

PATTERNS OF EXCHANGE IN THREE INUIT COMMUNITIES:  
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

by

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Patterns of Exchange in Three Inuit Communities: An Exploratory Study

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis centres around an inquiry into the decline of several Inuit customs involving the sharing of labour and goods beyond the level of the household but within the boundaries of the local community. The early disappearance of several prominent customs -- such as the community-wide caribou hunt -- can be traced to such factors as the adoption of the rifle, the individualizing influence of fur trapping, and in some cases the conversion to Christianity. However, hospitality, gift-exchange, some commensality, and certain forms of cooperation survived the early contact period, suggesting that the further decline of these practices must be explained by the presence of different variables.

When the economic and personality needs met by community-wide distribution are examined, it becomes apparent that the allocation of social approval and the economic interdependence created by traditional exchange practices served to restrain the internal solidarity of the Inuit household. Against this background, the new-found ability of individual households to satisfy the bulk of their food, fuel, and clothing requirements through the use of imported supplies undermines the effectiveness of the rewards and controls which maintain the customary circulation of assistance. The flow of goods and assistance through the kinship exchange network is therefore interrupted by the reliance of individual households on imported supplies of essential goods. With this in mind, the problem investigated in this thesis is that of determining whether the incidence of gift-exchange, mutual

sharing, and cooperation beyond the level of the household in Inuit communities can be expected to decrease with a rise in the use of imported food, clothing, and fuel.

In order to answer this question, the inquiry examines the hypothesis that a correlation will be found in three Inuit communities between: (1) the incidence of mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift-exchange beyond the level of the household within each community; and (2) the extent to which the people of each community have come to rely on imported supplies of food, clothing, and fuel. A detailed review of the expectations governing exchange in each community is combined with an evaluation of deviations from the norm and with a discussion of the available data concerning the variables in question.

Rather than utilize the fragmentary data made available for a variety of Inuit groups by early explorers, missionaries, or traders, the inquiry relies entirely on detailed studies conducted between 1952 and 1968 by anthropological fieldworkers. Since Inuit residence and exchange practices vary from season to season, it was necessary to select monographs prepared by observers who remained in the field for at least one full year. The range of suitable ethnography was further restricted by the need for information comparing Inuit communities with differing subsistence patterns, with varying exposure to contact with the outside world, and with no physical contact between them. Selected for study are the Sivokakmeit, sea mammal hunters of the Bering Sea; the Nunamiut, traditionally caribou hunters of inland northern Alaska; and the Utkuhikhalingmiut, who occupied

an isolated region to the north-west of Hudson Bay, relying primarily on fish, sea mammals, and caribou. By comparing these three communities, it is possible to introduce controls for variables such as the changes in subsistence which followed contact.

The key points presented in the thesis are summarized on page vi. Among the Utkuhikhalingmiut, who make the most use of local resources, the exchange of goods and labour is governed entirely by traditional expectations which support mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift-exchange beyond the level of the household. The Sivokakmeit, who rely most heavily on imported commodities, have begun to employ market transactions among themselves and to withdraw from their customary exchange networks. It may be concluded that the hypothesis is supported by the available data, keeping in mind that the methodological weaknesses of the thesis suggest that it be regarded as an exploratory study.

SUMMARY OF DATA

	UTKUIKHALINGMIUT	NUNAMIUT	SIVOKAKMEIT
Annual Cycle	Winter: fish, trap, trade. Spring: seal, birds, fish. Summer: fish, minor trade. Fall: fish, caribou.	Winter: frequent trapping & hunting away from village Summer: some fish, trapping, hunting. spring and caribou. Fall:  Limited wage labour & souvenir making	Winter: ice hunting of walrus, seal. Spring: boat hunting, whale, walrus, seal. Summer: greens, birds, fish. Fall: fish, seal.  Considerable wage labour, trapping, and handicrafts.
Food, Fuel, & Clothing	Canvas tents, kerosene, flour, tea, etc. Skin clothing, local meat, fish oil fuel.	Access to store local.  Local fuel, meat, fat, skins.	Imported fuel, house insulation, tools, motors, much food, nearly all clothes. Some local meat, very little fuel, almost no skin clothing.
Contact	trade extensive but difficult due to distance. Visits from mission. Mail with relatives outside.	Contact prior to 1850 Serious disruption in move to Coast and return. White store, school. Employment limited.	Heavy contact since late 1800's. Whaling, trapping, mission, store, school, Reindeer Co., CAA & military bases.
Residence	No settled residence. Tents, snowhouse, winter aggregation & summer dispersal	Permanent village Frequent absences in winter and some in summer to trap, hunt.	Permanent dwellings, little or no seasonal movement.
Society	30 persons. 8 households. personal kindred. extended bilateral kindred, with extensive overlapping in community.	96 persons. 18 households. Household clusters. Bilateral kindred 2 factions of prior bands. Less overlapping	250-300 persons. about 50 households. Lineages and patrilines. bilateral kinship.
Exchange	Extreme solicitude. Varied with kinship distance, proximity, need, & personal preference. All transactions made as gifts.	Emphasis on generosity. Qualified by scale of priorities, proximity, need, personalities. History of "pseudo" bidding or payment. No direct sale or purchase internally	Generosity valued. Preference to clans. Some sale & purchase. Ethnographer reports reluctance to share and erosion of kinship commitments.

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To Fred Brown, who also stepped into the breach left by the loss of Ernest Becker, I owe a special debt of gratitude. His teaching provided a perspective that has been a source, not only of academic inspiration, but also of personal comfort and confidence. For having strengthened my understanding of the process of inquiry, thank you, Fred.

The semblance of order in the presentation of this thesis is due largely to the efforts of Dr. Karl Peter. Although the study is still far from ideal in a methodological sense, it has been considerably improved by the attempt to meet the standards of scientific discipline.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, without whose tolerance and support this encounter with academia would have been impossible. May her patience be rewarded in the years ahead.



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## CHAPTER ONE: THE FRAME OF REFERENCE

### Introduction

Although Inuit exchange behavior might appear at first glance to be a somewhat narrow and well-worn subject, closer acquaintance suggests that it presents a productive and, as yet, relatively unexplored field of investigation. Admittedly, the ethnographic record contains a large number of scattered references to the exchange of goods and services among the Inuit, but there have been few attempts to place the traditional methods of distribution within the context of social and economic change in the Arctic. In fact, the only major essay to deal specifically and comparatively with the subject is restricted to a study of traditional food-sharing practices among the Central Eskimo, and the paper in question lacks an explicit theoretical frame of reference (Damas 1972).

Arguments in favour of further study need not rest solely on the fragmentary character of the available material. Traditionally, the Inuit exchanged labour and material goods in response to kinship obligations, through commensality, hospitality, and gift-exchange, or by community-wide sharing and collaboration in large undertakings. As recently as the late 1960's, these were the most common forms of exchange legitimately employed in the internal affairs of several of the more isolated Inuit societies. The expectations governing these transactions contrast so sharply with the sale and purchase of labour and

materials in the market economy that the neglect of this topic is surprising, particularly since the transition from the traditional to the new forms of exchange presumably plays a central role in the so-called "modernization" of Inuit economic and social affairs.

On a theoretical level, this transition may be approached from a number of perspectives. From Weber's point of view, for example, the process might be described as the replacement of traditionalism by formal rationality in economic matters.<sup>1</sup> According to the model adopted by Parsons, Inuit methods of distribution might further be described as particularistic, whereas those of the market are diffuse and universalistic.<sup>2</sup> To others, the exchanges which Weber and Parsons define as traditional or particularistic are simply regarded as being more personal than the formally rational or diffuse and universalistic transactions of the market.<sup>3</sup> These terms characterize different approaches to what is essentially the same process.

Whether this process is termed "rationalization", "modernization", or "cultural evolution" appears to make little difference, since the major point of distinction between traditional Inuit forms of exchange and those regarded as typical of the market economy is common to each perspective. Until recently, the Inuit considered it proper that the terms of an exchange should be influenced by factors such as kinship proximity, the relative needs of the parties concerned, or the existing balance of reciprocities between them. In the market economy, consideration for details such as these is regarded as an illegitimate interference with the "free" flow of labour and

goods throughout the market: relatives, friends, and neighbours are expected to compete on an equal footing with strangers, whether they are purchasing the necessities of life, buying or selling labour, or disposing of their own assets. It would be difficult to imagine anything more foreign to the Inuit way of thinking.

For many of the people living in the Arctic, the dissonance between Inuit methods of distribution and those of the market economy involves a measure of both personal and social conflict. The Inuit fur trader or storekeeper, for example, is likely to find himself torn between two sets of values and social pressures. On the one hand, in order to earn a living from his business, he must charge an adequate price for his goods, pay no more than he can afford for what he buys, and refuse credit to people he considers unlikely to settle their debts. On the other hand, from the Inuit point of view, he will be judged guilty of an unseemly lack of generosity and hospitality, particularly if his dealings with relatives and neighbours are conducted in this manner. Similar incongruities, although perhaps not so extreme, are likely to bear on any Inuit household which undertakes to accumulate capital goods at the expense of traditional responsibilities. In this sense, the "modernization" of Inuit economic affairs involves more than social change: it entails a direct attack on an entire set of values and practices which, at one time, played a central part in the maintenance of Inuit society.

Thus, the transformation of Inuit exchange practices has both theoretical significance to a variety of sociological

problems and practical relevance to those who live in the Arctic. Seen in this light, it is unfortunate that the opportunity for direct observation of this process is rapidly disappearing in some Arctic communities and might already be lost in others.

#### The alternatives, hypothesis, and research question

A number of factors might be suggested as alternative explanations for the decline of mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift exchange in many Inuit communities. Among these are: (1) the "individualizing" effects of Western religions; (2) a change in Inuit values, brought about by contact with the outside world; and (3) the alterations in Inuit social organization arising from the use of industrial products, such as the rifle. The inadequacies inherent in each of these alternatives lend support to the search for further explanations.

Although nobody has yet taken this position, it would be possible to argue that a shift in exchange practices and values might be expected among those Inuit who have been converted to Protestantism. Thus, it could be argued, in Weberian fashion, that the Protestant faith maintains such an intense concern with the question of predestination that it produces a strong commitment to those values which favour success among small businessmen -- and formal rationality in economic affairs. If this hypothesis appeared plausible, it might lead to research comparing exchanges among Protestant Inuit with those occurring among Catholics.

However, the hypothesis can be dismissed on methodological and empirical grounds without being tested in this manner. Even if we overlook the fact that present-day Protestantism places

much less emphasis on the belief in predestination, it would be difficult to ignore the observation that economically, socially, and politically the position of the Inuit is in no way analogous to that of the early Protestants. Moreover, despite the decline in mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift exchange in some Inuit communities, the conversion to Christianity has not been followed by a rapid and pronounced shift in values, such as the hypothesis might lead us to predict. On the contrary, it is entirely possible that Western religious beliefs have had the opposite effect in some groups of Inuit, since Christian ideals of charity and brotherly love are consistent with traditional attitudes towards the distribution of labour and material goods.<sup>4</sup> The conversion to Western religions would thus appear to be a most unpromising explanation for the decline of customary Inuit distributive practices.

Objections can also be made to the contention that changes in Inuit methods of distribution must be preceded by a shift in values and attitudes towards exchange. This train of thought is suggested by research conducted by C. C. Hughes, who argues that the rejection of many traditions, particularly among younger Inuit, has been brought about by the adoption of a perspective learned through contact with the outside world (Hughes 1966). On the basis of this argument, we would expect that Inuit who have been exposed to outside influences for roughly the same length of time would abandon their customary modes of exchange at about the same rate. However, as we shall see later, some Inuit communities continued to resist the sale and purchase of goods among themselves as late as the 1950's, despite familiarity

with wage labour and cash exchange dating back to the last quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

Emphasis on the necessity for a prior shift in world view is open, moreover, to the objection that it pays insufficient attention to the agencies responsible for the introduction of new perspectives. Hughes himself carefully documents the processes through which wage labour, for example, leads to a rise in expectations and to the dissatisfaction which results from the limited availability of consumer goods. In other words, it would appear that the challenge to Inuit values and attitudes will itself require explanation in terms of an intervening variable.

A more plausible case can be made for the view that certain items of industrial technology have been responsible for a decline in cooperation and sharing. Caribou hunting, for example, customarily required the collaboration of a substantial number of people to drive the animals to a location in which they could be slaughtered. When the Inuit began using the rifle, the community-wide caribou drives became unnecessary, since a hunter could range over considerable distances in search of caribou, kill the game wherever he found it, and then return the carcass directly to his own household. Similar breaks with tradition occurred in seal hunting, which used to be most effective when a number of hunters collaborated in watching the breathing holes. With the use of the rifle, the animals can be pursued by an individual hunter and shot from a distance, whether on the ice or in the open water, with much less effort and risk. Since the "work parties" tended to grow smaller, both

in caribou hunting and in seal hunting, it became common for the initial division of game to be made among a much more restricted group than was formerly considered acceptable.

As is often the case, however, this neat picture of cause and effect requires serious qualification. For one thing, not every item of industrial technology has had the same effect as the rifle. The use of modern boats and weapons in walrus and whale hunting, for example, has sometimes led to the selection of boat crews -- i.e., of the hunting party -- on the basis of merit rather than along traditional kinship lines.<sup>6</sup> However, in other cases, the boat crews continue to be composed of closely-related kinsmen, with the initial division of the catch taking place among them.<sup>7</sup> In yet other instances, there has been a conscious decision to divide the whale among local households which are not even represented among the members of the successful hunting party.<sup>8</sup> There is thus a disturbing range of variation in the consequences that may be expected from the use of different items. This difficulty is further complicated by the fact that there are significant differences in the effects of any one item, depending on the group in which it is adopted.

Furthermore, despite changes in the initial division of the catch among some Inuit groups, subsequent divisions continue to be made according to custom. Even outside commodities, purchased with cash gained from wage labour, trapping, or welfare, enter into sharing networks in which distribution is conditioned by traditional norms, although it might not follow precisely the same pattern as in pre-contact times. The continued flow of goods and labour through these local kinship networks suggests



that there are limits to the plausibility of explaining existing exchange practices solely in terms of modern technology.

Since changes in religion, values, and technology provide no more than partial explanations for a decline in traditional Inuit distributive practices, it would seem plausible to examine an alternative solution. In this inquiry, I shall consider the argument that the incidence of mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift-exchange beyond the level of the individual Inuit household is reduced by the dependence of the community on outside sources of essential goods, such as food, clothing, and fuel. In other words, the Inuit can be expected to abandon their customary exchange patterns to the extent that they come to rely primarily on the market economy for the necessities of life.

In order to test this contention, I shall compare the subsistence and exchange patterns of three Inuit communities during the late contact period -- i.e., between 1954 and 1968. The communities selected for study include those of the Sivokakmeit of St. Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea, the Nunamiut of northern Alaska, and the Utkuhikhalingmiut of Chantrey Inlet, to the northwest of Hudson Bay. The study will seek to demonstrate a correlation between two variables: (1) the incidence of mutual sharing, cooperation and gift-exchange beyond the level of the household within these communities; (2) the extent to which the people in each community have come to rely on outside sources of food, clothing, and fuel.

### Theoretical framework

At least until recently, mutual sharing, cooperation, and

gift-exchange beyond the level of the household clearly served important economic functions in all Inuit societies. For one thing, it provided a wider subsistence base, permitting each household to draw on the labour and material resources of kinsmen. Cooperation appears to have been particularly important in whale, walrus, and caribou hunting, where a larger work group presented recognizable advantages. Sharing and gift-exchange also meant that those households which were temporarily or chronically unsuccessful in the search for the necessities of life could call on relatives for material assistance. In this connection, the expectation that reciprocity in exchange need be neither immediate nor equal played an important part in ensuring that the less-successful households would be aided by more fortunate relatives in times of distress. Since misfortune commonly fell on everyone at one time or another, the distribution of labour and goods according to traditional norms spread the uncertainties of life in the Arctic over a larger group. In this way, the individual household was not required to rely solely on its own devices for food, clothing, and fuel, and the persistence of the society as a whole could more readily be assured.

There are strong indications that the traditional forms of exchange also served important personality functions. The Nunamiut, for example, prefer to live and work either in the village or in household clusters, complaining of loneliness and boredom during those seasons when they disperse to hunt or trap as individual households (Gubser 1964: 99-104). Moreover, as we shall see, the distribution of labour and material assistance affords an avenue for self-assertion as well as frequent opport-

unities to gain prestige and recognition as a worthy person.

In fact, the personality needs met by the maintenance of interaction and communication beyond the boundaries of the household may help to explain the persistence of customary exchange networks where the economic significance of distribution has dwindled.

Distribution conducted according to traditional expectations also appears to play a part in controlling friction and conflict in Inuit societies. At the level of manifest functions, sharing, cooperation, and gift-giving are openly employed to indicate good will, to solicit reciprocity, or to shame those who are considered greedy or selfish. In addition, since the customary forms of distribution explicitly leave unspecified the nature and timing of the reciprocity that is expected, the exact balance of distribution between households is seldom -- if ever -- known, with the result that further exchanges are continually encouraged as old "debts" are discharged and new ones created. Since the Inuit traditionally lacked a centralized form of government capable of enforcing peace, it seems reasonable to suggest that distribution helped to contain the hostilities generated by differences in the economic viability of adjacent households. The traditional exchange networks operating in Inuit societies were thus one means of holding in check the divisive influences of household solidarity.

Implicit in this statement is the assumption that household solidarity is a source of either actual or potential social conflict. Since this is the unit which works, travels, and lives together most consistently, and in view of the serious-

ness with which the Inuit are known to regard their household responsibilities, there can be little doubt as to the internal solidarity of the household. It would appear, furthermore, that the sharing and pooling of resources within the household might itself have helped to legitimate and reinforce the authority of parents and elder males. Thus, although the conflicting duties and allegiances of household members to their respective kindreds can be a source of dissension, this is countered somewhat by the primacy accorded to household distribution. Given the tendency of the household to be committed primarily -- although by no means exclusively -- to its own welfare, the integrative consequences of community-wide distribution would be difficult to dismiss.

The availability of essential goods from outside sources undermines, first of all, the economic dependence of the household on its traditional sources of support. Provided imported goods continue to be available on a fairly regular basis, exchanges beyond the level of the household tend to be channelled, not through the local network of distribution, but through the economic, social, and political institutions which bring supplies into the society.<sup>9</sup> Given this situation, the solidarity of the household is able to assert itself against the demands of the local distribution network.

In many cases, of course, goods purchased and brought into the society from outside sources continue to be distributed among kin in much the same way as those derived locally. The result is the creation of several different spheres, or circuits, through which goods and assistance circulate according to some-

what different expectations.<sup>10</sup> If we employ Sahlins' typology of exchange, the distribution of food in contemporary Inuit communities may be governed by negative reciprocity in dealings with outside agencies, by balanced reciprocity between households, and by generalized reciprocity within the household.<sup>11</sup> Viewed from Polanyi's perspective, this amounts to the creation of several economies operating simultaneously in the same society.<sup>12</sup> The maintenance of a number of overlapping economic circuits is especially important where the supply of imported goods is subject to severe seasonal fluctuations due to transportation problems, or where it is frequently interrupted by the absence of a steady cash income.

This is not to deny that personality and political needs continue to be met by some forms of mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift-giving. It might even be that the opportunities to gain prestige or to exercise authority through gift-exchange are occasionally enhanced by the increased availability of consumer goods. Nevertheless, as reliance on the outside world grows, the local distribution network dwindles in importance. The critical factor leading to the decline of exchanges conducted according to traditional expectations is thus the dependence of the individual household on the market economy for the bulk of its food, clothing, and fuel requirements.

