikertivaq	–	–
Ikkatteq	Íkagteq	Ikate	Ikkatteq
Imertivaq	Imertivaq	–	Imertivaq
Innartalik	Ivnartalik	–	Innartalik
Innartivaq	Ivnartivaq	–	Innartivaq
Isertoq	Isertoq	Iserto	–
Ittimiit	Igtumît	–	
Ittitalik	Igtitalik	–	–
Ittoqqortoormiit	Scoresbysund	Scoresby Sund	–
Ittulivartivit	Igtuluartivit	–	–
Kakalik	Kakalik	–	Kagalik
Kangaartik	Kangârtik	–	–
Kangersuttuaq	Kangerdlugssuaq	Kangerlusuak	–
Kangersuttuatsiaq	Kangerdlugssuatsiaq -	–	
Kaporniakkat	Kaporniagkat	–	Kaporniakkat
Kialeeq	Kialineq	–	–
Kulusuk	Kulusuk	Kulusuk	Kulusuk
Kuugarmiit	Kûgarmît	–	Kuuarmiit
Kuummiit	Kûngmiut	Kumiut	Kuummiut
Mannginnerseerpik	Mángínersierpik	Manginertserpi	–
Naalertaajartarpik	–	–	–
Nattivit	Nagtivit	–	–
Noorajik	Nôrajik	–	–
Nunap Isiva	Nunap Isiva	–	–
Nuuaalik	Nûgâlik	–	–
Paarnakajiit	Paornakajît	Parnagaï	–
Pikiitti	Pikîtse	Pikiti	Pigiitti
Pupik	Pupik	–	Pubik
Qeertaalaq	–	–	Qeertaalaq
Qernertivartivit	Qernertivartivit	Qanertewartivi	Qernertivartivit
Qimmeersaajalik	Qingmêrsâjalik	–	–
Qinngeq	Qíngeq	Kringek	–
Qipa	Qipa	–	Qipa
Sapulit	Saputit	–	Sappulit
Sarpaq	Sarpaq	–	Sarpaq
Sermiligaaq	Sermiligâq	Sermiliga	Sermiligaaq
Sermilik	Sermilik	Sermilik	Sermilik
Suunaajik	Sûnâjik	–	–
Tasiilaartik	Tasîlârtik	Tasidarte	–
Tasiilaq	Tasîlaq	Tasida	Tasiilaq
Tiileqilaaq	Tiniteqilâq	Tiderida	Tiilerilaaq
Timmiarmiit	Tingmiarmiut	–	–
Toqqulak	Tóqulak	–	–
Umiivik	Umîvik	Umivi	–
Uummannaq	Umánaq	–	–

Remarks: In the survey maps Geodætiske kort from 1968 (Copenhagen) the old spelling is used. The 'translation' to West Greenlandic is not consistent, however. Gessain 1969 is Ammassalik, ou la civilisation obligatoire, Paris. Robbe 1994 is Les Inuit d'Ammassalik. Chasseurs de l'Arctique, Paris. The differences between Robbe's and my spelling show that Robbe also follows the local pronunciation, but allows for the fact that the names have to be read by others than East Greenlanders.

