INTERVIEWING INUIT ELDERS

Introduction

Saulu Nakasuk, Hervé Paniaq, Elisapee Ootoova, Pauloosie Angmaalik

Edited by Jarich Oosten & Frédéric Laugrand
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Photos by Nick Newbery (Acknowledgements), Frédéric Laugrand and Sally Mikijuk (page 3, 12).

Cover illustration “Man and Animals” by Lydia Jaypoody

Design and production by Nortext (Iqaluit)

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ISBN 1-896-204-317

Published by the Language and Culture Program of Nunavut Arctic College, Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0 with the generous support of the Fairjait Tiguinniavik Elders Society.

For order information:
Nunavut Arctic College Library
Box 600
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0
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With much heartfelt gratitude we would like to thank
the Pairijait Tigummivik Society for funding the
publication costs for this series.

Without their contribution this series may not have become a reality.

THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAM
would like to acknowledge the support we received
from the R. Howard Webster Foundation, for the
Nunavut Arctic College — University of Leiden Exchange Project,
from 1995–1997 which helped lay the foundation for this book.
This volume is the first part of a series of five books devoted to the study of oral traditions. The research presented in these books was conducted by students of the Inuit Studies program supervised by Susan Sammons of Nunavut Arctic College. Elders were invited to come to the College, where all interviews were conducted in Inuktitut and simultaneously interpreted into English. The English and Inuktitut recordings will be published in separate volumes.

The project was set up to develop the skills of the students in interviewing, transcribing, and writing essays. The students selected topics which were of interest and importance to them, and facilitators were invited to assist the students in their research. The first course gave a general introduction to oral research, and was facilitated by Alexina Kublu (Nunavut Arctic College), Frédéric Laugrand (Laval University) and Jarich Oosten (Leiden University). The second course dealt with traditional health practices and was facilitated by Michèle Therrien (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations) and Frédéric Laugrand. Two courses on methods of social control were also taught, one facilitated by Wim Rasing (Nijmegen) and the other by Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten; these results will be published in one volume. A course on child-rearing practices was facilitated by Jean Briggs (Memorial University). Finally, Bernard Saladin d’Anglure (Laval University) facilitated a course on shamanism and traditional beliefs with Stéphane Kolb (Laval University).

All volumes contain an introduction by the facilitator(s), a presentation of the results of the interviews with elders, and a glossary of traditional words. Some volumes also contain essays written by the students about their individual areas of interest in each specific course.

The series on oral traditions is intended to contribute to the preservation of the knowledge of the elders, and the styles and modes of thinking implied in it. The contribution of the interpreters, Maaki Kakkik, Ooleepika Ikkidluak, Nina Manning-Toonoo and Archie Angnakak, was also invaluable.

We would also like to thank Sally Mikijuk for her perseverance and dedication through many trying times in the typing of these manuscripts. The many hours of work that Sally put into this project helped make this publication a reality. We would like to thank Marja Korhonen and Noel McDermott for proofing the English manuscript and Alexina Kublu for proofing the Inuktitut. Thanks are also due to Roberta Roberts at Nortext for her interest and support of this project and help with the publication of this manuscript.

Most of all, we thank the elders and students who made this series possible.
We would like to thank Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova, Hervé Paniaq, Tipula Attagutsiaq, Alichee and Akeeshoo Joamie, Jayko Pitseolak, Thérèse Ijjangiaq, Emile Immartoitok, Lucassie Nutaraluk, Mariano and Tulimaaq Aupilarjuk, Naki Ekho and Uqsuralik Ottokie for passing down their knowledge to us. We would also like to thank the students, Eena Alivaktuq, Susan Enuaraq, Myna Ishulutak, Nancy Kisa, Bernice Kootoo, Aaju Peter, Jeannie Shaimaiyuk, Julia Shaimaiyuk, Mathieu Boki, Johnny Kopak, Kim Kangok and Vera Arnatsiaq. We believe we learned as much, if not more from them as they did from us.
“I can be asked what I know. I state only what I know.”
Saillu Nakasuk

Interviewing the Elders
Nunavut Arctic College Oral Traditions Project

In November 1996, Arctic College organized a course on Oral Traditions for the students of the Inuit Studies program supervised by Susan Sammons. The aim of the course was to train Inuit students in recording the oral traditions of Inuit elders. Oral traditions reflect changing Inuit perspectives of the world. Their dynamics inform us about the way Inuit integrate past and current changes into their perspectives of the world. In a rapidly changing society, the preservation of the knowledge of the Inuit elders is of great value to the cultural identity of modern Inuit.