#### Definitions and methodology

Unfortunately, given the data currently available, neither of the variables in the hypothesis under consideration can be measured with a satisfactory degree of precision. For one

thing, it is seldom possible to determine the exact point at which an Inuit household has become dependent on outside sources of food, clothing, and fuel. Industrial commodities have been available throughout most of the Arctic for decades, and it would be difficult to find an Inuit household today which fails to make extensive use of imported goods. As a consequence, although it is feasible to distinguish between households which have entirely given up the traditional subsistence patterns and those which continue to live primarily on the land, these represent extremes which shade gradually into one another along a continuum. Many households occupy a position close to the centre of this scale, making use both of outside supplies and of local resources. It would be difficult to establish, in any but the most general terms, the degree to which such households rely on supplies brought in from outside.

The incidence of customary exchanges is also difficult to quantify. In this case, however, it is possible to draw a comparison between those Inuit communities in which market exchange is prohibited and those in which it is condoned. Consequently, although we might not be able to determine the true incidence of traditional distribution in each community, we can assess its importance as a proportion of the total number of exchanges taking place. Admittedly this is not an entirely satisfactory solution, but it does offer a feasible means of comparison and control.

In order to test the hypothesis under investigation, it is necessary to have a closer definition of the exchanges being considered. For the purposes of this thesis, an act of exchange is best defined as one in which a possession -- i.e., legitimate,

effective control over an object or a service -- passes from one actor to another.<sup>13</sup> According to this definition, it is entirely possible for exchange to be a one-way process, since reciprocity need be neither immediate, nor equivalent, nor even necessary. Borrowing or usufruct transactions are specifically excluded from consideration, because they do not require the "owner" of a possession to relinquish control. Moreover, since our concern is with forms of exchange that are regarded as legitimate, theft is also placed beyond the scope of concern. The focus of attention is refined even further by concentrating on exchanges which take place outside of the household but within a group of Inuit related to one another through a kinship network, known by a common name, and coming together regularly, -- for at least part of each year -- to hunt or fish in the same locality.

It would be misleading to apply the term, "society" to such groups. Admittedly, it is possible that each unit was largely self-supporting, although by no means self-contained, during the pre-contact era. In recent years however, the economic viability of many Inuit groups has been lost, and in some cases the ability of the group to reproduce itself would appear to have become problematic, due to high rates of mortality and migration. Other groups have disappeared completely, their members dispersed and absorbed into larger settlements.<sup>14</sup>

Difficulties also arise when the terms sometimes used to designate different types of pre-industrial social organization are applied to the Inuit ethnography. Elman Service, for example, has argued that Inuit societies conformed, in pre-contact times, to his model of the patrilocal band. In his

opinion, the patrilocal structure of Inuit societies collapsed during the contact period, giving way to the composite band which gathers together the remnants of several previously discrete groups. Service's argument has been challenged by Guemple, who contends that the composite band evolved long ago among the Inuit in response to fluctuations in the game supply and the need for periodic dispersal and aggregation of Inuit populations. In any case, regardless of the structure assumed by Inuit societies in the pre-contact era, we would still need a term which is more appropriate to their framework in the contemporary world.

Against this background, the groups in question are best identified by the term, "community". Use of the term in this context is consistent with the widely-accepted definition developed by Redfield, and it avoids some of the problems encountered when these groups are either identified as societies or designated by the concepts commonly used in reference to pre-industrial forms of social organization.

According to Redfield, the community is defined by four criteria: smallness, distinctiveness, homogeneity, and self-sufficiency. All three of the Inuit groups considered here would be considered small by most standards -- the largest having some six hundred inhabitants, and the smallest fewer than thirty-five. Each community also has a measure of distinctiveness, its members being known by a common name as the people who inhabit a recognized area. This characteristic must be qualified somewhat, since newcomers to the community might not be accepted as "real" members of the group for several generations. This situation is complicated further by the fact that relatives who have migrated



to other regions frequently continue to be regarded as members of their original community.

The Inuit communities considered here depart most markedly from Redfield's definition in self-sufficiency and homogeneity. Since self-sufficiency is one of the variables under investigation, Redfield's discussion of this problem is especially apt. Using his frame of reference, modernization draws the community into the orbit of a larger, industrial society and threatens its homogeneity through institutions which thrust their way into community life. Losses in self-sufficiency and homogeneity -- in other words, departures from the community, considered as an ideal type -- are thus readily connected to broader processes of social change.

This view of the modernization process requires modification in the case of the Inuit, since it is doubtful if all Arctic communities were as self-sufficient, in pre-contact times, as Redfield's definition might suggest. Of the three communities considered here, the Sivokakmeit appear to have been the most isolated. Even the Sivokakmeit, however, were subject to occasional migration, maintaining sporadic contact with relatives on the Siberian mainland. Although little is known of the pre-contact history of the Utkuhikhalingmiut, it seems reasonable to infer that they maintained exchange contact with other communities through the institution of the extended kindred, which persisted until the late 1960's. The Nunamiut, least self-sufficient of the three, are known to have had a regular trade in meat, hides, and blubber with Inuit communities on the Arctic coast. Indeed, to the Nunamiut, modernization has meant a

re-structuring of external trading patterns rather than a straight-forward decline in self-sufficiency. The term, "community" -- as defined by Redfield -- is used here with these qualifications in mind.

The household is somewhat easier to define. Occasionally, it may consist of little more than a nuclear family. Generally, however, it contains a core of closely-related people, together with their children, parents, and other immediate kinsmen. At times, non-relatives and even outsiders might be included. Since the size and composition of the Inuit household varies from place to place, and from season to season, more precise definitions of the household in each community will be given during the course of the study.<sup>15</sup>

Due to seasonal fluctuations in the subsistence and residence patterns of most Inuit communities, it has been necessary to select data collected by ethnographers who have remained in the field for at least a twelve-month period. The information dealing with the Utkuhikhalingmiut, for example, was collected over a period which extended from June, 1963 to March, 1965 by an observer who spent most of that time living as the adopted daughter of an Utku family. Similarly, for information concerning the Nunamiut, the study relies mainly on the report of N. J. Gubser, who spent fourteen months living with a Nunamiut family, ending his work in August, 1961. The Sivokakmeit material was collected by C. C. Hughes and J. M. Hughes, who occupied a house in the main village on St. Lawrence Island in 1954-55. In addition to their own observations, the Hughes' were able to make use of field work conducted among the

Sivokakmeit in 1940, thereby providing the most reliable diachronic view of social change in the Arctic employed in this study.

This point raises the difficulty of evaluating information concerning the aboriginal and early contact periods. In the monographs employed here, each ethnographer has tried to sketch the major changes which occurred prior to his or her fieldwork. To attain this end, a good deal of reliance must be placed on the reports of people such as traders, missionaries, and explorers -- or on the memories of the Inuit themselves. Even where the ethnographer has gathered, arranged, and corroborated this material in a scholarly fashion, it is still not the sort of first-hand evidence one would like to have. As a consequence, the inquiry cannot pretend to cover the period ranging from pre-contact times to the present day; at best, it deals with these communities as they appeared at the time they were studied.<sup>16</sup> Of the "before and after" evidence required to properly test the hypothesis suggested in this inquiry, the latter is clearly the most satisfactory.

Problems in the availability and quality of data restrict the confidence with which the findings of the study can be extended to other Inuit communities. For one thing, the need to employ year-round studies, rather than fragmentary comments provided by occasional visitors, means that not all Inuit communities were given an equal chance of being included in the sample selected for investigation. Secondly, even where the data has been collected by sound ethnographic techniques, reliance on material collected by other people precludes the possibility

of searching for contradictory evidence in the field, although it can be sought readily in the literature.

To the extent that the conditions of an ideal research design are not met in this inquiry, it would be unwise to place undue confidence in the results. For this reason, the thesis is best regarded as an exploratory study, intended to demonstrate the need for further research dealing with the subject of Inuit exchange networks.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE UTKUHIKHALINGMIUT

Jean Briggs' report of her field work among the Utkuhik-halingmiut provides a valuable introduction to a discussion of Inuit exchange behavior (Briggs 1970). For one thing, her book contains an exceptionally authoritative and comprehensive account of the values by which the Utku judge the exchange of goods and assistance.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, living as she did as the adopted daughter of an Utku family, Briggs was in a position to observe and to experience the manner in which these values are used in the daily lives of her hosts.

At the time of Briggs' study, the Utku inhabited the country adjacent to Chantrey Inlet and the Back River, an area of more than 35,000 square miles lying approximately one thousand miles to the east of the MacKenzie River delta. The length of their residence in this region remains uncertain, but Briggs estimates that they entered the area from the north at some time in the early 1800's (Briggs 1970: 13). Their numbers have steadily dwindled over the years, and by 1963, only about thirty-five Utku remained, of whom a number were away from the area for one reason or another.

Very little is known about the Utku way of life during the early contact period, and what information we do have is drawn largely from the memories of the Utku themselves.<sup>18</sup> At the time the Utku moved into the Back River country, the region is said to have been rich in game. In addition to fish and musk oxen, the Utku hunted caribou during the annual spring and fall

migrations, and they relied on seal for the winter and spring. About 1908 they acquired guns and began trapping fox which they traded for manufactured goods at Baker Lake. At this point, the Utku turned to fish and caribou for food, apparently abandoning the seal hunt altogether (Briggs 1970: 12).

In the autumn of 1958, the caribou migration failed, and since that time the Utku have relied even more heavily on fish. They remained a highly mobile society, splitting up, re-grouping, and moving frequently to make maximum use of the fish, the seals, and the few remaining caribou, but the pattern of their movements changed considerably. Whereas the whole band had once taken part in the caribou hunt, now only the able-bodied persons pursued the caribou inland for about three weeks in early September, leaving the rest to continue fishing on the river. October became a season of intense activity as an effort was made to cache enough fish to supplement the winter supplies and to last throughout the difficult spring period. At the time of Briggs' study, all of the Utku spent the winter months (November to March) at the mouth of the Hayes River, fishing, trapping, and making trading trips to Gjoa Haven. From April until July, the Utku dispersed, some families turning to sealing on Chantrey Inlet while others eked out the fish stored in the previous fall with whatever birds, eggs, and fresh fish they could find, moving almost continuously in search of game. July and August brought a return to fishing, this time with concentration on the migrating salmon trout. With September, the cycle began again.

The isolation of the Utku, combined with the perseverance

and skill with which they continued to exploit their native habitat create a misleading impression of self-sufficiency. In fact, the evidence suggests that they have been drawn tightly into the economic orbit of the outside world for some decades. According to Briggs, although any one person might make the trip to Gjoa Haven for supplies only two or three times each year, there was always somebody either on the way there or on the way back -- at least during the winter. Their purchases included kerosene, weapons, clothing, bedding, cooking equipment, tools, tea, tobacco, flour, and "... a holiday smattering of more frivolous items" (Briggs 1970: 2, 97). The reliance of the Utku on manufactured clothing, bedding, and canvas is especially significant, since it is a dependence brought about by the scarcity of the caribou and therefore cannot be avoided. Furthermore, the Utku had become accustomed to making souvenir items and loaning their canoes in return for supplies from the parties of sports fishermen who flew in for several weeks every summer. Whether or not the Utku could have survived in recent years without provisions from the outside, they made substantial use of the goods available to them.

Trading activities, moreover, were not their only point of contact. The Utku were converted to Anglicanism during the 1930's, and Briggs reports that religion occupied a prominent position in their daily lives (Briggs 1970: 119). They held regular services under the direction of a lay leader responsible to the Eskimo deacon in Gjoa Haven, and either the deacon or a white missionary from Spence Bay tried to visit the Utku at least once each year. Apart from these contacts, the majority

of the Utku were literate in Eskimo syllabics and could correspond with friends and relatives living away from Chantrey Inlet. In addition, a few of the children had been to residential schools in other communities, and were able to speak English, and at least some of the Utku had been outside for medical attention. While the remoteness of Chantrey Inlet limited the frequency of Utku contacts with the outside, there was nevertheless a steady erosion of their isolation.

The social framework:

Despite these incursions, Utku social organization is still based largely on the major kinship and residential divisions of their society: the nuclear family, the kin group, the extended kindred, and the band. Perhaps out of deference for the complexities of Utku marriage and adoption practices, Briggs prefers to use the term 'household' in referring to the nuclear family. She describes Utku society as containing eight of these households in 1963, with several people being in the ambivalent position of having equally strong connections with a number of families or with outside communities. These eight households are grouped into three kin groups, or ilammarigiit, the latter defined "... as an extended family consisting of genealogical or adoptive siblings and the children of those siblings" (Briggs 1970: 38). Kinship ties, created by birth, by betrothal or marriage, by adoption, or by naming, can be traced throughout the entire community, and Briggs reports that:

"... most Utku are related in two or more of the four ways



mentioned. Marriage relationships overlap and complicate blood relationships, since Utku parents almost always, when possible, betroth their children to relatives, especially to cousins, that is, to the sons and daughters of parents' brothers, sisters, and cousins" (Briggs 1970: 37).

In effect, the Utku band is a highly open and fluid unit, identified by the occupation of a common residential site during the winter, and knit together by the overlapping of kinship relationships.

The flexibility of Utku kinship alliances is given by the large number of potential affiliations provided by the ilagiit, the term used in reference to "... all relatives to whom one is linked, or assumes one is linked, genealogically" (Briggs 1970: 38). Writing of the Netsilingmiut, the nearest neighbors of the Utku, Balikci identifies the ilagiit as a personal kindred -- i.e., as an ego-centred aggregate of relatives on both the father's and mother's side. The ilagiit is not to be considered a descent group, first of all because its members are unable to reckon descent from a common ancestor, and secondly because it "... is not a group in the sociological sense of the word, but only a category of people in reference to an individual" (Balikci 1964: 29). Balikci considers four criteria that might be used to distinguish a corporate unit, and he finds the ilagiit deficient in each of them: the ilagiit is not a co-residential unit, since its members might be spread throughout several communities; it is not a political organization, because it is fragmented by a large number of overlapping ties and it is lacking in centralized authority; it has no ceremonial functions; and it does not operate as an economic unit (Balikci 1964: 27-29). The ilagiit, in brief, serves only as a means of tracing kinship

linkages that may or may not be activated between people living in the same community or at a distance from one another.

The regulation of exchange: morality, authority, and prestige.

Neither the ilagiit nor the band appears to be clearly differentiated by a set of explicit prescriptions governing exchange behavior. According to the Utku, concern for the welfare of others is an ideal having universal application. It is important to note here that this concern goes beyond the obligation to be generous, as that word is usually understood. Generosity denotes the act of giving freely; in Sahlins' terms, it is generalized reciprocity, the giving of goods or assistance with the understanding that a return need be neither equivalent, nor immediate, nor even necessary (Sahlins 1965: 148-149). The Utku ideal of naklik has a much broader and a deeper meaning. It demands that one be both protective and solicitous rather than simply generous in social encounters, and it asks that one anticipate the needs of others. As well as material assistance, it requires that more intangible demonstrations of concern for others should be given; one should not make others feel indebted to, or anxious for oneself, and above all one should be even-tempered and unaggressive. To say simply that the Utku value the obligation towards generalized reciprocity, then, would be an extremely crude indication of the ethics by which they judge exchange behavior.

Briggs provides two arguments in support of the view that the naklik ideal is a universalistic prescription among the Utku. In the first place, the Utku insist that helpfulness should be

extended, without 'discrimination' to all those in need:

"... a good person, that is, a person whose behavior is characterized by protectiveness, who is helpful, generous, and even-tempered, will demonstrate these qualities to all people, even to strangers, kaplunas, and so on, not just to close kin" (Briggs 1970: 323).

Moreover, even those whose behavior falls short of the ideal are to be treated in the same way.<sup>19</sup> This point is doubly significant in view of Briggs second argument: that the ideal is universal in the sense that all people are judged in terms of how well they live up to the standard. Those who do not are considered by the Utku to be either anti-social or lacking in reason.<sup>20</sup>

There are, of course, important qualifications in the way these standards are applied. Mature and able-bodied Utku are expected to be self-sufficient as far as possible, and indeed they must be if they are to be protective towards others. Consequently, it is the young, the sick, and the elderly who arouse naklik feelings.<sup>21</sup> Adult Utku are unwilling to have these sentiments expressed about themselves, partly perhaps out of shyness, but mainly because they are reluctant to be thought a burden to others (Briggs 1970: 325). Moreover, although the Utku require people to be considerate of one another, and find it difficult to refuse requests for assistance, they do not expect a person to share equally with all. As a consequence, they are hesitant and extremely moderate in making their wants known to people outside of their families for fear of being refused.<sup>22</sup> The value placed on concern for others thus operates as a damper on the demands made of people not in the immediate kin group.

The identity of the kin group is also recognized in other aspects of the moral code. If a person helps himself to supplies cached by a kinsman, his act is regarded as legitimate sharing -- provided the owner is notified. However, if use is made of provisions belonging to a non-kinsman in this way, it might be construed as 'theft', although recriminations are generally not made. Given these acknowledged departures from the naklik ideal, it is not surprising that the Utku prefer to live, work, travel, and share within the kin group, or that they feel the most comfortable and secure when among their 'real family' (Briggs 1970: 39, 184).

Restraint in asking for assistance is required, and restrictions on the amount of aid given are permitted even within the kin group, for the Utku frequently draw their households apart economically while remaining close socially and spatially. Briggs observed that her family of adoption fished alone one winter, stored its catch separately, and shared its provisions no more liberally with kinsmen than with anyone else. When kinsmen came to visit, for example, they received smaller portions of food than the members of the household, and Briggs' supplies of food, tobacco, and kerosene were not shared equally with them (Briggs 1970: 89, 178-79). The fact that no attempt was made to disguise these disparities suggests that such deviations from the ideal of kin group solidarity were acceptable, if not entirely approved.

Restraint is expected within the household, too. Protectiveness towards others is as highly regarded among family members as it is in the society at large, and the exercise of

male or parental authority in a harsh, domineering, or abusive manner is poorly thought of.<sup>23</sup> Briggs found that even the head of her household sometimes phrased his wants in terms of solicitude for others; feeling hungry himself, for example, he would suggest that his wife might like something to eat, knowing that she would prepare food for him at the same time. Extremely young children are treated with the utmost indulgence, but as they grow older they are expected to develop reason and they are taught to exercise restraint in their requests, even when these turn to food or affection.<sup>24</sup> Later on, they are expected to contribute their share to the upkeep of the family, and eventually they assume responsibility for the care of their own children and for their parents (Briggs 1970: 113, 121, 137, 182, 247-48).<sup>25</sup>

Restraint in asking for assistance is consistent with the Utku concern for balance in the exchange of goods and cooperation; reluctance to arouse anxiety for oneself is re-inforced by an unwillingness to be obligated to others. Although the Utku believe that everyone should be solicitous, they do not consider it correct for benefits to flow consistently in one direction when a return is both possible and desired. Thus, Briggs' letter of introduction to the Utku, written by an Eskimo woman in Gjoa Haven, assured them that in return for words and fish Briggs would provide tea and kerosene -- in other words, that she also accepted the obligation to reciprocate favours.<sup>26</sup> Again, her adoptive father once told her that he had provided her with caribou meat out of gratitude for her help with kerosene; and Briggs observes that in the Utku view the people who

supported her should have received a disproportionate share of the supplies she herself distributed (Briggs 1970: 232,273). Gifts, in short, do create debts even when they are called for by the naklik ideal.