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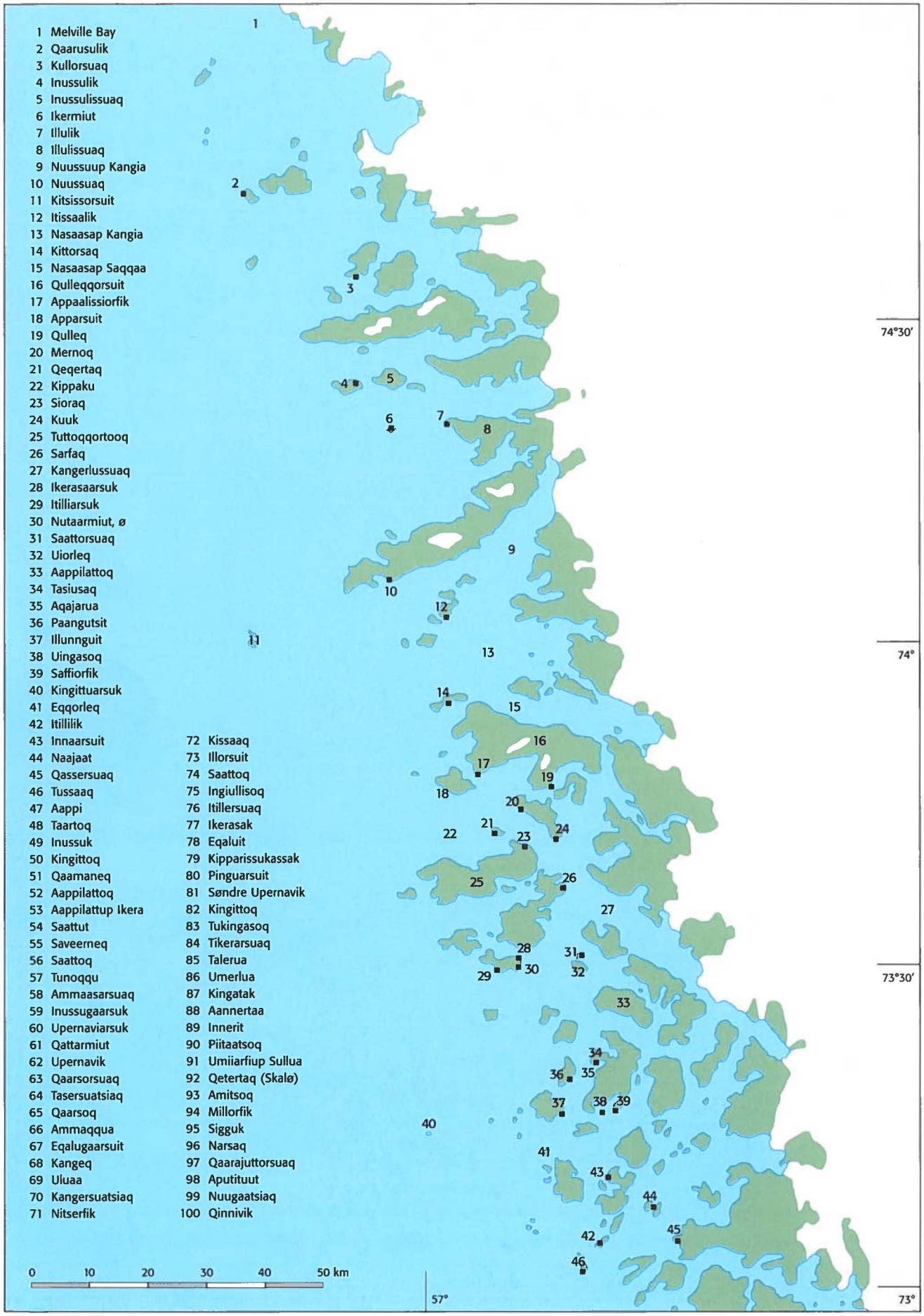
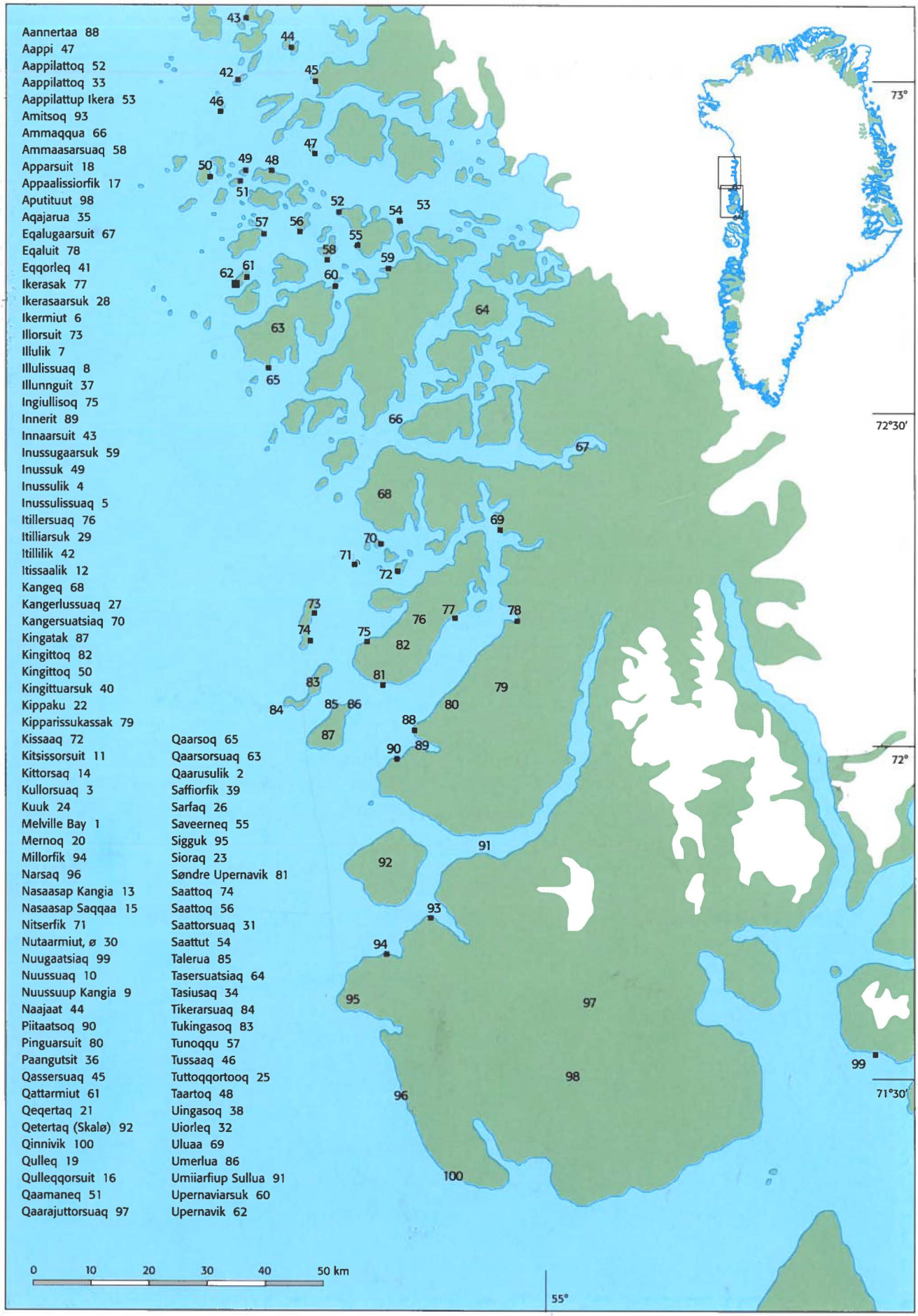