The oral tradition project started in 1994, developed in the context of cooperation between Nunavut Arctic College and Leiden University in the Netherlands. It had its inception when Jarich Oosten of Leiden University was introduced to Susan Sammons by Michèle Therrien of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations, Paris, at the IXth Inuit Studies Conference in Iqaluit. They agreed on a program of cooperation between Nunavut Arctic College and the University of Leiden to stimulate research on Inuit oral traditions. In 1995, Maaki Kakkik, of Nunavut Arctic College, visited Leiden University, where she and Jarich Oosten gave a joint presentation at an Oral Traditions conference. The following year, Alexina Kublu, an instructor in the Inuit Language and Culture program at the College, taught at Leiden University. The next year, Susan Enuaraq, a student in the College’s Inuit Studies program, gave several
lectures at Leiden as well. The contributions of the Inuit teachers were very much appreciated by the Dutch students, who were thus provided with an opportunity to be taught about Inuit culture from an Inuit perspective.

The three-week course on Oral Traditions was organized by Susan Sammons. The instructors were Frédéric Laugrand, Alexina Kublu and Jarich Oosten. It would have been ideal if all three instructors had been present all the time, but that was not to be. The first week was taught by Frédéric Laugrand and Alexina Kublu; during the second week, all three instructors were present; and in the third week Alexina Kublu had to leave because of her father’s death.

The design of the course
The general aims of the project were to teach the students to:
• consider Inuit perspectives as well as Western views on oral traditions;
• conduct research on selected themes;
• plan and organize their research;
• work in teams;
• collect and record oral traditions;
• acquire practical experience by conducting interviews with elders;
• transcribe the interviews into syllabics and Roman orthography;
• translate the texts from Inuktitut into English;
• write reports of their research.

The research project focused on life stories and themes selected by the students on the basis of their personal interests. The design of the course enabled them to connect their themes directly to the life stories of the elders.
In planning the Oral Traditions course of 1996, we opted for an approach which gradually introduced the students to basic principles of collecting and recording oral traditions. Four elders were invited by Nunavut Arctic College and interviewed in Inuktitut by students: Elisapee Ootoova from Mittimatalik and Hervé Paniaq from Iglulik came during the second week; and Saullu Nakasuk and Pauloosie Angmarlik from Pangnirtung were interviewed in the third week. Ooleepika Ikkiuluak provided excellent simultaneous interpretation to enable Frédéric Laugrand and Jarich Oosten to follow the process. The instructors refrained from interfering, and discussed the ways in which the interviews were conducted before and after the sessions, rather than during. In this way, the relevance of various principles of method, discussed prior to the interviews, could be tested immediately by the students in the interviews. The setting which was chosen guaranteed that elders as well as students could express themselves in Inuktitut in an environment in which they felt at ease. Thus, the course was oriented to practice, and no more theory or methodology was introduced than was strictly necessary.

Eight students participated in the course. Four teams were set up to conduct the interviews: Aaju Peter and Jeannie Shaimaiyuk interviewed Elisapee Ootoova; Susan Enuaraq and Julia Shaimaiyuk interviewed Hervé Paniaq; the interview with Saullu Nakasuk was conducted by Nancy Kisa and Bernice Kootoo; and Pauloosie Angmarlik was interviewed by Myna Ishulutak and Eena Alivaqtuq. The students wrote essays based on their interviews, which are included in the book.

The first week, the course followed a traditional pattern: tables were placed in rows and the main emphasis was on instruction. Students listened to taped interviews with elders and discussed texts. Kenn Harper, Noel McDermott and Maaki Kakkik gave guest lectures on various subjects.