Oddly enough, it is in the household, where naklik sentiments are presumably the strongest, that cooperation and distribution are most frequently regulated by the relations of authority and subordination. The Utku believe, in Briggs words, that "... it is in the natural ordained order of things for men to boss women and always has been" (Briggs 1970: 107). In general, women and children appear to owe unquestioning obedience to the head of the household, and there are even special imperative forms of speech that may be used towards them (Briggs 1970: 254). Thus, her adoptive mother obeyed commands to do with the preparation of food, repairing the house, or caring for the children. Briggs reports that her Utku mother would never presume to make any unusual use of provisions except with the prompting of others (Briggs 1970: 108). Briggs, also, was made aware of her daughterly duties when her adoptive father took it upon himself to dispense her supplies to visitors as he would those of his own family (Briggs 1970: 236, 244, 253). Indeed, her adoptive father's assumption that he was in command of all household affairs became a major source of conflict between them, particularly since Briggs found it difficult to relinquish her accustomed independence. Briggs discovered also that her mother claimed a degree of control over her provisions, although she was much less assertive than the head of the household. All in all, there appears to be only one minor inconsistency in

the pattern of male dominance: the women did decide what was to be bought with the income from the foxes they themselves trapped (Briggs 1970: 97, 236, 244, 253, 254, 268-69).

Opportunities for the exercise of authority beyond the confines of the family are severely restricted, for the Utku offer strong resistance to anyone who attempts to impose his will on people outside of his immediate family. To be sure, Briggs suggests that younger men are expected to obey their seniors, and occasionally she refers to the heads of kin groups as 'leaders' or 'patriarchs'. Nevertheless, she gives no concrete examples of the manner in which such authority might be used in an economically relevant way. She does mention that a man who is particularly well thought of for his skill and good character will sometimes be given the title of ihumataaq, or 'one who thinks' (Briggs 1970: 42) and the opinions of such a person would carry more weight in the making of group decisions. However, there was nobody of this stature among the Utku at the time of Briggs' study, and the ihumataaq institution would not appear to have been a regular or essential means of co-ordination.

The only other field open to the exercise of authority lay in the role of religious leader, but here the Utku accepted the dictates of religious doctrine rather than the authority of the office (Briggs 1970: 55-59). Briggs found that the value accorded to protective behavior tended to be expressed in terms of Christian morality, and it is possible that religious ceremonies, together with the moral authority of the lay leader, reinforced the traditional attitudes supporting generalized reciprocity. Even so, there is no evidence of any base of

authority capable of intervening directly, consistently, and effectively in economic processes involving more than one household.

In fact, prestige appears to be a more effective source of support to the approved forms of exchange behavior than authority. Among the Utku, prestige is given expression in the social approval granted to an individual on the basis of his personal achievements, since status is not ascribed to entire aggregates or classes of people.<sup>27</sup> For the most part, pressure from this direction seems to stem from a fear of being poorly thought of rather than from a desire to accumulate social approval. Disapproval is expressed to an offending individual only on rare occasions, but Briggs observed a good deal of gossip concerning the alleged greed or stinginess of others, and it seems reasonable to infer that apprehension of being ridiculed behind one's back acts as an incentive towards conformity with the naklik ideal. Where they occur, indications of disapproval expressed directly to the offending party appear to vary from broad hints to oblique requests for cooperation, but such occasions are rare. Where authority fails or is absent, shame and pride are frequently sufficient substitutes (Briggs 1970: 209-14, 222-23).

#### Exchange with outsiders

Following her adoption, the exchange relations between Briggs and the Utku were defined differently from those that applied during the period when she was known to them only as an outsider. During the first few weeks of her stay, the behavior



displayed towards her, and the favours expected in return, differed markedly from those of the later period. She reports that at first the Utku treated her with unusual consideration, giving her the softest seat when she visited their homes, offering her milk and sugar in her tea, urging her to serve herself first with the largest portions of food, and helping her with household chores.<sup>28</sup> One might be tempted to conclude that this behavior was simply a display of customary Utku protectiveness were it not for her remark that she was being treated "... with all the solicitude accorded to an honored guest" (Briggs 1970: 226), indicating that the Utku do, in fact, prescribe special treatment to outsiders. This impression is consistent moreover, with the change in expectations that occurred following her adoption, and with her conviction that during the first few weeks the Utku deliberately plied her with assistance in order to obligate her to reciprocate in kind -- an intention that she suspects at no other time, and an intention moreover, that points to a significant contradiction in the Utku attitudes toward outsiders.

This ambivalence is illustrated in the Utku response to their contacts with the sports fishermen who came to the Inlet every summer. On the one hand, they continued to judge the fishermen, and each other, in terms of how well they adhered to the naklik ideal of protectiveness. Thus, they favoured those fishermen who were reserved and considerate in their dealings, and on the whole they maintained their own standards in this respect. Briggs noticed that the Utku would not complain if they were given less than they wanted in return for the items

they offered to the fishermen, and they continued to lend their canoes even though they resented the inconvenience (Briggs 1970: 276, 278, 282).

Nevertheless, the failure of the fishermen to reciprocate adequately was a source of considerable tension, and the knowledge that their standards were ignored by the fishermen provoked departures from the ideal forms of behavior. Briggs' adoptive father was characteristically more assertive than the others in his trading, so much so that "... some of the kaplunas felt quite chary of him and protective toward the other Eskimos" (Briggs 1970: 44). Briggs insists that he was not aggressive in the way a white man might have been, but "He was always in the forefront of the group of men who were displaying their articles for trade and he, unlike the others, was never loath to state what he wanted in exchange" (Briggs 1970: 44). Moreover, Briggs found that occasionally he could be prompted to ask for more than had been given. One gathers the impression that such deviations were not condemned when displayed in dealing with kaplunas as they would have been among the Utku, for they never occurred elsewhere.<sup>29</sup> On this note however, the discussion is beginning to turn from a concentration on the prescriptions to a focus on the actual behavior displayed by the Utku in Briggs' presence.

### Usages

The first point to be made in this regard is the familiar truism that people do not always live up to their ideals. Indeed, as we have seen, there is a degree of ambiguity in the

naklik ideal itself: the rule is that those in need should be helped, no matter who, but the Utku do not interpret this to mean that all should be helped equally. Briggs found that, "... in reality, help is extended much more willingly to close relatives than to others" (Briggs 1970: 209), and it appears as if close kinsmen actually expected a disproportionate share of one's resources. Thus, hospitality was sometimes not extended to people outside of the kin group, especially where one's actions could be rationalized in terms of the faults of others. Tensions within the ilammarigiit too, sometimes resulted in an absence of spontaneity in sharing, and on occasion, in hoarding from others in the kin group. Even more overtly, requests for assistance were sometimes turned aside by a denial that one has the item requested, or simply by an evasive reply. Evidently, much of the gossip concerning the stinginess of others was based on sound observation (Briggs 1970: 180, 182-83, 210, 221-22).

Considerations of a practical nature and of personal choice also influence the circulation of benefits throughout Utku society. For one thing, it would be impossible for the flow of assistance to continue without interruption, for Utku households frequently draw apart from one another physically in the search for game. Moreover, even close proximity is no guarantee of cooperation. Briggs writes that during the spring and summer the camp "... seemed almost a communal unit, whether or not the families that comprised it were closely related" (Briggs 1970: 88). In the winter, on the other hand, "... the camp lost its semblance of communality. Paradoxically, when the families joined one another, each iglu-household to some extent withdrew,

economically and socially, from the others. Even close kin withdrew from one another in this way, so that relatives who shared their work and their meals during the summer now worked and ate separately..." (Briggs 1970: 88). This picture is complicated still further by the observation that households occasionally chose to join their iglus together in the winter, sharing their work, their supplies, and their company as communally as in the summer tent camp.<sup>30</sup> Generalizations concerning the flow of benefits throughout Utku society can only be made with these variations in mind.

The circulation of benefits is achieved largely through cooperation in labour, through communal eating practices, through the hospitality extended to visitors, and through soliciting or gift exchange. Briggs considers it unlikely that the Utku used the elaborate seal-sharing partnerships found among the Netsilik, and at the time of her study, none of the other dyadic partnerships known to exist among the Inuit was retained by the Utku. In addition, Briggs makes no mention of wealth being distributed through public ceremonies, and if we cannot assume that benefits do not circulate among the Utku by this means, at least we can infer that large-scale ritual plays at best a minor role in the distribution of benefits.

Collaboration in labour occurs most frequently within the household, and it rarely extends beyond the kin group. The head of the household carries out most of the family's hunting, fishing, trapping, and trading activity, with the help of his own sons wherever possible. The women assist with the harnessing of dogs, with moving camp, and with building new shelters, and they are

in charge of such domestic duties as the preparation of food, the gathering of twigs for firewood, the manufacture of clothes and bedding, and housecleaning. In addition, they are reported to supplement the food supply with small game, to engage in fox trapping, and to help out substantially with fishing (Briggs 1970: 89, 166). Briggs gives very little information concerning cooperative activity beyond the level of the kin group, perhaps because it is not a regular occurrence. Exceptions do occur, of course: on the male side, the men often travel together on trading trips, and on the part of women there is collaboration in the preparation of communal meals for the summer tent camps. It is notable, however, that where either of these exceptions occur, tensions arise between the members of different kin groups, and people prefer to work in the company of kinsmen.

In spite of their frequent collaboration, men and women are often separated during the day, for the division of labour engages men in work that takes them away from home. But even when they are not separated in this way, men and women observe a social segregation that is rarely broken as long as people outside the family are present. Writing of the barriers between men and women, Briggs observes that:

"During the day, when the houses were full of visitors, I had the impression that Eskimo men and women largely ignored each other, except when a man gave instructions to his wife (or daughter or sister) to perform some service for him...Women did not participate in men's conversations; they sat at the periphery and listened. Or else, while the men gathered in one circle the women brought their sewing to another spot, where they gossiped together, reminisced, and played with their babies" (Briggs 1970: 80, 91).

That the barriers are dropped only after the last visitor has left emphasizes even further the distinction between kinsmen

and outsiders.

Much the same picture prevails with regard to communal eating practices. Common eating arrangements are normally restricted to the household, although on the rare occasions when their iglus have been joined physically the members of a kin group might take their meals together. The Utku say that at one time, when the band was larger, men and women used to eat in separate groups because they felt more comfortable that way, and Briggs observed that they continued this practice whenever people gathered in large numbers. Contrary to Rasmussen's report, however, Briggs believes that communal eating beyond the level of the kin group rarely occurred except in the spring and summer tent camps, and it would not appear to figure prominently in the distribution of supplies during later years (Briggs 1970: 88-89, 91-92).

Food and other benefits 'change hands' most frequently during the social calls the Utku make upon one another. Visitors to an Utku household do not always receive equal portions of a meal, and often their share amounts to little more than a morsel. Where a person wants something more substantial or definite, he or she might take along a present, knowing that the recipient will feel obligated to respond with the desired item. Superficially, this might appear to be a form of barter. However, it would be incorrect to place Utku soliciting in that category, since in theory one's needs are supposed to be met, at least partially, whether or not one can reciprocate. Moreover, the decorum of gift exchange is carefully maintained, and one is not permitted to express dissatisfaction to the other party if

the return is not what was wanted. As we have seen, the Utku disapprove heartily of restrictions on protectiveness, and they are reluctant to drive a bargain even with outsiders.

### Summary

The outline of Utku economic organization follows roughly that of the major kinship groupings. Although the ideal of protectiveness and the norm of reciprocity run throughout the entire social fabric, the identity of household and kin groups is recognized by qualifications in the ideal and by variations in the way different categories of people are judged. In very general terms, and with an eye to seasonal variations and personal idiosyncracies, close kin expect and receive a larger share of one's resources than do outsiders.

It would be difficult to identify either the boundaries or the structure of the Utku band on the basis of a set of behavioral regulations and patterns. Only in three ways could the band be said to demonstrate a measure of unity. Solidarity is recognized, to begin with, in the mixture of respect and manipulation which characterizes relations with outsiders. Secondly, the Utku allow a degree of centralization through the office of religious leader.<sup>31</sup> Thirdly, the band is brought together by the visiting, soliciting, and sharing that occur when the Utku assemble at the winter camp ground. Apart from these factors, the band is integrated only by a multiplicity of personal kinship affiliations, and it lacks a unifying principle capable of drawing its kinship structure into a unified whole.

In fact, the household is the most thoroughly integrated

social unit in Utku society. It is here, for example, that obligations of cooperation and sharing are the most explicitly defined in terms of role expectations. It is in the household, also, that relations of long-term interdependence and authority are most effectively combined and exercised. The interdependence between family members is further enhanced by occasional periods of separation from other households and by frequent restrictions on the intensity of economic contact with other families, particularly where separate dwellings are maintained. This is not to say, of course, that the household is isolated or self-sufficient, but that the boundaries and identity of the family are clearly evident, not only in the set of role expectations associated with family membership, but also in the frequency of economic and social interaction between family members.

The unity of the household is challenged, to some extent, by its inclusion in the kin group. Commenting on the observation that two of the four families in her kin group frequently camped together or joined their dwellings physically, Briggs describes them as the two halves of one whole. Such close collaboration appears to have been unusual, however, for she observed the use of joint iglus only three times in the course of two winters. Of the other households, one occasionally joined iglus with families belonging to either of two kin groups, although not without causing resentment on the part of the father-in-law (Briggs 1970: 87, 89, 181, 372). This latter remark serves as a reminder of the support owed by an adult male to his father or to his wife's parents, the only specific obligation of kin group membership mentioned by Briggs. More reliable



indicators of ilammarigiit identity can be found in the tendency of people to live, work, socialize, and share more readily with kinsmen than with outsiders, and in the expressions of hostility directed toward members of other groups. Although economic and social contacts are made throughout the band, they do not occur in a random or diffuse fashion; on the contrary, activities involving people outside of the household are patterned by the tendency for interaction to take place between members of the same kin group. While the overlapping of kinship affiliations tends to qualify the orderliness of this picture, it does not destroy the impression of regularity entirely.

This patterning results in a high degree of congruence between the economic, social, and political aspects of Utku social encounters. In Utku society, the people who collaborate most often at work are also the people most likely to share their resources and to meet socially. Moreover, the closer to home one stays, the greater is the likelihood that relationships between these same people will be subject to the exercise of authority. Given this situation, the interplay between the economic, social, and political sides to inter-personal behavior ought to be exceptionally high. The manner in which morality, authority, and prestige affect the circulation of benefits has previously been reviewed. It remains to be seen how exchange is used to support the non-economic features of Utku social relationships.

To begin with, it appears unlikely that the social approval derived from zealous conformity to the naklik ideal could be used to exert influence where it is not due. Even where it

results in the title of ihumataaq, meritorious behavior offers little more than the likelihood that one's decisions will be judged as valuable advice, and a deliberate effort to make use of one's reputation would run considerable risk of being interpreted as an attempt to take undue advantage of people, thereby provoking dislike and undermining whatever prestige had been accumulated. Where prestige is the reward of benevolent behavior, it offers little inducement to those seeking power over others.<sup>32</sup>

In this connection, there might be some significance in the observation that the subordinate position of Utku women is frequently explained as a consequence of the gratitude provoked by their economic dependence. Briggs reports that Utku women do not resent the dominance of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. On the contrary, they express a desire to be of service to their men, and Briggs remarks that they rationalized the vicissitudes of their position "... in terms of the feeling that it is the men who have the hardest work to do, going out in the coldest weather to fish or hunt and making long difficult sled trips under the most adverse conditions" (Briggs 1970: 107-108).<sup>33</sup> While it would be stretching the evidence to say that Utku men take advantage of gratitude to promote obedience, it does appear as if protectiveness has this effect.

Caution must be exercised in accepting such interpretations however, for Briggs is unwilling to report, with certainty, that the Utku employ protectiveness as a means of creating obligations among themselves. Admittedly, she seems sure that during the first weeks of her stay, when she was defined as

an outsider, solicitude was meant to elicit reciprocity, but this certainty ceased with her adoption into an Utku family. Thus, although she suspects that her father intended her to feel obligated by his concern for her welfare, and although she notes that this would be consistent with the findings of observers among other Inuit groups, she is not sure that he was behaving towards her, as a kapluna, in a manner he would use in dealing with other Utku (Briggs 1970: 66-7).

Protectiveness is openly employed in other ways, however. In a positive sense, it is used to indicate good will, or in attempts to pacify or humour people who have been disagreeable. Briggs also suspects that excessive solicitude might be used to shame those thought not to be sufficiently co-operative. In a similar negative vein, Briggs observes that when she indicated reluctance to lend a stove to her adoptive father for one of his trading trips he responded by refusing to continue the use of her kerosene. This incident is consistent with the reluctance of the Utku to share their work during a period of hostility between two kin groups. That a refusal to accept assistance is meant by the Utku as a sign of hostility is confirmed also by their response to Briggs' own attempts to be independent; while she was usually met with persistent solicitude, on at least one occasion she was reprimanded by a withdrawal of help when she really wanted it (Briggs 1970: 73, 107, 219, 240, 241, 253, 270, 273, 287).

It is fitting, perhaps, to close by calling attention to the most notable departures from customary Utku behavior. As one might expect, such departures occurred where the Utku are

involved with the outside world -- precisely those situations in which the economic, social, and political aspects of their relationships have begun to pull apart. Thus, Briggs' adopted father, an exceptionally assertive man by Utku standards, exercised an unusual display of authority in taking command of the distribution of supplies left by the kapluna fisherman and in taking charge of the activities involved in looking after Briggs while she was still a stranger among them (Briggs 1970: 44). Moreover, it was Inuttiaq, in his capacity of religious leader, manipulating the authority of the kapluna church, who attempted to impose his will on the congregation. Whether these attempts brought him the disapproval of other people Briggs does not say, but it is notable that his dominance was held in check beyond the confines of the household except where kapluna institutions introduced an exceptional zone of autonomy.

## CHAPTER THREE: THE NUNAMIUT

The Nunamiut inhabit a remote mountainous region in northern Alaska, bounded on the south by the timberline and lying some one hundred fifty miles from the Arctic coast. Their way of life has been studied and described by N. J. Gubser following a fourteen month field trip which ended in August of 1961 (Gubser 1965). For most of this period, Gubser lived with a Nunamiut family, utilizing interpreters and hired informants during the first few months of his stay and gathering data by participant observation as his knowledge of the language improved. As a young, unmarried male, he was readily able to work, travel, and socialize with people outside of the household he lived with, and by the end of his study he was acquainted with most, if not all of the Inuit families living at Anaktuvuk Pass. His book contains a comprehensive account of Nunamiut economic and social organization, and a review of interpersonal norms and behavior. In addition, his description of Nunamiut society as it was at the time of his study is supplemented by a summary of their social history over the last several hundred years.<sup>34</sup>

The Nunamiut have a long-established tradition of trade and social contact with other societies, and in particular with the Inuit occupying the Alaskan Arctic coast. Living as they did at some distance from the ocean, the Nunamiut were largely dependent on trade with the coastal groups for a variety of essential products obtainable only through the hunting of sea mammals.<sup>35</sup> The coastal people, for their part, relied heavily

on the Nunamiut for a supply of caribou products, caribou being a scarce resource nearer the sea.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, following the spring caribou hunt each year, a number of Nunamiut families would travel down the rivers to the coast where they exchanged caribou hides for blubber and the skins of seal and walrus. Many of these exchanges involved a formalized type of bidding, in which goods were advertised throughout the trading camp in order to obtain the highest offer. Most Nunamiut, however, tried to establish long-term partnerships with coastal households, reserving the balance of their goods for their partners and conducting their transactions as gift exchange (Gubser 1965: 167-172, 206).