1 Melville Bay
2 Qaarusulik
3 Kullorsuaq
4 Inussulik
5 Inussulissuaq
6 Ikermiut
7 Illulik
8 Illulissuaq
9 Nuussuup Kangia
10 Nuussuaq
11 Kitsissorsuit
12 Itissaalik
13 Nasaasap Kangia
14 Kittorsaq
15 Nasaasap Saqqaa
16 Qulleqqorsuit
17 Appaalissiorfik
18 Apparsuit
19 Qulleq
20 Mernoq
21 Qeqertaq
22 Kippaku
23 Sioraq
24 Kuuk
25 Tuttoqqortooq
26 Sarfaq
27 Kangerlussuaq
28 Ikerasaarsuk
29 Itilliarsuk
30 Nutaarmiut, ø
31 Saattorsuaq
32 Uiorleq
33 Aappilattoq
34 Tasiusaq
35 Aqajarua
36 Paangutsit
37 Illunnguit
38 Uingasoq
39 Saffiorfik
40 Kingittuarsuk
41 Eqqorleq
42 Itillilik
43 Innaarsuit
44 Naajaat
45 Qassersuaq
46 Tussaaq
47 Aappi
48 Taartoq
49 Inussuk
50 Kingittoq
51 Qaamaneq
52 Aappilattoq
53 Aappilattup Ikera
54 Saattut
55 Saveerneq
56 Saattoq
57 Tunoqqu
58 Ammaasarsuaq
59 Inussugaarsuk
60 Upernaviarsuk
61 Qattarmiut
62 Upernavik
63 Qaarsorsuaq
64 Tasersuatsiaq
65 Qaarsoq
66 Ammaqqua
67 Eqalugaarsuit
68 Kangeq
69 Uluaa
70 Kangersuatsiaq
71 Nitserfik
72 Kissaaq
73 Illorsuit
74 Saattoq
75 Ingiullisoq
76 Itillersuaq
77 Ikerasak
78 Eqaluit
79 Kipparissukassak
80 Pinguarsuit
81 Søndre Upernavik
82 Kingittoq
83 Tukingasoq
84 Tikerarsuaq
85 Talerua
86 Umerlua
87 Kingatak
88 Aannertaa
89 Innerit
90 Piitaatsoq
91 Umiiarfiup Sullua
92 Qetertaq (Skalø)
93 Amitsoq
94 Millorfik
95 Sigguk
96 Narsaq
97 Qaarajuttorsuaq
98 Aputituut
99 Nuugaatsiaq
100 Qinnivik
0 10 20 30 40 50 km
74°30'
74°
73°30'
73°
57°