In the second week, the room was rearranged. Tables were placed in a square to create a more informal atmosphere, and the emphasis was shifted from instruction to practice. The morning interviews focused on life stories; in the afternoons, a general question-round on selected themes was organized. The interview situation was by no means a normal situation: as elders are held in great respect, students were not accustomed to subjecting them to long lists of questions.

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Introduction — Interviewing the Elders
The elders, however, were very helpful and encouraged students to ask questions and to overcome their initial shyness. Elisapee Ootoova stated, “You shouldn’t be wary of asking us any questions as we are not at home.” The first interviews were nevertheless a bit rusty; both students and elders had to learn how to deal with the uncomfortable situation of interviewing. The students found it difficult to prepare questions, and we heard the frequent complaint, “I’m out of questions.” But the interviews continued: whenever one student was out of questions, the others took over, giving the interviewer some time for reflection and formulation of new questions. This process strengthened a feeling of trust among the students.

At the end of the second week, Susan Enuaraq suggested we remove the chairs and tables. That worked out well and the situation became much more relaxed. Students and instructors sat on the floor while the elders were seated on a couch. The emphasis shifted gradually from interviews in teams to interviews in which the whole group participated. This setup proved to be the most effective in terms of eliciting information. The context of a group interview was experienced by the elders as a natural situation, in which they spoke more easily on many issues. Various elements were gradually
introduced in the course to create a more informal context which would facilitate the interviews. Thus, strings were handed out so that elders and students could play cat’s-cradle while listening or talking, and in the third week Anne Schreiner, the residence manager, provided the group with muffins and cookies which, in addition to a supply of coffee and tea, proved very helpful in creating a more relaxed atmosphere.

Attendance at the course was very good. No student missed more than a half day. Each day, the first hour of the course was used to prepare for the interviews, and the last hour was devoted to preparing and writing the essays and life stories. This proved to be much more effective than asking the students to do this work at home, as they had families to take care of.

This first course in oral traditions was an experiment for us. The design that had been developed was continually adapted during the course. We began with the firm conviction that the students would do well provided they were given the opportunity to develop their own interests and approaches. We started from the genuine interests of Inuit students in their own culture and traditions.

The elders were very knowledgeable as well as modest. They had no wish to speak about things of which they had no personal experience, but they wished to teach the students by giving an account of what they had heard and seen themselves. The following exchange between Saullu and Eena illustrates this point:

Saullu: I’m only telling you about what I’ve experienced. I’m not going to tell you about anything I haven’t experienced.

Eena: Yes.

Saullu: Even if it’s something I know about, if I haven’t experienced it, I’m not going to tell about it.

Or, an exchange among Julia, Saullu and Pauloosie:

Julia: Sometimes when you are telling about something, I hear you saying, “I can’t talk about what I haven’t experienced.” Did you get told…?

Saullu: Yes.

Julia: One is not to talk about something without having experienced it?

Saullu: Yes. One is not to talk about something just from hearsay, because it is too easy to speak a falsehood. It is not desirable to tell untruths.

Julia: Yes.

Pauloosie: The lie would come out later, or if the true story were told, the apparent lie.

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Introduction — Interviewing the Elders
Saullu: Yes. That’s the way it was.

Pauloose: Having heard about it just once, knowing… I have already stated that I can say that I don’t know anything about it if I have only heard about it just once. If at a later time someone were to tell about it like it really is, and though I did not intentionally lie, I would be like someone who had lied. Thinking about my own reputation, I have continued this as a practice.

The elders spoke with great sincerity. Not only the content of the information but also the style in which it was presented were very impressive. Thus the interviews conveyed not only old traditions of Inuit society, but also styles of thinking and social interaction, expressing central values of traditional Inuit society.

Saullu: It is not possible to forget the words of our elders, when we had our elders as the ones who gave us instructions. Even so, what one heard as a child keeps on coming back even though it is not always on your mind.