Russian and European goods reached the Nunamiut through their trade connections prior to 1800, and occasional direct contact with explorers and traders occurred throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. By the 1890's, many of the coastal people considered trade with the whaling industry to be more attractive than that with their customary inland neighbors, with the result that the Nunamiut could no longer rely on their usual sources of marine products. At about the same time, the caribou were becoming increasingly scarce in the Brooks Range, in part because of intensified population pressure from the Nunamiut themselves, but also because of inroads made by the whaling industry (Gubser 1965: 7, 53). In order to avoid starvation, the Nunamiut were drawn to the coast to trade furs directly with the whalers or to hire out as hunters. Although the whaling industry itself collapsed completely in 1908, it was replaced to a large extent by an expansion in the fur trade.

By the early 1920's, all the Nunamiut had left the mountains to take advantage of trapping and trading activities along the coast. In the 1930's, however, the fur market also declined, and several families returned to the Brooks Range to base their subsistence once again on the caribou. Trade along the north coast was ended completely by 1940, obliging the Nunamiut to market their furs in villages to the south. The Tulugak River people occasionally chartered a small plane to bring in their supplies, and in 1949 a trading post was established at the summit of Anaktuvuk Pass. By 1961, a few families were continuing to trap, but the economy had been converted into one of "... localized sporadic hunting, trapping, and odd jobs" (Gubser 1965: 25-27, 187).

Both the size and the geographic distribution of the Nunamiut population have varied significantly over the past century. Gubser estimates that in 1880 there were about a thousand Nunamiut, distributed among four major territorial groups.<sup>37</sup> Epidemics, starvation, and assimilation into coastal communities reduced this number drastically, so that by 1920 only a small group of families gathered on the coast to the east of Point Barrow retained their Nunamiut identity. Three of these families returned to their home territory in 1938, and by 1949 thirteen families were again established in the interior, five at Chandler Lake and eight on the Killik River. With the establishment of a regular air service at Anaktuvuk Pass, these remnants were gradually drawn together into a more-or-less permanent settlement. In 1961, Gubser counted some ninety-six Nunamiut, comprising eighteen households, in the village. Even

then, such a large concentration of people in one locality was having a detrimental effect on the game and fuel supplies, and Gubser felt that some members of the community would probably have to relocate in order to reduce the pressure on the natural resources of the area (Gubser 1965: 319-320).

### Social organization

The organizational framework of Nunamiut society differs significantly from that of the Utku. Admittedly, there are some points of similarity, such as the nuclear family, the household, and the personal kindred. But whereas the Utku have maintained the mobile hunting band, the Nunamiut have adopted a more settled community, incorporating the remnants of several identifiable bands and structured in part by the presence of white forms of social organization. In addition, the Nunamiut utilize a number of contractual, non-kinship relationships, and they continue to support the institution of umialik -- roughly analogous to the Utku ihumataaq.

According to Gubser's observations, the nuclear family is the "... basic structural unit in Nunamiut social organization". It is basic, for a start, in the sense that "... an individual's first claim for support and foremost responsibility are directed toward the members of his nuclear family" (Gubser 1965: 62). In addition, the family bears the greatest responsibility for the socialization and education of children.<sup>38</sup> The primacy of the family is evident, thirdly, in Nunamiut residence patterns; of the eighteen households at Anaktuvuk Pass in the summer of 1960, no less than seven consisted of individual families, and



it is significant that several of these occasionally chose to isolate themselves from the community in order to improve their hunting and trapping opportunities.

As one might expect, a similar measure of independence might be claimed for the household. In addition to the members of a nuclear or extended family, this larger residential unit frequently includes "old, unmarried, or widowed" persons who might or might not have relatives in the group (Gubser 1965: 72). The members of the household look to one another for economic and social support and in turn contribute labour according to their age and sex. Occasionally, as with the nuclear family, a household might isolate itself in search of game. And even where a number of households live close to one another -- in small clusters during the winter, or in the village at other times of the year -- each household hunts, fishes, traps, and collects wood largely for its own benefit.<sup>39</sup>

The measure of independence achieved by the household should not be exaggerated however, for the Nunamiut prefer to live near, travel with, and work among what Gubser terms a 'household cluster'. In effect, this unit appears to be somewhat similar in size, although not in composition, to the local kin group among the Utku.<sup>40</sup> Ideally, the two or three households comprising a cluster should include a mature family together with the households of their married daughter or daughters. However, in practice, a good deal of personal choice is permitted, and often compliance with this ideal would simply not be feasible.<sup>41</sup> As a result, a couple might join the husband's parents, or if this too cannot be arranged, they might take up

residence near the household of a sibling. Where this latter option is exercised, there is a pronounced tendency for an alliance to be formed around the ties between two sisters; while it seems fairly common for a brother and sister to form the core of a household cluster, brotherly affiliation occurs only where the wives are also siblings. It should be pointed out that the household cluster does not enjoy a degree of unity and permanence equal to that of the Utku kin group. Despite a preference for association with kinsmen, there is nothing to prevent a cluster from being formed by unrelated households, and in any event a cluster is little more than a temporary alliance "... with little or no continuity in membership or time. Such a cluster ... was formed usually to accomplish a specific economic purpose, such as a long trip or a season's trapping. An independent household cluster ceased to exist when it merged into a band" (Gubser 1965: 166).<sup>42</sup>

During the late 1800's, the Nunamiut were divided into a number of bands, each containing from fifty to one hundred fifty persons. The band was a fluid aggregation of households inhabiting a recognized territory and acting as a corporate group in warfare, in hunting caribou, in social events such as dancing and feasting, or in traveling to the coast to trade with other groups. As with the Utku, every family could name at least one relative in the band, and most households would have a number of such connections. The membership of the band was by no means permanent however, since a household could readily shift its allegiance to other groups. Moreover, a band could be obliged to split up into smaller fragments whenever the group became too

large for the available food resources or whenever political divisions became too intense. In addition, the band would regularly break up during the summer and winter and congregate again in February or March for the spring caribou hunt, a cycle which leads Gubser to suggest that collaboration in caribou hunting was the primary motivation for band formation (Gubser 1965: 67, 165, 166, 172).

By the time of Gubser's study the mobile hunting band had long since been abandoned, having been replaced by the permanent settlement at Anaktuvuk Pass.<sup>43</sup> This shift in residence arrangements has been accompanied by a marked reduction in the forms and frequency of activities involving the entire community; in 1960-61, the communal dancing and feasting house, known as the karigi, was used only four or five times each year, and the group no longer cooperated in defense or in trading expeditions to the coast.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps of even greater significance, the Nunamiut found that in hunting with firearms and in trapping they could operate more effectively either individually or in small teams. As a consequence, community-wide collaboration in the caribou hunt dwindled during the late 1800's and ceased altogether in 1905 or 1906 (Gubser 1965: 55). With the cessation of corporate activities such as these, the Nunamiut are drawn to the village in part by the attractions of such white institutions as the store, the school, and occasional opportunities for wage labour. At the same time, of course, village life also offers relief from the monotony and loneliness that the members of a household experience when they choose to live by themselves on the land, a factor which acts as a brake on the economic

benefits that might be gained if the Nunamiut were to live in smaller, more scattered groups.<sup>45</sup>

The Nunamiut term for the members of the personal kindred is ilyagitch, an expression that appears phonetically related to the Utku word for the same category of persons.<sup>46</sup> Gubser's assessment of the ilyagitch, moreover, is markedly similar to the accounts of bilateral kinship reported for other Eskimo groups. Maternal and paternal affiliations are regarded as being equally close, the degree of collaterality and the level of generation being the features used to establish the status of the relationship. As with the Utku, the personal kindred is not to be considered a corporate group:

"The members of any person's kindred never come together all at one time for any purpose. The members of any person's kindred never own goods, tangible or intangible as a group, nor is a person ever considered to stand for or represent the members of his kindred as a whole in any way. Among the Nunamiut, the members of a kindred can be defined only in reference to one person, or in the case of identical twins, two persons" (Gubser 1965: 142).

Gubser's definition of the kindred is qualified further in a manner that is not emphasized by other observers. To the Nunamiut, the ilyagitch is not simply an abstract category, but "... rather those members of his kindred whom he knows personally as a result of proximity, those he has met on his travels, and those whom he has heard about from his known relatives" (Gubser 1965: 143). Thus, while the reckoning of bilateral filiation offers a large number of relationships capable of being activated according to need and opportunity, the ilyagitch itself is a definite list of identifiable persons.

Nunamiut kinship relationships do not appear to overlap

as frequently or as closely as those of the Utku, and some of the people at Anaktuvuk Pass do not recognize each other as relatives.<sup>47</sup> Where a distinct kinship relationship is unavailable, affiliation may be established through a contractual, non-kin relationship. As one might expect, the practice of building partnerships to facilitate the trade in coastal products has been largely discontinued.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, those Nunamiut who are neither relatives, partners, strangers, nor enemies might associate as friends or, if they share the same name, they might form a namesake relationship. Although the obligations of support and cooperation defining these connections do not carry the same weight as those applied to kinship alliances, such forms of voluntary association do provide an important secondary network of social interaction.

Nunamiut society is further integrated by the institution of umialik. Literally translated, this term refers to the owner of a skin boat, ordinarily a person of considerable wealth. The word has a much broader application than this, however, being used to denote a person who has achieved, through skill and hard work, outstanding success in such endeavors as hunting, trapping, and trading. Traditionally, any Nunamiut band would contain a number of umialik, one of them being recognized as the most influential person in the group. In 1961, the village at Anaktuvuk Pass contained three such dominant individuals, two among the Tulugak River people, and one from the Killik River faction (Gubser 1965: 186). The title of umialik does not confer the authority to issue commands; it means only that the advice of the person so designated will be considered with

more respect than that of other people in community affairs. Moreover, the umialik can never be secure in his possession of the title, and he must be careful to avoid antagonizing people, since his abilities and judgement are constantly being challenged. As a consequence, to use Gubser's words, "The position of umialik can never be inherited, succeeded to, or transferred to any other person; it can only be earned" (Gubser 1965: 105).

### The structure of inter-personal and group relationships

Gubser provides a detailed list of the items referred to by the economic rights and duties which help to structure the organizational framework of Nunamiut society. Under the heading of "economic support", for example, he records assistance in the provision of such material goods and services as "... meat, fat, skins, weapons, tools, traveling equipment, shelter, aid in traveling, clothes, cooking services, firewood, water, tools, and berries; in other words, the necessities of life" (Gubser 1965: 137). Apart from such obligations of outright support, some Nunamiut social relationships call for economic collaboration in:

"... such undertakings as hunting, trapping, and making weapons, traveling equipment and other implements, transporting meat and skins, building houses, traveling long distances, scraping skins, sewing, cooking, and collecting firewood, water, roots, and berries" (Gubser 1965: 138).

Such cooperation, he notes is usually undertaken when it is likely to be more productive than labour conducted on an individual basis. It is differentiated from support in the sense that while the parties concerned are obligated to assist

one another in their work, both benefit from their association.

The claims for economic support and cooperation levied against each individual are arranged in a discernable hierarchy, the obligations to one's parents assuming the position of highest priority. As might be predicted, an unmarried person living in his parents' household is expected to contribute without reservation a share of goods and services commensurate with his or her age, sex, and capacity. Even after marriage and the establishment of a separate household, the responsibilities to one's parents remain, although in practice it might be difficult to maintain the same level of support.<sup>49</sup> If the parents live nearby (and in 1961, with the establishment of the permanent village, they would nearly always do so), then a certain amount of economic cooperation will continue, and occasional gifts will change hands within the family irrespective of need.

Second in order of priority are the responsibilities of siblings to one another.<sup>50</sup> Predictably, unreserved sharing and cooperation are expected of young, unmarried siblings, and even items that are individually owned must be loaned immediately upon request (Gubser 1965: 124, 138). Nunamiut bachelors generally remain attached to their parents' household, but failing this they may join the household of a married sibling, usually that of a sister. Following marriage, economic support between siblings is generally limited to times of hardship. Cooperation, on the other hand, is very common between sisters, although as we have noted it is less frequent between brothers.

The responsibilities to one's spouse come third in the Nunamiut scale of priorities. In fact, reading Gubser's account,

it almost appears as if Nunamiut couples are bound as much by their obligations to the household as a whole as by their duties to one another as individuals. A married man, for example, is required to bring home all the animals he kills, and although the woman of the household is in charge of food distribution, her 'possession' of meat and hides is that of a trustee rather than that of an owner. This is not to ignore, of course, the substantial amount of economic support and cooperation between husband and wife. In addition to the duties implied by their roles in the division of labour, they might work together in such tasks as building houses, feeding dogs, skinning and butchering animals, or preparing hides to be made into clothing (Gubser 1965: 65, 69, 75, 80, 82, 139). Moreover, Gubser remarks on the strong sentimental ties between some couples, as evidenced in "... small gestures of kindness, private jokes, and nostalgic talk", or in the distress that people experience on the death of a spouse (Gubser 1965: 111). In summation however, despite the affective bonds, the interdependence, and the frequent collaboration between Nunamiut couples, Gubser returns to the observation that men and women do, in fact, maintain separate worlds, frequently working and visiting with members of their own and other households as if the spouse "did not exist" (Gubser 1965: 116).

The segregation of male and female worlds is further reflected in the requirement that economic cooperation be offered to siblings' spouses of the same sex as oneself. A certain amount of assistance might be expected in any case, simply on the grounds that since a person "... would try to help any of



his own relatives who are in difficulty, their spouses would receive some help by virtue of their marriage and presence in a household" (Gubser 1965: 154). The fact remains however, that the spouse's of one's kindred can normally expect only limited support in times of need, the requirement being that the marriage partners of more distant blood relatives be given hospitality but not support or cooperation. Given this situation, sibling's spouses of the same sex do enjoy a somewhat privileged position.

The obligations to the consanguinal relatives of one's spouse are considerably less demanding than the duties to one's own kindred. Except when they live nearby or under the same roof, a married person is required to offer no more than limited support and cooperation to his spouse's siblings and parents -- and then only during times of need, and when the responsibilities to closer relatives have been fulfilled. As a consequence, although cooperation with one's in-laws is actually quite common, it would be considered proper to "... treat them with minimal decency" (Gubser 1965: 156).

In fact, kinship relationships other than those with close lineal kinsmen, siblings, and spouses appear to require little more than limited assistance, and that only when a genuine need occurs. Children frequently exchange small gifts with grandparents and great-grandparents, for example, and as a child grows older he becomes increasingly responsible for their support. Sharing with cousins, on the other hand, is not as strongly supported as it is between siblings, although cousins often cooperate economically as a matter of choice, and a certain amount of assistance is expected wherever possible and needed.

Similarly, a person is normally expected to support or cooperate with nieces or nephews only when his prior commitments have been met. The co-parents of a married couple are under no formal obligation to support or cooperate with one another, and collateral relatives living in distant regions can be called upon for no more than hospitality and aid for a few days at a time (Gubser 1965: 149, 155).

Given the priorities attached to mutual support and co-operation among kinsmen, the obligations to one's partners, friends, and namesakes are of a somewhat different order and magnitude. Partners from different bands are required to be fair in their dealings, to trade only with one another, and to refrain from intruding on the partnerships of other people. Partners from within the same band often hunt together and associate socially, but they are not obligated to do so. When friendships become extremely close they may be regarded as partnerships. Otherwise, friends exchange gifts and assistance, and they might offer support when required -- provided the responsibilities to relatives have been satisfied. Namesakes offer one another hospitality and they might hunt together, but Gubser found it rare for a namesake relationship to result in economic support (Gubser 1965: 160-62).

As with the Utku, the explicit rights and obligations associated with the kinship structure are supplemented among the Nunamiut with a more diffuse ideal favouring kindness, helpfulness, and generosity toward others. The ideal is expressed in terms remarkably similar to those of the Utku; in Nunamiut mythology, for example, one of the more important

characters is said to have instructed his people "... never to be angry, to love each other, to be kind, and to help each other" (Gubser 1965: 32). This resemblance in content is paralleled by a similarity in the universality of the ideal: "... any man, by virtue of proximity, must at least be offered something to eat should he be in need" (Gubser 1965:129). Thus, wealthier Nunamiut are expected to share with those less fortunate, and prestige is accorded to the generous, outgoing individual. Childhood socialization stresses the importance of generosity, and the standards are reinforced in adult life.

Opportunities for an exceptional display of generosity and kindness occur outside of the household, in such activities as the division of game that has been killed collectively; in hospitality and gift-giving; and in communal eating. Traditionally, the meat and skins taken in a communal hunt would be divided according to the contributions made by the participating households and by their relative needs. In 1961, game captured by several men working together would usually be divided evenly, provided the requirements of their respective households were also equal. Visitors at meal time were either given equal portions or else allowed to help themselves if food were plentiful. During periods of general shortage, successful hunters would receive a large number of mealtime guests, and immediate relatives would be given meat to take home with them. Even under normal conditions, visiting must involve a very considerable exchange of food, since "... any single household will be visited by every person in a settlement" over the course of several months. Of lesser significance today are

communal meals in which every person is served an equal portion after providing as much food as his household can afford. It is on occasions such as these that the sanctions and rewards supporting compliance with the stated ideal are most vigorously applied (Gubser 1965: 79, 91-92, 97, 133, 174-75).

### The consequences and functions of exchange

While the economic functions of trade between Nunamiut and other Inuit or Indian groups during the late 1800's can be established with an acceptable degree of confidence, the integrative consequences of these exchanges remain difficult to assess. To be sure, trading expeditions along the coast provided frequent opportunities for social interaction in such activities as feasting and sports events. Gubser believes, moreover, that the Nunamiut expressly regarded their partners among the coastal Inuit as a major source of necessary supplies, and partnership relationships were especially amicable (Gubser 1965: 133). Nevertheless, trading was no guarantee of a peaceful relationship, and where kinship or partnership bonds could not be established, a strong element of tension and danger attended contact with strangers. Thus, although the Nunamiut traded with both the Kutchin and the Koyukon Indians, they engaged in many years of fierce hostility with the former while avoiding conflict with the latter (Gubser 1965: 50). Where people did not know one another, they often avoided contact altogether rather than run the risk of becoming involved in fighting. When contact did occur, strangers who refused to reciprocate gestures of friendship became enemies, while out-

siders who engaged in trade might eventually become partners. Whether or not it could be said to have cemented peaceful relations, trade does appear to have been taken as a token of good will between individuals.

These observations are consistent with the experiences of early explorers all along the Alaskan Arctic coast. Kotzebue, for instance, found that the Malemiut dropped their initial hostile stance when he offered them food in exchange for friendship and furs. Elsewhere, both Franklin (who encountered small groups of Nunamiut) and Simpson observed that the Eskimos were generally hostile or fearful until trading was opened. Travelers, on the other hand, who refused to part with their goods in exchange for Inuit products were regarded as dishonest and unfair, and they became targets for theft and expressions of violence (Gubser 1965: 2, 4, 5).