Aannertaa 88
Aappi 47
Aappilattoq 52
Aappilattoq 33
Aappilattup Ikera 53
Amitsoq 93
Ammaqqua 66
Ammaasarsuaq 58
Apparsuit 18
Appaalissiorfik 17
Aputituut 98
Aqajarua 35
Eqalugaarsuit 67
Eqaluit 78
Eqqorleq 41
Ikerasak 77
Ikerasaarsuk 28
Ikermiut 6
Illorsuit 73
Illulik 7
Illulissuaq 8
Illunnguit 37
Ingiullisoq 75
Innerit 89
Innaarsuit 43
Inussugaarsuk 59
Inussuk 49
Inussulik 4
Inussulissuaq 5
Itillersuaq 76
Itilliarsuk 29
Itillilik 42
Itissaalik 12
Kangeq 68
Kangerlussuaq 27
Kangersuatsiaq 70
Kingatak 87
Kingittoq 82
Kingittoq 50
Kingittuarsuk 40
Kippaku 22
Kipparissukassak 79
Kissaaq 72
Kitsissorsuit 11
Kittorsaq 14
Kullorsuaq 3
Kuuk 24
Melville Bay 1
Mernoq 20
Millorfik 94
Narsaq 96
Nasaasap Kangia 13
Nasaasap Saqqaa 15
Nitserfik 71
Nutaarmiut, ø 30
Nuugaatsiaq 99
Nuussuaq 10
Nuussuup Kangia 9
Naajaat 44
Piitaatsoq 90
Pinguarsuit 80
Paangutsit 36
Qassersuaq 45
Qattarmiut 61
Qeqertaq 21
Qetertaq (Skalø) 92
Qinnivik 100
Qulleq 19
Qulleqqorsuit 16
Qaamaneq 51
Qaarajuttorsuaq 97
Qaarsoq 65
Qaarsorsuaq 63
Qaarusulik 2
Saffiorfik 39
Sarfaq 26
Saveerneq 55
Sigguk 95
Sioraq 23
Søndre Upernavik 81
Saattoq 74
Saattoq 56
Saattorsuaq 31
Saattut 54
Talerua 85
Tasersuatsiaq 64
Tasiusaq 34
Tikerarsuaq 84
Tukingasoq 83
Tunoqqu 57
Tussaaq 46
Tuttoqqortooq 25
Taartoq 48
Uingasoq 38
Uiorleq 32
Uluaa 69
Umerlua 86
Umiiarfiup Sullua 91
Upernaviarsuk 60
Upernavik 62
43
44
42
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83
79
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85
86
80
88
87
90
89
91
92
93
94
95
97
98
96
100
99
73°
72°30'
72°
71°30'
55°
0
10
20
30
40
50 km

In response to an increase in the number of mouths to feed and occasional bad hunting years, the Greenlandic hunters of Upernavik and Ammassalik have had to expand their hunting areas.

Dr. Robert Petersen estimates the size of a Greenlandic hunting area big enough to feed a family or a settlement from around 1860 until 1970.

He also describes the role of pioneers in the process of expansion, and how expansion affected social organization, economic solidarity and traditional attitudes to justice.



Robert Petersen (b. 1928) was one of the fathers of the modern Greenlandic orthography and in the early 1980s founded Ilisimatusarfik, the University of Greenland. He was appointed Professor of Eskimology at the University of Copenhagen in 1975 and was Principal of Ilisimatusarfik from 1987 until retirement in 1995. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Université Laval, Québec, in 1992.

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