The production and transmission of knowledge in Inuit society

One of the themes of the course was how children were instructed in Inuit society, before the introduction of schools. For Inuit, instruction was always rooted in practice. Children learned by observing their elders and imitating their behaviour, and received directions and instructions in relation to the practice itself. Thus, children might be encouraged to sew, but that did not imply that elders carefully instructed children how to go about it. Children had ample opportunity to observe adults sewing, and they were thought to be perfectly capable of trying to do it on their own. Once they had completed a job, however, elders might comment on it, and sometimes a child had to start again from scratch. (See the essay by Nancy Kisa.) Knowledge was produced in relation to practice. Children were taught to develop their skills; this included using whatever was appropriate, and the use of modern techniques or implements had no negative connotations whatsoever. Inuit were always prepared to adopt new methods and materials if that proved to be advantageous. Obviously, however, those methods and skills that had withstood the test of time received much attention. Thus, Inuit clothing had reached a high degree of perfection. Young girls not only had to master the basic techniques before they would be allowed to marry, but were also taught design, ornamentation and styles of clothing. Whenever it proved useful, new implements such as steel needles or ornaments such as glass beads were adopted. A balance of experience and innovation is central to the production and transmission of knowledge. The elders would relate to the young hunters how they hunted caribou with bows and arrows, but that did not mean they disapproved of the use of guns. In qualifying the knowledge of the elders as “traditional,” we should never forget that it was always directed to the future, intended to give a perspective to younger generations so that they were better equipped to face the changes they were facing.
Children were taught ideas and values that existed in Inuit society. These ideas and values could be expressed in stories, in comments, or in corrections of behaviour. Generally, children did not ask elders to instruct them, but the elders took the initiative in preparing and advising them whenever they thought it appropriate. In fact, the great respect in which elders were held often meant that young people were reluctant to pose questions to elders unless they were invited to do so.

As we have discussed, a context was created in class in which elders were expected to talk and students were expected to ask questions, and both had to come to terms with this unfamiliar situation. The elders repeatedly encouraged the students to pose questions and the students had to overcome their initial embarrassment in doing so. In this way, a situation was created that was also totally focused on practice. This context was effective to some extent because it was not “traditional;” elders were suddenly involved in the context of modern education. They were flown to Iqaluit and had to spend long hours in the rather impersonal environment of the residence, but they adapted wonderfully to it.

The elders were not only instructing the young students about practices and customs which existed when they were young, but they also connected their descriptions of these customs and practices to their own views of modern society and current practices and values. We have to assume that this is a “traditional” practice. This is exactly what “production of knowledge” aims at: relating the ideas and practices of the past to the situation at hand, and making them relevant to a new generation which will face new problems and challenges.

Traditional knowledge is not something abstract and separated from the context in which it is produced, but is always related to the present. In this respect, it contrasts with the modern schooling system which sets great value on the absorption of objectified knowledge. In the interviews, the elders repeatedly expressed their disappointment with the modern schooling system and wondered whether they had been wise in sending their children to these modern schools which taught nothing about...
Inuit life and values. They thought the schools played a part in alienating children from their roots.

**The nature of Inuit knowledge**

For a long time, Inuit were considered to be a non-literate people. All knowledge was thought to be passed on orally. In fact, this image is distorted. Syllabics were introduced to Inuit more than a hundred years ago and Inuit have been reading and writing since then. Proportionally, Inuit may have been even more literate than the average European country at the turn of the century. This said, we must take into account that literary traditions held a specific place in Inuit society. Literacy related to Christianity (reading the Bible and hymn books), and to practical purposes such as letters, accounting, and even the writing of diaries. But the passing on of knowledge still remained based on oral traditions. Even today, modern Inuit students often find literary texts describing traditional customs and practices boring. To them, these texts lack life and do not incite much interest.