Since contacts with outsiders are no longer as hazardous as they used to be, exchange is not as important a means of establishing friendly relations with strangers as it once was. Nevertheless, Gubser records a number of circumstances in which the presentation of gifts, among the Nunamiut themselves, is intended as an indication of good will. Friends, for example, regard an exchange of gifts and assistance as gestures of the bonds between them, and courting couples often exchange gifts with the same understanding (Gubser 1965: 162-63). Similarly, people present gifts to their parents, siblings, or in-laws as expressions of affection or to maintain pleasant relations (Gubser 1965: 63, 82, 141, 148, 162).

But if a gift is a sign of amicability, it can also be

construed as an indication of one's desire for a reward. Nunamiut who give a great deal to others can expect favours in return when the need and the opportunity arise (Gubser 1965: 106, 123). Thus, a person might press hospitality on a visitor, "... hoping to curry favour or establish a claim on the recipient's generosity" (Gubser 1965: 92).<sup>51</sup> It is notable that even relatives employ the same technique to bolster the commitment to kinship duties.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the sheer fact that a satisfactory series of exchanges has been established is frequently sufficient in itself to maintain a relationship that might otherwise collapse.<sup>53</sup>

Should good will and the expectations of reciprocity not be sufficient reward for generosity, then prestige might make up the balance. With the Nunamiut, social approval is first of all a function of one's industry and skill, and secondly of how well one's assets are used to satisfy the needs of others. Thus, a young couple will be judged by the standard of living they achieve, and a family with the ability to support children that another household cannot afford will acquire prestige. If a person performs his role well, if he is cooperative and diligent in meeting his obligations, and if he is generous, then he will gain in social approval; if not, people might gossip about him or indicate their disapproval directly by responding grudgingly when he asks a favour. A person who visits and eats too often with another household, for instance, must either repay his hosts with gifts of meat or labour, or be shamed into staying away. The result is that "Many people strive to build up a reserve of personal satisfaction for their own psychological

well-being as well as a reserve of public prestige that may be extremely valuable in times of political crisis or personal need" (Gubser 1965: 106, 118, 123, 147).

These comments aptly summarize the pressures and rewards that help to stimulate competition for the title of umialik. This is not to say that the Nunamiut exist in a state of perpetual and unqualified rivalry. On the one hand, admittedly, a person seeking to become known as an umialik might well be prompted to build a fund of prestige and a reserve of obligations through the judicious distribution of supplies. On the other hand, however, the deliberate use of one's wealth to achieve prestige and accumulate 'credit' will quickly become apparent to the community, the result being a loss of popularity, particularly if one's reputation has been built at the expense of others. A person may brag about his dogs, his exploits, and his generosity, but he cannot continue to accumulate prestige for long without provoking resentment that might sooner or later prove dangerous, both to his own welfare and to that of the community (Gubser 1965: 126).

#### The patterning of economic activity

It would be a mistake, of course, to assume that the standards of interpersonal behavior outlined in the foregoing discussion are reflected faithfully in the conduct of everyday life. Even discounting the incidence of outright deviance, considerations of residence, proximity, economic necessity, and personal choice may legitimately be used to alter the pattern of one's economic activities. Moreover, the Nunamiut history of trading

behavior suggests that they are more tolerant than the Utku of barter, not only in dealings with outsiders but also among themselves. Kinship obligations and the non-specific ideals of generosity and kindness are clearly set aside on occasion.

Some of the more serious complications derive from the composition of the household itself. Each member of a household is obligated, according to his or her abilities and role, to "... constantly and unstintingly provide all the goods and services needed by the group" (Gubser 1965: 137). Since a household might include distant relatives, or even one or two people who are not recognized as kinsmen, it is entirely possible for the parents and siblings of a married person to receive less economic assistance than one might expect from the stated ideal. A similar conflict arises between the obligations to one's spouse and the duties to one's parents. Even where a couple decides to live with one set of parents -- and in 1961, only one extended family was formed in this way -- the other set of parents could expect less actual support than they might feel entitled to.<sup>54</sup> Where a couple establishes an independent residence, the commitments to both sets of parents must compete with the solidarity of the household unit. Although Gubser maintains that the Nunamiut themselves are rarely aware of this conflict, the pattern of residence alignments makes strict adherence to the order of priorities problematic.

Households which camp together as a cluster are not bound, simply by virtue of their association, to offer a degree of support equal to that required within the household, and one would not expect the formation of a cluster to interfere as



seriously with the commitment of an individual to his parents and siblings.<sup>55</sup> However, although there is very little exchange of goods between households forming a cluster, there is a good deal of cooperation in such tasks as hunting, collecting firewood, and traveling. Moreover, the tendency for a cluster to consist of closely-related families -- i.e., for a married person to live near a parent or sibling -- means that the kinsmen of one spouse are likely to receive and to reciprocate, in practice and as a matter of course, more assistance than relatives of the other partner.

This situation becomes more pronounced with the isolation of many Nunamiut households which occurs during the winter and summer months, since sheer geographic separation can serve to prevent assistance from being provided where it would otherwise be expected.<sup>56</sup> In winter, the Nunamiut divide into as many as five small family groups, ranging up to fifty miles from the village at Anaktuvuk Pass in search of game. The summer dispersal today is by no means as extreme, although a few families again leave the main village to "... catch fish, trap ground squirrels and hunt in quiet regions" (Gubser 1965: 99, 104).<sup>57</sup> Such seasonal variations in the geographic distribution of the Nunamiut mean that parents and siblings who have been separated from one another are not able to cooperate with, or support one another as closely as the ideal says they should.

Residential alignments and the concomitant pattern of economic support and cooperation are further conditioned by the relative need of the families concerned and by the personal compatibility of the people involved. Thus, although ideally a

married couple should take up residence either with or near the wife's family, the husband's parents might successfully argue that their household is in greater need of assistance. Similarly, a man will often choose to cooperate most closely with his in-laws or with cousins, uncles, and nephews in order to avoid tensions in his relationship with parents or siblings.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, although the expectations which the Utku attach to the concept of naklik are indeed present and actively supported in Nunamiut society, it is difficult to tell whether the Nunamiut insist on conformity with the ideal with equal vigor. The ethic of protectiveness does not appear to have impressed itself on Gubser as strongly as it did on Briggs, but it is entirely possible, of course, that this reflects differences in the interests and circumstances of the ethnographer rather than variations in the field situation.

It is significant, nevertheless, that departures from the ideals of kindness, helpfulness, and generosity are explicitly condoned in a number of transactions. Traditionally, for example, exchanges bordering on barter were permitted in connection with goods imported from the coast. Bidding for these items occurred, not only in the dealings with coastal Inuit but also among the Nunamiut themselves. Those families who failed to make the trip to the coast and who could not obtain the necessary supplies from relatives or partners were obliged to secure them through a repetition of the bidding procedure within the band. In addition, shamans customarily required payment for the services they provided (Gubser 1965: 215), and their powers were said to be transferrable for a

fee (Gubser 1965: 203).<sup>59</sup> In the more contemporary setting, Gubser found that a household which needed help in a major undertaking might "... offer a strong young man a pair of white man's boots, a knife, or even a rifle in exchange for his labour". It is noteworthy, however, that Gubser immediately qualifies the image of commercial acumen created in this remark; during his stay, he encountered no instance "... in which one Nunamiut hired another to do a given job for a specific wage" (Gubser 1965: 130-31). Although money was available, and its uses well-known to the Nunamiut, it had not yet intruded upon their internal social relationships.

In summary, it appears evident that Nunamiut society has evolved a highly complex interchange between a variety of exchange networks. As with the Utku, Nunamiut morality requires that assistance be extended to all those in need, but it permits limitations on the amount and kinds of help extended to persons beyond one's household and immediate family. In the actual course of daily affairs, the conflict between the household and the closer members of the personal kindred would appear to be resolved, with important qualifications, in favour of the former. Hence, although support and cooperation beyond these boundaries is maintained to some extent by the rewards and sanctions which support the obligations to more distant relatives and to neighbors, the economic identity of the household is never completely obliterated. Similarly, while the decorum of gift-exchange is maintained in relations with more distant kinsmen, with partners and with friends, these transactions fall short of the unreserved commitments expected of

close family members. Moreover, some forms of exchange bordering on purchase are permitted between households. In their relations with white society, the Nunamiut have accepted the purchase of goods and labour, establishing a flow of exchanges that operates according to principles markedly different from those employed among the Nunamiut themselves.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE SIVOKAKMEIT

The Sivokakmeit are the Inuit people of St. Lawrence Island, a wind-swept, rocky outcrop of some two thousand square miles lying approximately thirty-eight miles from the coast of Siberia and one hundred miles to the west of Alaska. In the case of the Sivokakmeit, we have two extensive field studies, one conducted in 1940 and the second carried out in 1954-55. The resulting monograph contains a brief treatment of Sivokakmeit history, together with a more detailed discussion of village economic and political organization and interpersonal norms and behavior. In addition, the monograph describes the major changes which have occurred between 1940 and 1954.

Since St. Lawrence Island is entirely lacking in caribou, the Sivokakmeit were traditionally dependent on sea mammals, birds, and plants for the bulk of their food supplies. Economic activity, as recently as 1954, varied seasonally according to the availability of local resources. Berry picking and the collection of roots and tubers was generally restricted to the month of September. Fishing, spotted-seal hunting and bird hunting lasted from September through to November, at which time the birds normally leave the area. During November, the sea ices over, bringing the annual southward migration of the walrus herds. Although a few birds might be found in the winter, the hunting of walrus, hair-seal, and mukluk-seal -- carried on either individually with the use of dog teams or collectively with the employment of boats -- was the chief source of food

from December to March. With the opening of the ice in the spring, hunting from boats becomes the only feasible technique. The whaling season, a period of about two months beginning in April, is also a time of intensive walrus and mukluk-seal hunting. In late May or early June, large numbers of birds return to the island, generally in time to replace the departing walrus, whale, and hair-seal. During June, the Sivokakmeit begin collecting seaweed and greens. Bird hunting and fishing occupy the remainder of the summer, during which period the large settlements broke up into small family units to exploit the environment more effectively. Although food could be plentiful on occasion, the fall walrus hunt and the spring whaling seasons were critical periods for the Sivokakmeit, since a failure in the game supply at these seasons could result in severe famine.

Prior to the late 1800's, the Sivokakmeit appear to have had very little experience with the outside world. Since they had no direct contact with the Inuit of Alaska, their closest neighbors and relatives lived on the Chukotski Peninsula in Siberia. Trading trips to the Siberian coast, occasionally rendered impossible by hostility between the two groups, occurred infrequently during the spring or summer months. These contacts may have become more common following the migration to St. Lawrence Island of a number of Siberian Inuit about 200 years ago. No other regular channels of external contact are known.

Despite the relative isolation of St. Lawrence Island, the Russian explorer, Kotzebue -- who visited the Sivokakmeit in 1816 -- found the islanders already familiar with tobacco and in possession of several European iron and copper utensils. Follow-

ing this, in their contacts with the whaling industry during the last half of the nineteenth century, the Sivokakmeit encountered wage labour and the trading practices of the market economy. The demand for baleen, the most lucrative early export of St. Lawrence Island, provided a substantial cash income during the last decade of the century, at which time it was replaced in importance by the fur trade.<sup>60</sup> Like other Inuit people, the Sivokakmeit readily turned their hands to trapping. During the 1920's, when the price for white fox skins ranged from \$30 to \$40 a pelt, trapping became a highly rewarding occupation. In 1894, the Presbyterian church established a mission on the island, almost immediately taking an active part in the indigenous economy. In 1900, to replace the depleted walrus herds, the church sponsored the importation of reindeer, an experiment which provided a large and reliable supply of meat until the 1940's -- at which time the reindeer herd was rapidly decimated. A native-owned store, established early in the twentieth century, prospered during the 1920's and 1930's, serving as the principal channel for the import of industrial goods and the export of furs and ivory carvings. The store also provided a full-time job to the storekeeper. Other than the position of school janitor, there were no other permanent jobs available to the Sivokakmeit in 1940.

A rough idea of the degree to which the Sivokakmeit had become dependent on the outside world at that time can be gained through a quick review of the volume of traffic servicing the island and of the variety of manufactured goods possessed by its residents. In addition to the regular annual visits made by two

small trading vessels and the Native Services supply ship, occasional non-scheduled trips were made by coast guard cutters and commercial vessels. The main village of Gambell contained a schoolhouse and teacher's quarters, a community store, a nurse's residence and dispensary, a Presbyterian mission building, and over fifty Inuit homes -- all constructed of lumber imported from the mainland. The Sivokakmeit owned whaleboats and out-board motors, rifles, knives, saws, gas-powered washing machines, and a wide range of industrial tools. Metal pots and pans, and kerosene lamps were found in most homes. Imported clothing was used occasionally. In addition to tea and other staples, candy, chewing gum, and cigarettes were purchased by the islanders. By 1940, no longer an isolated and self-sufficient community, St. Lawrence Island was already firmly committed to the industrial centres of the outside world.

At this point, however, the Sivokakmeit continued to rely on indigenous sources for the bulk of their food, clothing, and fuel requirements. Thus, the income from trapping and ivory carving, and the meat provided by the reindeer herds could still be regarded as supplements to the traditional economy rather than as replacements for the customary means of survival. Furthermore, in Hughes' opinion, the basic outline of traditional Sivokakmeit social organization was still intact. The customary kinship alignments remained, and "... sentiments of reciprocity and sharing of food and other goods were still strong, despite anomalies introduced by the presence of such institutions as the mission, village council, store, and reindeer operation (Hughes 1960: 19).



In particular, both the store and the Reindeer Company established social relationships in the internal affairs of the Sivokakmeit that are foreign to the native culture. The store, originally opened in 1905 by a San Francisco firm employing an Inuit storekeeper and manager, was purchased by a Sivokakmeit stockholding corporation in 1910. In 1923, this enterprise was merged with the newly-formed Reindeer Commercial Company. In 1939, the store again became an independent entity; until 1947, its shares were distributed rather unevenly among the families in the village. In addition to the usual services, the store provided a bank for the community welfare fund -- the need for which suggests that the customary distribution practices had begun to break down as early as 1940. The store was managed by a president, a board of directors, and a hired manager. As a consequence of this operation, the Sivokakmeit were exposed to the experience of hiring and firing one another, to the difficulty of demanding payments from relatives and friends, and to the problems of collecting debts from people who might previously expect assistance as a matter of right. In Hughes' terms, "The store ... is an area in which the old Eskimo sentiments concerning immediate sharing of food ... clash directly with the newer requirements of a cash economy ..." (Hughes 1960: 177).

Certain aspects of the reindeer operation also contradicted traditional patterns and norms of distribution. Initially, the herd became the property of older men who had been taught the proper techniques of reindeer husbandry by Lapp herdsmen brought to the island specifically for this purpose. Younger men then

spent a three year apprenticeship under the owners of the herd, receiving a number of animals in return for their labour. In 1923, this practice was dropped, and the herd became the property of a corporate entity in which shares were owned by a number of Sivokakmeit. Those who owned stock received, in deer, a ten percent yearly dividend on the number of animals covered by their holdings. If they desired extra meat, they were obliged to purchase it from the Company at prices ranging from six to ten dollars a carcass -- i.e., the rate charged to Sivokakmeit who were not shareholders. The actual reindeer herding, occupying a number of men under the direction of a salaried manager, paid thirty cents an hour plus a provision of free meat. Additional help, hired at roundup time, was paid for at an hourly wage equal to the price of a pound of meat. Essentially the Reindeer Company was a business institution, depending for its maintenance on a careful calculation of costs, dividends, and income derived from the yearly meat harvest. Although the management of the herd eventually deteriorated, the Sivokakmeit coped successfully with the complexities of this operation for about forty years, gaining considerable experience with the use of market relationships among themselves.<sup>61</sup>

Between 1940 and 1955, the Sivokakmeit continued to depend on the fur trade for a proportion of their yearly income. Unfortunately, the income from trapping fell sharply in 1947, although it appeared to be recovering somewhat in 1954. At that date, each active trapper in the village of Gambell took about fifty fox pelts a year, while those from Savoonga averaged about twice that number. In addition to fox pelts, sealskins,

walrus hides, and the occasional polar bear skin were marketed (Hughes 1960: 194).

Fluctuations in the fur trade appear to be directly related to the availability of wage labour -- in other words, the Sivo-kakmeit lose interest in trapping when they are able to earn money from other sources. Thus, for the years 1951 and 1952, when the most work was available, the income derived from trapping dropped to less than half the 1948 level. In Hughes' opinion, this "... indicates that when cash work is available, the economic base shifts -- and will continue to do so as ... the older generation dies off" (Hughes 1960: 182).

Beginning with the construction of a new schoolhouse in 1939, opportunities for employment through white institutions became more frequent and more lucrative than had been usual in previous decades. The building of a C.A.A. base in 1943, for instance, provided wages in excess of a thousand dollars for a number of island residents. Throughout the ten years during which the base was open, it provided at least one full-time position as station labourer. Opportunities for repair and maintenance work also arose from time to time. In addition, many Inuit women and girls served as domestic help with C.A.A. families, a few even moving to the mainland with their employers when the base was abandoned. A military base, also established in the vicinity of the main village, provided only a few construction jobs, but it did offer further employment in the draining and stacking of oil drums. The building of a larger installation at the far end of the island also provided wages of two to three thousand dollars to the thirty or so Inuit men

who took part, and the surfacing of the Gambell airstrip in 1954 brought a limited amount of money into the community.

On the whole, however, opportunities for regular, full-time employment remained few. The most prized position in Gambell was that of teacher's assistant and janitor, yielding a salary of over \$3,000. Of secondary importance was the job of post-master, established in 1946. Considerably lesser incomes were gained by the marriage commissioner and by members of the National Guard.

During this period, significant gains were made in the sale of native handicrafts. Ivory carvings, sold through the store or to the personnel of government and military installations as well as to the crew members of visiting ships, increased greatly after 1940. As a result, in 1954 the majority of men and older boys received at least some income from this handicraft. The sale of highly-decorated native clothing had also progressed -- to the point where skilled Inuit seamstresses did not have the time to sew clothing for their own hunters (Hughes 1960: 198). A few people were also able to earn money through the sale of etchings and drawings.

At the same time, the income derived from various government assistance programs increased dramatically; in the village of Gambell alone, it rose from just over a thousand dollars in 1940 to more than twelve thousand dollars in 1954. Unemployment benefits, for example, were paid to the men who worked on some of the construction projects. Three or four army veterans received disability cheques, and people who had been treated for tuberculosis received a small stipend during convalescence.

Welfare was paid in the form of widows' pensions, old age assistance, and aid to dependent children. In addition to cash benefits, food relief has been provided, first of all in 1948 and again several times in 1954-55. To the islanders, such assistance appeared as a welcome supplement to the meagre local subsistence base.<sup>62</sup>

The shift towards wage labour and government assistance has been accompanied by an increase in the use of manufactured products and by a reduction in reliance on local resources. By 1955, for example, the use of moss and animal skins for house insulation had been completely discontinued, as had the manufacture of fur boots and intestine or bird-skin parkas. Only three of the sixty houses in Gambell still used the seal-oil lamp, the remainder preferring to purchase oil heaters and fuel costing \$25 to \$35 a barrel. Although the community power plant, costing from \$800 to \$900 a year, was no longer in operation, a few families ran smaller plants of their own at considerable expense. The use of larger outboard motors and modern ammunition had driven the cost of outfitting a boat for the spring hunt up to \$200 or \$300 -- an estimated outlay of \$19 for every walrus taken. With the abandonment of their traditional weapons, the Sivokakmeit had become completely dependent on shotgun shells for bird hunting.<sup>63</sup> They did less fishing than formerly, and very few greens were picked except when a severe food shortage threatened. Following the loss of the reindeer herd, deer meat had become an imported item, selling for \$40 a carcass on the beach. Many people still valued walrus meat, but it had become difficult to build up a reserve supply, since

most blubber -- the traditional preserving agent -- was thrown back into the sea. All in all, in 1954 the Sivokakmeit were getting far more of their food, fuel, and clothing from outside sources than in 1940 (Hughes 1960: 87-89, 119, 123, 155).

Given this situation, the store had assumed an increasingly central role in the Sivokakmeit economy. In 1947, the village council, remaining in control of the operation, voted to join the Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association. This organization undertook to do the buying for its member stores and to market Inuit trade goods, thereby centralizing the flow of Inuit-white transactions to a much greater extent than had previously been the case. At this point, a salaried Sivokakmeit director was appointed to A.N.I.C.A., and by 1954 an assistant manager had also been hired to help in the store itself. Apart from the jobs which it provided, and in addition to its usual position as importer of outside goods and exporter of Inuit commodities, the store had also become a vital supply centre for those families who lacked hunters. In 1940, the store had been indispensable to the subsistence of the village, but its operations dealt with a more limited range of goods, and its clientele made greater use of local resources.<sup>64</sup> By 1954, linked irrevocably to the mainland economy, the Sivokakmeit had become heavily dependent on their store and on its medium of exchange -- money.

### Social organization

During the fall and winter of 1878-79, the Inuit of St. Lawrence Island suffered a severe famine, losing roughly two-

thirds of an estimated population of fifteen hundred persons to starvation. Population gains since then have been held in check by recurrent food shortages, by disease,<sup>65</sup> and in recent years by emigration to the mainland.<sup>66</sup> In 1954, the Sivokakmeit numbered between five hundred fifty and six hundred persons, approximately two hundred fifty of whom lived in the village of Savoonga, and the remainder in the main settlement of Gambell (Hughes 1960: 12, 14).

Neither of these two communities is strictly representative of the pre-contact situation. Indeed, Savoonga was created as recently as 1917, on a site previously used by reindeer herders. Since it was closer to the more favourable reindeer range than Gambell and was not as productive an area for walrus, it was occupied initially by the families of men who owned deer and by those responsible for the welfare of the herds. Gambell, for its part, is constructed on the site of an aboriginal settlement. However, in 1954 only a few of the villagers could be reckoned as descendents of the original inhabitants, the remainder being the descendents of people from Siberia or from other parts of the Island. Both of these settlements have thus been formed quite recently through the agglomeration of a number of more widely scattered units (Hughes 1960: 14, 16, 146).

The identity of these groups has been preserved and possibly reinforced in Sivokakmeit society through the maintenance of unilinear descent groups (ramkas) named after the locality from which they originated.<sup>67</sup> Since membership in the ramka is reckoned through the male line and a woman is said to 'belong' to her husband's group on marriage, Hughes refers to these groups as patriclans. In 1954, Gambell contained three major

ramkas and the remnants of seven others, together with a number of smaller units who are regarded as being part of larger groups.

The larger patriclans are subdivided into as many as five lineages. The lineage is defined by Hughes as a "... line of kinsmen directly descending from an ancestor, and presided over by the oldest male in that group of lineal descendents". It "... operates as something of a distinctive social unit in the internal affairs of the clan while remaining subordinate to the larger structure in its external contacts (Hughes 1960: 269). Since not all of the clans have lineages, Hughes prefers to treat this level of organization as a developing phenomenon rather than as a long-established tradition.

The growth of clan and lineage levels of organization has by no means obliterated the old bilateral kinship affiliations. As is the case among the Utku and Nunamiut, the kindred on St. Lawrence Island cannot be considered a corporate group, nor can its boundaries be clearly defined. The Sivokakmeit term for the kindred is "kamukrakotheit", roughly translated as 'people of the same flesh, or blood'. It usually includes "... one's wife and children, one's parents and their siblings, one's cousins and often one's grandparents and grandchildren" (Hughes 1960: 271). There is a slight emphasis on patrilineal affiliations which, together with the somewhat narrower range of the Sivokakmeit kindred, serves to distinguish it structurally from those recognized by the Utku and Nunamiut.

Within the kindred, an even closer circle is recognized, consisting of siblings and cousins on the father's side, and known as the 'real' kamukrakotheit.



The emphasis on patrilineal affiliation is reflected in the composition of boat crews and hunting parties. Traditional hunting techniques required a crew of seven or eight men. Even today when four or five men can, if necessary, handle a boat, there are times when a larger crew is advantageous. Normally, only men of the same clan -- preferably siblings and patrilineal cousins -- are included in the crew. Only if there are insufficient clansmen available to make up a crew will outsiders be invited to participate, since it is felt that close relatives are more likely to help one another if the boat gets into difficulties (Hughes 1960: 255). For the same reason, boats hunting together as a party also used to be clansmen. The close ties between related males are thus of primary consideration in the formation of what used to be the most important unit of production in Sivokakmeit society.

In former times, it was possible for two men of different clans to enter into a formal partnership calling for the sharing of goods, for mutual help and protection, and for an exchange of wives between them. Since partnerships within the clan were prohibited, and because any one person might have several such partners at the same time, these relationships constituted an important counterfoil to the internal solidarity of the ramka. The ceremonies by which public recognition was given to a new partnership were abandoned about 1920. By 1954, the institution remained little more than a memory (Hughes 1960: 267-69).

The composition of the Sivokakmeit household is not explicitly discussed in Hughes' monograph. Ordinarily, a young couple is expected to live with the husband's family following

a period of residence with the parents of the wife (Hughes 1960: 277, 279). However, this pattern appears to have broken down somewhat, since the 1940 research indicates that the household might number from as few as two to as many as ten or more persons (Hughes 1960: 85, 277, 279). Calculations drawn from Hughes' demographic data suggest that the average household might contain seven or eight persons. On the basis of this information, it seems reasonable to infer that some households consisted of large, extended families, while others were composed of smaller or nuclear families -- in some cases, no more than a childless couple. Hughes makes no mention of whether distant relatives or unrelated persons might join a household group.

#### The expectations governing exchange

In common with the Utku and the Nunamiut, the Inuit of St. Lawrence Island express strong support for an ideal favouring generosity and kindness toward others. Food, in particular, must always be shared with those in need. On an even more general level, "... the sharing of worldly wealth is done without being asked. It is expected that it will be done, and the onus of justifying why it is not done immediately and without reservation rests on the individual and is not given the sanction of cultural norms. Stinginess is a general social evil here..." (Hughes 1960: 166-67, 254). Moreover, generosity must be extended to all, not just to kinsmen: in the words of one informant, "What Dad used to tell me about was help anybody, anybody you see, whoever he is. Not just your relatives" (Hughes 1960: 254). Even people from the outside world were to be

treated as friends.

It is not required, however, that one's resources be shared equally with all comers. Both ideally and in fact, it is with one's clansmen that labour and goods are shared most frequently. This bias is reflected in the composition of the boat crews, and it also helps to pattern the general flow of soliciting and visiting in the village. Thus, although meat is given freely to anyone who asks for food, it is one's clansmen "... who receive the most bounty and to whom one makes preferential distribution, especially in times of famine and scarcity" (Hughes 1960: 253). The distinction between clan members and outsiders is underlined too, in the reciprocity obligations imposed on outsiders: within the ramka, the unequivocal sharing of goods and services is based on the implicit assumption that a balance will be worked out in time; in dealing with non-clansmen, however, immediate payment of some kind is typically expected. In fact, the children of father's brother and of father's father's brothers are regarded socially as near equivalents of actual brothers. The clansmen of any given generation thus form a group modelled on the sibling relationship (Hughes 1960: 249, 253-54).

The bias in favour of patrilineal alignments shows up again in the constraints of assistance and sharing required of close relatives and household members. Between brothers, there is supposed to be unlimited sharing of goods, mutual support, and assistance; ideally, brothers should live together, "... help each other and share everything they have and get, and teach their children to do the same things in every way" (Hughes 1960:

235). Furthermore, it is the son, and not the daughter and her husband who is expected to provide unstinting support and care to both parents throughout their lives.<sup>68</sup>

Although patrilineal affiliations are primary, the obligations to matrilineal kinsmen are by no means insignificant. As a general rule, the members of one's mother's natal descent group will expect preferential sharing of food, help and kindness, although less than that required of clansmen. The relationships between brother and sister and between sister and sister demand abundant mutual support, kindness, and affection. Similarly, father's sister may provide occasional gifts of clothing and other goods, and a certain amount of sharing and support can be expected from mother's sister's children. Mutual help, sharing, and ceremonial gift exchange sometimes also occur with father's sister's children (Hughes 1960: 241, 252, 249).<sup>69</sup> However, following a period of groom service, a girl is expected to assume responsibility for a major share of the household duties in her husband's home, and her first obligations remain with this unit.

Within the household, the sharing of labour and material goods is further conditioned by the exercise of authority. For a start, when the male members of a family work together, the decisions of the father command "utter respect" concerning their activities and the initial division of the game.<sup>70</sup>

Respect and obedience are expected, not only from a man's sons, but also from his wife, unmarried daughters, and daughters-in-law. The father is said to have complete authority over the activities of a daughter as long as she remains in his household.

When a woman is married, authority over her activities is transferred to her husband and to her husband's parents. She is expected to anticipate the needs of the father-in-law, to be extremely attentive and helpful, and to accept the complete authority of her husband's mother (Hughes 1960: 237-38).

The most notable exception to the rule of male dominance within the household occurs in the sharing of food with other families. In this sphere, it is the wife and mother of the house who has complete authority.

"The game animals and all other food that a man brings into the house are turned over to her, and it is she who decides whether and to whom to distribute meat. The husband has no voice in the matter, and if a man were to go to another house and ask a woman for meat, he would be refused even though his wife would be given some if she were to go" (Hughes 1960: 238).

This is a paradoxical situation, contrasting sharply with the experience of Briggs among the Utku, where male dominance in distribution extended to exchanges with other families.

A limited degree of authority would appear to be vested in several positions beyond the level of the household. The oldest living member of a lineage or clan is its acknowledged leader and spokesperson. In consultation with other elders, he or she advises people on questions of religious custom, marriage choice, morality, public disputes, and the division of material goods (Hughes 1960: 265-66). In addition, the position of boat captain carries considerable influence and prestige throughout the village. This position is passed from father to son, together with a major share in boat ownership. The captain has complete authority over his crew, deciding when the weather is safe for hunting, when the crew will depart, where they will hunt, when they will

return, and how the meat will be divided.<sup>71</sup> Since equality governs the distribution of game among the crew, the captain's share is greater, not in meat, but in prestige. This kind of supra-household authority, achieved on the basis of age and kinship relationships, is a feature not encountered among either the Utku or the Nunamiut.

In discussing the role of village elder, Hughes prefers to use the term, "influence", pointing out that social control is "... accomplished by actuation of diffuse sentiments in most Eskimo groups, sentiments which are translated into behavior by the impromptu social support given by kinsmen" (Hughes 1960: 285). Thus, the clan spokesperson operated in a fashion similar to the chairman of a board, under the direction of a group of lineage leaders who were the ultimate arbiters of clan policy and custom (Hughes 1960: 270). The elders of the clans issued advice and "sage cautions" rather than directives carrying the weight of legitimized power. As a result, centralized authority appears to have been completely lacking among the Sivokakmeit.

Given this situation, community-wide decisions were often affected by the prestige and power of the shaman or by the strength of an athletic man who validated his opinions with a physical victory over his opponents. Thus, the Sivokakmeit had formal titles for "strong man" (oomelIk), "very strong man" (Iknaekunre), and for a man who excelled in running (sookaelIngak) or in lance work (paenaethlIk) (Hughes 1960: 90-91, 285). Unfortunately, perhaps because the importance of these roles has waned in recent decades, Hughes provides only scanty information concerning the mechanisms or consequences of such influence.

Summary: traditional and market exchanges

In 1954, a good deal of cooperation and distribution continued to be channelled through the traditional sharing networks, despite the intrusion of outside institutions. Cooperation in hunting, in particular, continued to involve close kinsmen. Despite the general norm supporting generosity and sharing with all, the expressed bias in favour of exchanges with relatives remained, as did the reluctance to demand payment from kinsmen. On the whole, visiting, hospitality, and soliciting could be expected to follow kinship alignments rather than being diffused indiscriminately among all villagers.

The tenacity of certain Sivokakmeit exchange customs is exemplified in the support given to groom service. Despite the advent of the marriage commissioner, the introduction of Christian ceremonies, and the rejection of parental authority in the choice of marriage partners, young men still accepted the requirement that they work for some six to twelve months for the father of the prospective bride.<sup>72</sup>

At the same time, there has been an increase in the incidence of non-kinship exchanges among the Sivokakmeit, many of these associated with the operations of the Village Council.<sup>73</sup> For example, the Welfare Committee operated by Council is responsible for the financing of many community projects. Funded by a tax on all goods sold through the store, the Committee pays for public entertainment, Thanksgiving dinners, village hunting expenses in times of distress, the dental and midwife bills for all villagers, and welfare to needy families. By 1954, Council itself had taken direct control of the store and was continually

concerned with alleviating the food shortage, acquiring relief and emergency supplies from various government agencies on the mainland. At the same time, Council had entered more fully into the regulation of other economic activities, enacting by-laws which dealt with the protection of trap lines, the distribution of whale meat, and the prohibition of walrus hunting for ivory (Hughes 1960: 286).

In its deliberations, Council gives evidence of having accepted new types of social relationships while still clinging to traditional values. Although it would be wrong to overstate the degree of change in this direction, members of all clans were technically equal before the village law.<sup>74</sup> For instance, ivory taken in violation of village regulations was to be confiscated and sold, the proceeds to be given to poor people. On occasion, where a villager is in debt to an outside agency, Council has been known to intercede, asking for an extension of the loan and perhaps helping with the payments. Both of these cases demonstrate a willingness to employ money and market exchanges, coupled with concern for traditional norms of sharing and generosity. Recognizing the legitimacy of market exchanges, the Sivokakmeit apparently still persisted in practicing customary distribution methods among themselves.

Between 1940 and 1954, the store strengthened its position as the focus of economic activity in the village. It bought and sold fox furs, seal skins, ivory carvings, raw ivory, baleen, and skin clothing. Moreover, the store acted as the principal agent for the importation of manufactured goods, and it even financed the electricity plant while this was in operation.



Despite this focus on what was essentially a market institution, acceptance of the constraints and norms governing the store operations has been slow. Mention has already been made of the clash between traditional Sivokakmeit attitudes towards the immediate sharing of food and the cash-or-credit requirements of the store. Credit has been a persistent problem. Hughes suggests that even in 1954 many Sivokakmeit found it hard to understand why they could not have the things they needed, regardless of their ability to pay.<sup>75</sup> The store was obliged to discontinue the operation of the electricity plant when its customers failed to pay their bills.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, the pricing policies and financial needs of the store remained unclear to many island residents -- a problem that might have been worsened by the fact that store prices were set by A.N.I.C.A., not by the community, on the basis of purchase costs, service fees, insurance charges, transportation costs, and necessary operating profit.<sup>77</sup> As a result of its credit policies and pricing practices, the store management was generally unpopular, a further indication that the operation was judged by traditional attitudes towards the distribution of goods. On the whole, while the Sivokakmeit might have acceded to the requirement that they pay for goods or services from the outside world, they appeared less willing to apply the same practices among themselves (Hughes 1960: 177, 186, 213).

The problems surrounding the use of credit were deepened by the inability of many Sivokakmeit to budget their incomes over an extended period.<sup>78</sup> Following any unusual injection of funds into the island economy, the Sivokakmeit tend to go on a spending

spree, relying on welfare or on relatives when they have exhausted their unaccustomed wealth (Hughes 1960: 213). Thus, the large cash incomes provided by C.A.A. construction jobs were immediately spent on expensive capital items such as motors, lumber, and appliances, and on imported food. On the whole, the problem of subsistence is defined as one of securing sufficient funds to purchase the desired goods, rather than one of managing a limited income or of surviving on local resources.

There are signs that clan insularity and the traditional distribution networks are beginning to break down. One informant is quoted by Hughes as saying, "All over, everybody is acting like close relations. In the past only they go by relationship. But now no matter either alien or stranger, he's a relation" (Hughes 1960: 276). Hughes believes this to be an overstatement, but he accepts it nevertheless as an example of the changes that have been occurring.<sup>79</sup>

The gradual erosion of kinship influence in the structuring of the distribution network is evidenced in a number of subtle, but significant points. For example, when several boats hunt together, it is becoming increasingly probable that representatives of more than one clan will be present.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the division of whale meat is now made directly throughout the village instead of occurring first amongst the clan or lineage of the striking boat (Hughes 1960: 116-117). Bear meat is still distributed within the hunting party or boat crew, under the direction of the captain. However, the skin and skull -- both items of commercial value -- remain with the captain, to be sold (Hughes 1960: 116-117, 124). Trap lines are owned in the

sense that an individual or group of kinsmen using a specified territory without lapse must not be interfered with, and is entitled to dispose of the furs privately. Where there is an interruption in the use of a trap line, another person may establish a claim on the area. In this way, the boundaries of the hunting areas, which used to remain under the control of particular clans, are becoming increasingly difficult to determine (Hughes 1960: 125-126).

Customary sharing practices appear to be breaking down in other matters. Households which own power plants, for example, have been known to sell electricity to their neighbors (Hughes 1960: 88). Even more incongruous is the observation that a trapper whose wife is either unable or unwilling to provide him with the necessary equipment is permitted -- and indeed, obliged -- to purchase dog harness and clothing from someone else (Hughes 1960: 126).<sup>81</sup> Occurrences such as these clearly contradict traditional Sivokakmeit attitudes towards the sharing of services and material possessions. Hughes' summary of this matter is worth quoting in full:

"Money, so important in relation to the white world, is entering into the kinship system as well as much of the rest of the village life. Some people now hesitate between the impulse to give an object or goods freely to their kinsmen, 'in the Eskimo way'. This incipient trend toward the rationalization of economic dealings and individual acquisition may very well continue, in view of the village's current situation of limited economic potential and persistently increasing pressure from the mainland economic system. If so, it represents one of the most severe threats to the stability of the clans, in which the unhesitating sharing of one's goods is fundamentally important" (Hughes 1960: 276).

In 1940, imported artifacts and techniques could still be assimilated with little difficulty in the Sivokakmeit way of

life. It appeared at that time that foreign institutions such as the store and the council had been grafted onto the Sivokakmeit social order without causing undue disturbance. By 1954, however, there was far less use of native techniques and resources, accompanied by a greater dependence on the employment, cash income, and welfare provided by mainland organizations. At that point, traditional alliances and relationships, and patterns of distribution were being gradually abandoned.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The opening chapter argued that certain customary Inuit exchange practices might be expected to decline in those Inuit communities which import the bulk of their essential goods from the outside world. In order to test this argument, it was suggested that a correlation might be found between two variables: (1) the incidence of mutual sharing, cooperation, and gift-exchange beyond the level of the household but within each of the communities selected for study, and (2) the extent to which these three communities have come to rely on food, clothing, and fuel imported from the outside world. Having discussed the available data, it now becomes necessary to summarize the information that has been presented, and to compare the strength of these two variables in each community.

This inquiry should not be construed as an attempt to demonstrate that the decline of all traditional Inuit exchange practices is due to a growing reliance on imported commodities. Quite clearly, for example, the absence of exchanges taking place on ceremonial occasions might best be explained by factors such as missionary activity, population losses, or the geographic dispersal of Inuit communities during the contact era.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, the effects of Western religious and moral values on wife exchange, or the part played by modern weapons in the disruption of community-wide hunting techniques, cannot be discounted. Different explanations might also be necessary to account for the decline of exchange customs found at one time among groups

not considered in this thesis -- e.g., the elaborate seal-sharing partnerships of the Netsilik, or the extensive pooling and re-distribution conducted by influential hunters among the Iglulik (Damas 1972). It has not been my intention here to deal with the discontinuance of ceremonial exchanges or with the expiry of methods of distribution which have not been available to study for at least twenty or thirty years.

My concern is with those customary exchange practices which persisted in the ethnographic present of the three communities reviewed here. Among the most obvious of these customs is the hospitality extended to visitors at mealtimes. It must be remembered, moreover, that many guests return home with gifts of food and other essential items, and that supplies are frequently carried to needy households by those who have sufficient. Gifts are also given frequently in times of relative abundance, to provoke reciprocity either in material items or in good will. In addition, a good deal of labour is exchanged, particularly in hunting, in traveling, and in everyday household duties. Although, to the outsider, these exchanges might seem less impressive than other customs of the past, they continue to perform important functions, and they serve to distinguish Inuit community life from that typically found in the modern industrial town.

In all three communities, a high value is placed on generosity, not just in dealing with close kinsmen and neighbors, but in reference to people in general. It is understood that food, in particular, should be given without hesitation and without the expectation of return, to anybody in need. This ideal extends beyond the sharing of material goods. Among the Utku, it

is part of a more general norm, expressed in the concept of naklik, which favours protectiveness and solicitude towards others. According to the ideal, it would be unthinkable for any person or household to go without the necessities of life as long as others in the community possess adequate provisions.

The norm does not require that one's resources be shared equally with all comers. On the contrary, in all three communities, one's primary responsibilities are to the immediate household and to those kinsmen who are defined as being closest both in a geographical and in a social sense. During periods of shortage, non-relatives and strangers, placed last on the scale of priorities, might be entitled to no more than minimum necessary assistance.

With the Utku, requests for assistance beyond the household, particularly outside of the local kin group, are restricted by the desire not to be a burden on distant relatives or unrelated persons. Distribution throughout the band therefore tends to follow a pattern formed by alliances between local representatives of the bilateral kindred. Since the creation and maintenance of alliances varies with personal preference, with relative need, and with the seasonal dispersal and aggregation of the band, there is considerable flexibility in the shape of the Utku distribution network.

Distribution among the Nunamiut also follows a pattern which is conditioned, but not dictated, by the scale of priorities attached to affiliations formed within the bilateral kindred. However, whereas the Utku express no preference for alliances either with the male or with the female branch of the

kindred, the Nunamiut favour household clusters centred around the relationship between mother and married daughter or between married sisters. Moreover, the Nunamiut supplement kindred affiliation with partnership, friendship, and namesake alliances -- institutions which add to the flexibility of the exchange network.

This flexibility is restricted somewhat among the Sivokakmeit by the presence of patriclan and lineage groupings. These require a degree of sharing and support equal to that expected between brothers. Clan relationships provide the basis for the composition of the boat crews, traditionally a highly respected unit of economic cooperation on St. Lawrence Island. Despite the strength of the patriclan structure, the Sivokakmeit recognize responsibilities to the members of a bilateral kindred. This appears to be distinguished from the bilateral kindreds of the Utku and the Nunamiut by a more limited range and by a slight emphasis on patrilineal affiliations. As with the Utku and Nunamiut, conflict arising from the commitments owed to various kinsmen is partly resolved by the simple expedient of assigning primacy to one or the other relationship. At the risk of over-simplifying matters, it could be said that the household occupies first place in the Sivokakmeit scale of priorities, with the patriclan coming second, and the more distant members of the bilateral kindred third. In practice, this scheme is complicated by the overlapping of different relationships and by the influence of personality preferences and conflicts.

In each of the communities reviewed here, conformity with



the ideals governing distribution beyond the household is maintained largely by the granting or withholding of social approval. For example, in order to achieve a high standing in his community, it is not sufficient for a man to be a skilled hunter or an accomplished traveller; he must also be considerate of others and give assistance modestly and without hesitation to people in need.<sup>83</sup> Those who exceed community expectations enjoy the reinforcement provided by prestige, while those who fail to meet their responsibilities suffer from gossip, from the withdrawal of esteem, and possibly from ostracism.

In neither of these communities does prestige appear to provide a base for the exercise of authority in the distribution of goods and labour between households. The Utku use the title, "ihumataaq", in speaking of a particularly worthy person, but this does not confer the right to interfere in the exchange network. Similarly, the umialik of the Nunamiut, who must also earn his position, is unable to influence exchanges other than the distribution of his own supplies or perhaps the organization of community activities. The prestige accorded to an exceptionally successful and generous individual yields nothing else, beyond a tendency for his or her advice to carry more weight in community affairs.

Nor would authority attached to particular statuses or roles appear to play a great part in the community exchange networks reviewed here. With the Utku and the Nunamiut, there is no authority, extending beyond one or two households, capable of intervening legitimately in the distribution of supplies. Only among the Sivokakmeit -- where lineage elders and boat captains

are selected according to kinship and age, rather than on the basis of the prestige earned by personal accomplishments -- do we find leadership positions which intervene regularly and legitimately in the exchange of assistance. Even on St. Lawrence Island, however, there is no centralized office responsible for the pooling and re-distribution of community resources.

With the Utku, we found an exceptionally strong commitment to the generalized norm of solicitude. However, the responsibilities owing between members of the household and the kindred resulted in a tendency for people to live, work, socialize, and share more readily with close kinsmen than with distant relatives. Contacts with outsiders, particularly strangers, are characterized by extreme courtesy combined with a measure of manipulation that would not be considered proper in dealings with other Utku. Bearing in mind the exceptions based on proximity, comparative need and personal preference, the frequency and amount of generalized reciprocity diminish as one moves from the household, through the local kin group, to the extended kindred, and finally to non-kinsmen. Nevertheless, all people are judged according to their willingness to share, and the Utku disapprove strongly of persons who request payment for assistance granted to a needy person.

The data dealing with the Nunamiut exchange network are somewhat more difficult to interpret. Although the Nunamiut openly solicit assistance by offering "payment" in the form of a gift -- an act which would be considered improper by the Utku -- it is impossible to say whether or not this is a deviation from customary practice. For one thing, the Nunamiut tradition-

ally employed a mode of exchange bordering on barter, both in their external and in their internal affairs. Moreover, Nunamiut society in the pre-contact era included friendship, partnership, and namesake institutions among non-kinsmen, adding to the flexibility of the exchange network. Offsetting whatever significance might be attached to these observations is the fact that the decorum of gift exchange is diligently maintained; at the time of Gubser's study, it was unheard of for one Nunamiut to purchase the assistance of another for a specified sum. On the whole, there would appear to be no firm data suggesting that the incidence of the exchange practices considered here has diminished among the Nunamiut.

On St. Lawrence Island, the evidence is more clear-cut, although perhaps not as complete as one might wish. Despite expressions of a strong commitment to traditional exchange norms, the Sivokakmeit demonstrate both a growing reluctance to share freely and an increased willingness to employ money in dealings with kinsmen and neighbors. Thus, for instance, items such as dog harness and electricity are sometimes sold to fellow villagers. Although these indicators of social change may appear subtle to those of us who are accustomed to industrial life, they contrast sharply with the emphasis placed on solicitude by the Utku and with the avoidance of market relationships by the Nunamiut.

A similar contrast can be found in comparing the consumption of imported commodities. The Utku make extensive use of food and fuel brought in from the outside world, particularly during the winter when travel to the store at Gjoa Haven is easiest. Nevertheless, there are times when the Utku are obliged to man-

age largely without store-bought supplies, and throughout the year most of their food and clothing requirements are met locally from fish and game resources.

Judging from the presence of the trading post at Anaktuvuk Pass, the Nunamiut may be assumed to have a somewhat more reliable source of outside supplies. Despite a decline in trapping and hunting, however, the depletion of game and fuel resources in the vicinity of the settlement testifies to the use still made of local assets; although by no means self-sufficient, the Nunamiut continue to rely on the land for a significant proportion of their food and fuel requirements.

On St. Lawrence Island, considerably greater use is made of imported goods, as indicated by the changes which occurred between 1945 and 1954. Among the Sivokakmeit, there is a much more pronounced trend away from local resources, with the focus now being on supplies brought in from the mainland rather than on goods produced locally.

It appears plausible to conclude that the hypothesis established in the opening chapter is supported by the evidence considered here. The Utku and the Nunamiut, who remain more dependent on the land than do the Sivokakmeit for their food, fuel, and clothing requirements, also maintain a higher incidence of those customary exchange practices dealt with in the thesis. On this basis, the hypothesis might be allowed to stand until contradictory evidence is introduced, or until the conceptual framework is challenged. This suggests that the hypothesis would merit further investigation.

## Objections

Chapter One discussed the major methodological deficiencies of the thesis. Without seeming to dismiss or underestimate the seriousness of these defects, it is possible to question whether they completely destroy the credibility of the hypothesis. When all is said and done, the final evaluation depends in large measure on whether we believe that a superior research design would yield different results. What might we reasonably expect to find, for instance, if anthropological field work in the Arctic were so thorough and so extensive that the selection of communities included in the sample selected for study could be done at random? The answer is that we don't know, and probably we never will. The best we can hope for are fragmentary pieces of information either supporting or contradicting the evidence presented here. Given this understanding, one can only suspend judgement.

Apart from these deficiencies in research design, the inquiry may be challenged from three directions. The first of these concerns the changes in values and tastes which either preceded or accompanied the shift towards dependence on imported commodities among the Sivokakmeit. The second area of concern is the possibility that such 'foreign' institutions as the Village Council and the Reindeer Company have been instrumental in the decline of traditional sharing practices on St. Lawrence Island. The final difficulty centres around the question of whether the generalized norm of solicitude is an indigenous cultural trait or a contemporary innovation. Since each of these objections is capable of reducing the plausibility of the inquiry, they must

be dealt with briefly before the thesis is brought to a close.

Recent changes in Sivokakmeit values and tastes would be difficult to ignore, particularly among the younger people. Imported foods have replaced walrus meat, for example, kerosene has been substituted for seal oil, and yard goods have superseded skin clothing. Perhaps of even greater significance, wage labour is frequently preferred to hunting and trapping. This being the case, might it not be argued that a prior change in tastes, acquired as a result of contact with the outside world, is necessary in order to bring about dependence on imported commodities?

There are two replies to this question. First of all, it is likely that the use of imported goods is at least equally as dependent on their availability as on a change in tastes; twenty years ago, for instance, it would have been pointless to ask whether the Inuit preferred snowmobiles to dog sleds, since the machines had not entered the Arctic market at that time. In the second place, the factors influencing an increase in the use of industrial goods are simply beyond the scope of the hypothesis investigated here. What matters is the fact that imported commodities are used more frequently, for whatever reason.

What can be said to those who would argue that market transactions have been brought to St. Lawrence Island through the medium of institutions such as the store, and not as a result of dependence on imported goods? To a degree, the force of this argument must be admitted, since the Sivokakmeit clearly had to learn the expectations associated with market-oriented behavior

somewhere, and the vendor/customer or employer/employee relationships implied in these new organizations provided a convenient model. However, our main concern here is with exchanges conducted between kinsmen as kinsmen, not with transactions between actors occupying different status-roles in western institutions. The acceptance of market transactions in one sphere does not necessarily lead to the rejection of customary values in others; a store manager, for example, might insist on payment from his brother for goods purchased over the counter while giving assistance freely at home or in hunting. Granted that the Sivokakmeit might have had difficulty in comprehending and accepting this split in roles and personalities, it remains possible to distinguish analytically between the introduction of market-oriented exchanges in modern institutions and the dissolution of the customary sharing network.

Aside from the sharing and cooperation expected between close relatives, the traditional Inuit exchange practices considered here are distinguished from contemporary market transactions primarily by the obligation to offer assistance, without hesitation, to all those in need. It might be asked whether this is typical of the pre-contact situation; could it be, for instance, that the Utku are now more willing to share than previously, perhaps as a result of missionary activity? If so, then the comparison between the Utku and the Sivokakmeit data is based on a misleading model.

It is not sufficient to reply that the generalized norm of solicitude is so strongly entrenched that it must be a part of the traditional value system. More to the point is the observ-

ation that both the norm and the accompanying practices are present, to varying degrees, in all three communities. If the norm is a recent innovation, it would be difficult to explain why the exchange expectations in question are rigorously adhered to among the Utku while the Sivokakmeit sharing network shows signs of collapse. After all, the Sivokakmeit have been more closely subjected to outside influence, including that of missionaries, for a longer period of time than have the Utku. There would appear to be little reason to doubt that the generalized norm of solicitude is an indigenous cultural trait and not an imported value.

#### Conceptual, theoretical, and practical implications

Considering the widely-accepted view that exchanges in hunting and gathering communities are conducted according to the specific obligations owing between particular kinsmen, the Inuit commitment to a generalized norm of solicitude is an unexpected finding. As is pointed out by Briggs, the norm is universalistic, both in the sense that it requires the granting of assistance to all needy persons and in the sense that all persons are judged according to their compliance with this expectation. This leads one to question the value of characterizing the 'modernization' process, even in part, by the transition from particularistic to universalistic modes of exchange. After all, the Inuit expectation that assistance be given freely to anybody in need is no less universalistic than the market-oriented understanding that goods and services should be sold to anybody able to pay the going price.



Nor could we say that one set of expectations is more universalistic than the other in terms of its integrative consequences. Any exchange of goods or assistance requires that each party to the transaction take the attitude of the other towards himself in order to anticipate and control the results of his own conduct.<sup>84</sup> Market transactions typically draw a great many people, sometimes spread over very large areas, into a common universe of discourse. Non-market exchanges within and between Inuit communities accomplish much the same result, reinforcing the network of social relationships and maintaining communication among individuals and groups.

The relationships and networks which result are not, however, identical. Transactions conducted in the market economy imply no further obligation between the parties involved, once the conditions of sale have been met. With exchanges conducted according to the norm of solicitude, the original obligation remains, regardless of reciprocity. If I receive a skin, I may respond by giving a fish in return, with the tacit understanding that I have discharged a 'debt', but claiming openly that the fish is given because the other person is in need. In other words, even though there is an unspoken understanding that the two gifts are connected, the reciprocity is said to be justified on the basis of relative need, not as a duty provoked by the initial gift. The obligation to continue giving remains, in part because the exact balance of reciprocities cannot be calculated, but mainly because the balance is not openly accepted as a relevant consideration. Where the norm of solicitude is applied, exchanges are expected to continue

as long as the need for assistance persists, as long as either party is capable of providing help, and as long as proximity continues. The contrast with the market situation, in which relationships are often established and broken almost momentarily, is clear.

This leads to a second point of distinction. With the Inuit, the contradiction between one's commitments to household members and the obligations encountered in dealing with distant relatives and strangers is met -- although not resolved -- by a scale of priorities in which primacy is accorded to close kin. In industrial societies, this conflict is approached by applying a different set of expectations to each exchange network -- for example, one demands payment for work done on the job, whereas the work done at home is given freely. This implies a disjunction between networks, rather than their integration within a single frame of reference. Unlike the traditional Inuit community, in which individuals and groups are related according to their positions within an inclusive frame of reference, the market excludes institutions such as the household, connecting them only through a series of more-or-less random exchanges.

These considerations suggest that it may be plausible to distinguish between traditional Inuit exchanges and the market transactions of industrial society in terms which are more appropriate than 'particularism' and 'universalism'. The customary Inuit exchange network operated against a background of continuing responsibilities and counter-obligations arranged within a single frame of reference. In industrial societies, goods and services pass through and between a number of discrete

exchange networks -- including that of the market, in which transactions occur more randomly and without implying continuing obligations. On the basis of their consequences, the customary Inuit exchange expectations considered here are best described as 'affinitive', whereas market transactions are more aptly defined by the term, 'diffusive'.

In the smaller and more remote Arctic communities, the network of transactions mediated through diffusive exchange is likely to be somewhat less dispersed than that typically found in larger urban centres. Partly as a result of the scarcity of transportation and communication links, access to retail outlets, to institutions purchasing Inuit commodities, and to potential employers is severely restricted. The Inuit in these communities thus deal regularly with a relatively small number of market-oriented institutions, a factor which concentrates and channels their contact with the outside world, contributing to the patron-broker relationship described by Paine.

Differences in the size and isolation of Inuit communities must therefore be kept in mind during any study of economic change in the Arctic. If the data were available, it would be interesting to deal comparatively with the transformation of community exchange practices across the North American Arctic. To complete this background, it would be necessary to trace the demise of a number of Inuit cooperative and sharing customs not treated here, drawing correlations with the adoption of modern weapons and other technologies, with the extent and nature of missionary activity, with the conversion to trapping or wage labour, and with the use of imported commodities. A review of

changes in pre-contact Inuit trading patterns and in community-wide distribution, drawing on a wider empirical base and culminating in a discussion of the contemporary situation, might be used in this way to structure a more general model of economic change among the Inuit. Using such a model, it might be possible to advance beyond the exploratory study presented here.

In this thesis, it has been argued that the recent decline of affinitive exchange in some Arctic communities cannot be explained satisfactorily by the influence of innovations in technology, religious belief, or values. Nor is the example presented by diffusive transactions undertaken in contacts with the outside world a sufficient explanation. Access to imported fuel, clothing, and food would appear to be a further variable capable of undermining the rewards and controls which maintain the customary exchange networks. Where the Inuit are able to purchase the necessities of life from the outside world, the chain of obligations and reciprocities is broken. When this happens, neither the authority of tradition nor the sanctions employed in the distribution of social approval are likely to restrain the divisive forces of household solidarity.

On a practical note, this suggests that efforts to improve Inuit access to consumer goods -- efforts that probably have the support of many Inuit people, local businessmen, and Arctic administrators -- are likely to erode what is left of the customary exchange networks. This erosion can be expected to continue, whether such efforts concentrate on the encouragement of Inuit industry, on an expansion of employment opportunities, or on an

increase in welfare allowances. Moreover, the process is not likely to be impeded by the pooling and redistribution undertaken by Inuit agencies, such as village councils, cooperatives, or populist movements, unless these are successful in preventing their members from buying and selling goods and services individually on the market. In any event, the simple provision of access to imported commodities would appear to be the most effective means of persuading the Inuit to abandon their customary commitment to community-wide sharing and cooperation.

FOOTNOTES

1. It should be understood that this is not an attempt to depict in total the distinction between traditional and market economies. My concern here is with one aspect of this distinction, namely the difference in the expectations of action in each type of economy. According to Weber, "Economic action may be traditionally oriented or may be affectually determined ... when economically oriented action is dominated by a religious faith, by war-like passions, or by attitudes of personal loyalty and similar modes of orientation, the level of rational calculation is likely to be very low, even though the motives are fully self-conscious. Bargaining is excluded 'between brothers', whether they be brothers in the kinship sense, in a guild, or in a religious group." (Weber 1947: 210). This does not mean that the parties involved in this form of economic action are not moved by self interest or by acquisitive intentions. However, in the absence of money, they lack the means to calculate numerically the costs and benefits of the transaction. Moreover, traditional and affectual demands restrict the ability of the parties to the transaction to respond to the market (ibid: 35-37). Economic action is formally rational to the extent that quantitative calculations, "... primarily concerned with maximizing the opportunities of acquisition ... in the market" are possible (ibid: 183).
2. The concept of universalism refers to rights and obligations which transcend traditional primary bases of social solidarity such as kinship and local community. "Thus there have been rights to enter into contractual relationships, the consequences of which were defined as independent of the kinship or local community relations of the contracting parties" (Parsons 1965: 143).
3. "... the community ... was essentially made up of personal relationships. ... The incentives to work and to exchange labour and goods ... arise from tradition, from a sense of obligation coming out of one's position in a system of status relationships, especially those of kinship, and from religious considerations and moral motivations of many kinds" (Redfield 1953: 10-11). "... societies based upon kinship could have no other kind of economic system than one in which relationships between persons took precedence over relationships between goods" (White 1956: 245). White thus contrasts exchanges in primitive societies with commercial transactions in which the relationship between goods -- i.e., their market value -- over-rides the relationship between persons.
4. For an example of the manner in which Inuit norms might be reinforced by Christian principles, see Briggs (Briggs 1970: 245, 267-68).

5. This was the case, for example, with the Nunamiut (Chapter 3). The Nunamiut were thoroughly familiar with barter and with wage labour, but they did not permit these forms of exchange among themselves.
6. Damas 1961.
7. Ibid.
8. This point is raised in Chapter 4, dealing with the Sivo-kakmeit (Hughes 1960: 115-16).
9. In the Arctic, these have commonly been represented by traders, storekeepers, missionaries, or governmental and police personnel. One of the consequences resulting from the influence wielded by such agents in the patron-broker relationship, described by Paine et al (Paine 1971).
10. This model has been developed by Barth (Barth 1967).
11. Sahlins 1965.
12. Polanyi 1957.
13. Parsons 1965: 71-73.
14. This does not always result in the group losing its identity. The Nunamiut, for example, left their customary hunting sites to settle on the Arctic coast, retaining a measure of distinctiveness even where they joined other communities, and returning to their home territory after a number of years.
15. For a discussion of the effects of situational factors -- such as the availability of food or the hunting and leadership abilities of adult males -- on the size and composition of residence groups among the eastern Canadian Inuit, see Dunning 1966.
16. For the sake of consistency and simplicity in style, the present tense is used frequently throughout the study, although the data used may be as much as several decades old. Where the present tense is used, it should be understood to be the "ethnographic present" portrayed by the monograph in question.
17. Rather than use their full name, Briggs refers to the Utkuikhalingmiut as the Utku. The same practice is employed here.
18. Briggs has attempted to corroborate the data she collected in this way with that of Rasmussen, who visited the Utku briefly in 1923. Briggs also checked both against the reports of explorers traveling through the region in the late 1800's.

19. Thus, although the Utku avoided Briggs socially for a period of several months as a result of her volatility, they continued to be mindful of her material wants.
20. The Utku respond differently, depending on whether they consider un-naklik behavior to be caused by ill temper or by lack of good sense. Thus, small children are not criticized for poor behavior until they are old enough to know better; grown people who persistently behave badly are disliked; and those who are insane are feared when in a psychotic period, although liked when behaving normally (ibid.: 195-97).
21. Naklik extends to all things helpless: to puppies, inept kaplunas in the Utku habitat, even to the small bits of paper Briggs made notes on. Especially, they are extended to one's family (ibid.: 70-71, 121, 252, 320-26).
22. "The reluctance to ask from people outside the extended family is phrased as a fear of being unkindly refused" (ibid.: 209). Briggs does not say why a refusal is thought to be so unkind, but it appears likely that it is interpreted as a sign that one is being a burden, or that one is asking for more than a non-kinsman is entitled to solicit.
23. Comments on the solicitude of men towards their families appear to be a frequent source of gossip, and ample grounds for like or dislike.
24. Briggs gives an excellent account of how socialization in this regard is achieved (ibid.: 109-76).
25. The data on this point are weak. Briggs mentions that an active male is expected to contribute to the maintenance of his parents, and presumably this applies to the parents-in-law too, if he has joined their kin-group. There is a suggestion here that the attachment to the wife's kin is strongest, for one man was thought badly of for leaving his wife's group -- and for wanting to take his wife with him.
26. It would be incorrect, I believe, to interpret this as a form of bargaining or purchase; Briggs was not making her assistance contingent on a return from the Utku, but offering to participate in their affairs from the perspective of their own values (ibid.: 19).
27. Superficially, the status of women might appear to be an exception to this. Briggs found however, that women are not expected to obey men because they are thought to be inferior, but simply because it is "in the natural order of things" (ibid.: 107).



28. For a while, she reports that some families "... continued to refer to me as the 'kapluna'; to treat me with ceremony; and to trade with me, rather than simply asking for small amounts of my supplies" even after her adoption. In addition, she leaves no doubt that the Utku continued to make considerable allowances for her kapluna ignorance, or that her unwomanly independence and wealth confused her role as a daughter considerably (ibid: 226-27; 235).
29. The term, "kapluna" is the Inuit word for "white man".
30. It is important to note that seasonal variations and personal preferences both play as important a part in the organization of cooperative activity as they do in the distribution of benefits.
31. The importance of this office as a means of social control is illustrated in the frequency with which it was used to censure Briggs' own anti-social behavior. On three occasions, religious observance was used as an opportunity to lecture Briggs on the requirement of emotional control. On one occasion, religious authority, including the threat of physical punishment on the part of the church hierarchy, was used as a threat (ibid: 257, 259, 268, 272, 280).
32. This is not to say that other aspects of the ihumataaq role could not be used in this way. Part of the ihumataaq's 'authority' stems, for example, from his superior knowledge or skill, and these might provide a more reliable base for the exercise of authority.
33. Note that the reverse is also true: women are appreciated for their help and obedience.
34. Historical data dealing with the Nunamiut are more extensive and more reliable than those concerned with the Utku, largely because the Nunamiut oral tradition can be corroborated by that of neighboring groups, but in part also because small groups of Nunamiut have been known to ethnography, on a sporadic basis, since about 1915.
35. Some Nunamiut assert that they could manage without the coastal trade, but Gubser doubts this, arguing that they could not have survived without blubber and seal skins. In the late 1800's or early 1900's the traditional trade items were either supplemented or replaced with manufactured goods, also available only on the coast (Gubser 1965: 160, 163, 174).
36. Spencer is of the opinion that the coastal Eskimo were not so dependent on this trade as were the Nunamiut since they could, if necessary, find at least a few caribou within range of home. Nevertheless, he insists that the two groups maintained a state of interdependence based on the specialization of their economies (Spencer 1969:

201-203, 441, 447).

37. Gubser reports that some native informants place their number as high as 7,000, while Spencer arrives at the more conservative estimate of 3,000. Gubser admits that he is speculating from archeological, historical, and ethnographic data, but while there is still considerable room for argument, his is at least an 'intelligent guess'.
38. Obviously, these functions are shared with other kinsmen and the community at large. There has also been a white school teacher in the village since 1960. See Chapter 4, "The Individual", pp. 105-133.
39. "Members of different households may hunt together, but they divide the kill equally among the hunters, each of whom brings his share back to his own house for its exclusive use" (Gubser 1965: 77).
40. Among the most prominent of these differences is a decided preference for inter-family alliances to be formed through related females, a feature that appears to be absent with the Utku.
41. I hesitate to term this a matrilocal residence rule, since the latter commonly denotes that a couple should take up residence with or near the wife's mother, whereas the Nunamiut specify only that they live near or with her parents. Deviations from the rule are allowed for a number of reasons, including the compatibility of the people involved, the relative need of each set of parents, and obviously, their longevity.
42. There is some confusion on this point. The temporary cluster of traditional Nunamiut society might have been replaced by a more permanent grouping of related families, since Gubser found that a number of families do continue to associate for long periods of time in the contemporary scene.
43. The only indication of band organization remaining is the presence of two political factions within the village, one representing the people formerly associated with the Tulugak Lake range, and the other drawn from those who frequented the Killik River. Kinship ties are closer within each faction than between them, and the demarcation line becomes clearer when there is a scandal, political conflict, or economic crisis in the village. The presence of factions is not a recent phenomenon, since the bands were also divided in this way (ibid: 186-89).
44. Thus, "The making of implements, visiting, discussing plans, and settling disputes now takes place in households" rather than in the karigi (ibid: 172).

45. Gubser estimates that the traditional Nunamiut band ranged from 50 to 150 people, at which point a division of the group became necessary to reduce pressure on the game supply. Today, a person who wishes to become wealthy by Nunamiut standards must isolate himself in order to find a plentiful supply of meat and hides (ibid: 132, 145).
46. "... every Nunamiut thinks of ilyatha as 'my relatives' and not as 'my group of relatives' in a collective sense. ... he regards the members of his kindred as a social category which presents him with a set of potential relationships. The Nunamiut kindred does not constitute a group" (ibid: 152).
47. This is not an entirely new situation. Spencer believes that the Nunamiut were less closely inter-related even in the 1800's than the coastal groups, largely because of the extraordinary amount of movement required by their hunting and trading activities. The band, he considers to have been a geographical, not a kinship association, although kin relationships were frequently available (Spencer 1969: 133-38).
48. Some of the wealthier Nunamiut still have partners, both among the coastal groups and within the band, but Gubser does not provide data on the goods that change hands between them (Gubser 1965: 133, 162).
49. Apparently, such assistance is due even at the expense of the spouse and children: "Should a mature, married man learn that his parents are starving in a nearby valley, he may abandon his spouse to her blood relatives and rush to their aid" (ibid: 139).
50. This priority is reflected, for example, in the distribution of meat: this distribution, performed by the woman of the family, gives first preference to her parents, and secondly to her siblings (ibid: 81).
51. It would be interesting to investigate the experiences of early explorers in this regard. Simpson, for example, found the Eskimos "... almost overbearing in their friendliness", and in one village he felt himself to be "overpowered by caresses" (ibid: 5).
52. "... an individual is motivated to respond to the request or unspoken expectation of a relative, trading partner, friend or namesake because that person may have helped him in the past, creating a social debt which he obviously should extend himself to pay". Elsewhere, Gubser remarks that when a close collateral relative has helped a family in distress, the normal bonds of hospitality between them are strengthened (ibid: 123).
53. A series of exchanges continually creates new debts just

as it clears old ones, even among kinsmen. "... social interaction continues, never quite in balance, always demanding action of some kind...". Gubser gives the example of a household in which the husband and wife would have broken up were it not for the fact that the wife and husband's parents made a highly productive team: "The things they did together, the ongoing activity of the group, held it together in spite of the marital conflict" (ibid: 123, 141).

54. In fact, Gubser observes that discussions concerning a couple's choice of residence take place between both sets of parents, usually after the first year of marriage (ibid: 66).
55. "When economic support between two persons of different households within a community is indicated, the person under obligation must offer support only in time of need, such as hunger, bad luck, or illness, or when requested; otherwise, he is free to contribute services or to share his material wealth as gifts with the recipient in order to maintain pleasant relations or to secure political backing" (ibid: 137).
56. "Usually of course, a man and wife ... try to help the set of parents that happens to be nearby. Geographical location, then often determines which kinship ties are expressed...". Thus, "... if a person leaves his family of orientation in one valley and joins his spouse and family in a distant region, locality will impose itself on Nunamiut bilaterality" (ibid: 139, 141).
57. It is entirely possible that the summer dispersal was much more severe aboriginally, as the Nunamiut exercised a great deal of choice in their migration back to the mountains after the trading with coastal groups was completed (Spencer 1969: 133).
58. Gubser's choice of words on this point suggests that this tension might be a structural one, but he does not pursue the issue explicitly. "He most likely cooperates very easily with his in-laws ... in the usual daily activities, especially since the tensions common between parent and child, and sibling and sibling, are absent, and he may come to regard them with real affection over a lifetime of close association (Gubser 1965: 156).
59. There is some confusion on these points, since the decorum of gift-exchange appears to have been maintained. Gifts were offered in return for favours from the shaman, not as a form of payment such as we employ in entering a modern business establishment. Incidentally, this same confusion appears to have attended the early contacts with white traders along the Arctic coast of Alaska. These reports leave no doubt, however, that the Alaskan Inuit were much

more aggressive in their gift exchange than the Utku would consider proper (ibid: 203, 215, 261-62).

60. During the late 1800's, whalers, explorers, and commercial vessels visited the island frequently for supplies, water, and trade goods such as sealskins and ivory. A number of Sivokakmeit worked on these vessels during the summer months, and whalers sometimes wintered on the island, employing Inuit labour in the winter hunting of sea mammals. Although the demand for whale oil disappeared with the development of the petroleum industry, the market for baleen -- whalebone -- soared briefly during the 1890's; in one instance, six large pieces of baleen were sufficient to purchase "... a wooden whaleboat entirely equipped with oars, sail, harpoon gun, lines, and bombs". The demand for baleen dropped gradually, disappearing entirely by 1930 (Hughes 1960: 188).
61. The reasons for the extinction of the herd have not been firmly established. However, it appears that the herd's manager persistently over-estimated the size of the herd, thus permitting the harvest of a yearly dividend which exceeded the growth rate of the herd. Inuit informants also suggest that poor herding practices, coupled with deterioration of the range, may have been responsible (ibid: 149-53).
62. According to Hughes, the Sivokakmeit adopted the attitude that the assistance was "... a way to make money .... Considered against a background of no income or little income, the welfare cheques are greatly prized (ibid: 205).
63. This problem is summarized by Hughes: "... now it would be a serious calamity for hunters if the village were completely cut off from the mainland" (ibid: 185).
64. A rough indication of the extent of this latter shift can be gained from Hughes' data concerning village incomes. From 1947 to 1951, the total village income almost tripled, although it suffered a decline in 1954. By contrast, "In terms of the relative amount of wealth the people receive for their primary raw material, ... it would seem as if the Sivokakmeit are actually poorer now than they ever were before. Their primary raw material is steadily decreasing in income power, and they have no other product with which to replace it (ibid: 193-94, 207-208).
65. Demographic data are reviewed by Hughes. Samples from this data include: a crude death rate more than three times that of the United States; an infant mortality rate of 169.4 per 1,000 live births, as compared with 27.8 per thousand in the U.S., and 161 per thousand for India over the same period; a death rate in the age group 11 to 19 years which is 44 times that of the U.S. in 1951; and

the loss of 22 percent of the people living in Gambell in 1940 by 1955 (ibid: 56-62).

66. In 1955, only thirty-one Sivokakmeit lived permanently on the mainland, but this number amounts to nine percent of the population of Gambell. There has been a marked change in migration since 1940 (ibid: 71).
67. Hughes thus sees a shift from small, bilaterally descending groups to identification with patrilinear descent groups, the identity of which has been reinforced through competition arising from proximity: under aboriginal conditions, "... the tribal identification was taken for granted and was not brought into daily focus through the daily juxtaposition of different groups, as happens now". Incidentally, although one of these groups is not named after its place of origin, its members are known as not 'real' Sivokakmeit -- i.e., Inuit who have lived in Gambell for generations (ibid: 251).
68. Hughes points out that mutual help and kindness are also expected between grandparents and grandchildren, but he fails to mention any bias in favour of patrilinear affiliations in this relationship (ibid: 236).
69. In addition to mutual sharing and support, cross cousins are expected to maintain a joking relationship (ibid: 242).
70. "Even after a man retires from the active hunting life, ... he still is consulted by his sons as to when to go hunting, the care of the boat and other equipment, decisions as to the apportionment of goods, and so on" (ibid: 236).
71. Between 1940 and 1954, several boat captains invoked their authority to introduce changes in the division of whale meat. Customarily, the first boat to strike the whale received a larger share of meat than those who arrived latest on the scene. Two of the elders, either captains of the striking boat, or headmen of the lineage or clan which made the kill, were able to introduce a more equitable, village-wide distribution of the meat (ibid: 115-116).
72. The Sivokakmeit themselves evidently regard groom service as reciprocity for the expense and trouble expended by the parents on the upbringing of the bride: "... after all, you figure how much a man and woman puts in for their daughter to raise up until she's 18, you know; and they deserve that, just a year's working from their son-in-law. ... It's a lot of hard work for a man and a woman to raise up a child" (ibid: 282).
73. The Council has accepted a good deal of responsibility for the centralization of authority in the village. "Acting upon the broad directives contained in the constitution and by-laws, the council legislates and judges in matters

pertaining to the health and bodily welfare of the people, marriage and family relations, economic problems of the entire village, social welfare, recreation, and crime (ibid: 287).

74. "Clearly Gambell is still in a state of transition in which only the rudiments of the 'universalistic' mode of social relationship are found (Parsons 1951); and the preponderant bulk of social influence and welfare still derives from the viability of clan groupings" (ibid: 291-292).
75. When the store had sold out of goods, the management was blamed for not ordering sufficient supplies. When the store was adequately stocked, the villagers were unable to understand why they were obliged to continue on short rations in the absence of money to make payments towards their credit balance (ibid: 178).
76. I feel uneasy about my interpretation of this point. The Sivokakmeit might simply have been unable or unwilling to pay their bills, in which case their actions would be best regarded, not as an inability to perceive the connection between their debts and the viability of the electricity plant, but as a rational decision to withdraw their support of the operation.
77. According to Hughes, the islanders remained ignorant of the guidelines governing the availability and cost of supplies from A.N.I.C.A. Apparently, if they had known how to proceed, they could have insisted that prices be lowered. (ibid: 178).
78. Again, this point is open to other interpretations. The Sivokakmeit might have been unable to extend an inadequate income over periods of intense shortage.
79. This quotation, he says, is "... interesting as a perception of the transition from one type of ordering social relationships -- for example, that which has been called the "folk society" -- to a more universal pattern" (ibid: 276).
80. "No doubt some loosening of the clan bonds has occurred in this, the most fundamental venture of clansmen, even as the bonds have loosened in other respects" (ibid: 255).
81. The fragmentation of Sivokakmeit society is occurring at some points even within the household. Thus, although women help their men with the skinning of fur-bearing animals, sometimes staying up all night at the task, the furs which they themselves have caught are taken directly to the store, to be traded for clothing, cosmetics, or food; the wife's furs, in other words, are not pooled with those of the husband (ibid: 127).

82. It is also possible that ceremonial activities were limited, even in the pre-contact era, by the harshness of the Arctic environment. The relative absence of Inuit ceremonialism, as compared with that found among hunters and gatherers in more favourable environments, is quite striking. Furthermore, ceremonialism appears to have been more important among the Inuit of Southern Alaska, where subsistence is less difficult.
83. It is worth noting that the reverse is not necessarily true: the failings of a poor provider are more likely to be overlooked if he is characteristically generous, even if he seldom has a surplus to distribute.
84. "... the process of production and transportation, and of taking the goods received in return, related the individuals more closely to the others involved in the economic process. It is a slow process of the integration of a society which binds people more and more closely together. It does not bring them spatially and geographically together but unites them in terms of communication. ... communication in which the individual in his own process of production is identifying himself with the individual who has something to exchange with him. ... the web of commerce can go anywhere and the form of society may take in anybody who is willing to enter in this process of communication" (Mead 1934: 292). In his discussion of universals, Mead takes the position that a universe of discourse "... is constituted by a group of individuals carrying on and participating in a common social process of experience and behavior". The universe of discourse may be very broad, as with the web of market relationships in the Western world, or it may be relatively narrow; what makes it universal is not its scope, but the common world of meaning which is created (ibid.: 89-90).



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