Most ethnographic texts tend to reconstruct Inuit knowledge as an objective body of knowledge. The idea that knowledge should be objective and true has a long history in the West. The classic definition of truth as an *adaequatio rei et intellectus* is instructive. The image formed in the mind is true if that image is adequate to the thing itself. The truth of a statement is therefore not based on the authority of the speaker but on its relation to reality. If the form of the statement and reality itself correspond to each other, the statement is true. This approach to truth obviously had great advantages in the development of science in Western society, as it freed truth from the constraints of social relationships. Neither the state nor the church should impose its truth on science. This approach works very well with respect to the natural sciences, but becomes more complicated with respect to the social sciences and humanities. Here, the construction of a body of knowledge that is generally accepted as true is much more complicated. Examining anthropology alone, for example, it becomes immediately clear that the scientific insights of preceding generations are completely rejected today. Renowned anthropologists stated that Inuit were savages, that they were not capable of rational thinking, or that they did not have social organization but were held together by some sort of herd instinct. In reading these anthropological texts, we see that the distinctions between data, opinions, value judgments and so on are often very vague. Birket-Smith writes, “Der herdentrieb ist es, der Eskimos zusammehalten.” (“It is the herd-instinct that keeps the Eskimos together.”) Reading this statement, we cannot infer whether it is based on information obtained from an informant, from a careful and systematic comparison of Inuit and a herd of animals, or from a discussion between Birket-Smith and a learned colleague specializing in cattle, or from Birket-Smith’s himself. The problem is not so much that Birket-Smith was not a good anthropologist; the problem is that...
anthropological texts tend to present information in such a way that the distinctions between observations, inferences, hearsay and so on are by no means clear. Statements such as, “Inuit are hunters,” “Inuit are non-literate,” “Inuit are very flexible and dynamic,” can be made by anyone, without giving a clear indication of how he arrived at that particular conclusion. The knowledge presented is, in many respects, completely taken out of context. Anthropologists tend to quote their sources precisely when they refer to other anthropologists (“Rasmussen states, according to Boas…” and so on), but when they refer to Inuit elders who are the source of specific information, anthropologists usually are no longer very precise. They may quote Inuit from time to time, but the general pattern is to present the data as an objective body of knowledge in which data, theory and opinion are integrated. A good example is the way Knud Rasmussen handled the famous statement of the old angakkuq Ava on fear. Ava explained to Rasmussen that he could not explain why people suffered, why there had to be hunger or starvation. He stated, “We do not believe, we fear.” This statement must have appealed to Rasmussen, as he had already emphasized in his book on Polar Eskimos, in 1908, that fear was the essence of Inuit religion. He made Ava’s statement into the motto of his discussion of the beliefs of the Iglulingmiut. Thus he inferred from the statement of an individual a general statement about the nature of Inuit religion.

We suggest that it is precisely this way of presenting information that makes it less interesting to Inuit. We suppose that for most Inuit, the interest of the statement on fear is based on the fact that it is made by Ava. Nobody will assume that Ava intends to give anything but his own personal opinion and conviction. Moreover, the statement was made at a time when Ava was considering conversion to Christianity. In that sense, the famous statement not so much reflects an assessment of traditional Inuit religion, but informs us about ideas and values expressed by an old angakkuq during a time of transition and conversion.

In Inuit language and culture tends to set little value on generalizations. Not the movement from the specific to the general, but, inversely, the movement from the general to the specific is what is important. One should be precise in statements, specifying time, place, subject and object. General statements are viewed as vague and confusing, whereas specific statements are seen as providing much more interesting information.

In Inuit society, we are dealing with a completely different tradition of knowledge. All knowledge is social by nature and the idea of objectified true knowledge holds little attraction or fascination.

Elders have always been held in high respect in Inuit society. Their knowledge and experience was supposed to guide the younger generations. This knowledge was highly personal and rooted in practice. It would be a mistake to assume that we are dealing with a body of objectified knowledge about which all elders agreed. Each elder had his
own knowledge and experience and was prepared to acknowledge the value of different opinions and experiences related by others. In the course of the interviews, the elders professed great interest in each other’s comments. The point was not so much to come to a common opinion, but to come to an awareness of the existing variations. In that respect, it did not matter whether the elders came from different places. Variation is an essential characteristic of the knowledge of the elders. As each one has his or her own knowledge, it is absolutely essential that this knowledge is seen as related only to that particular elder. Once the source, more specifically the name of the elder, is lost, the knowledge loses its roots and becomes devoid of much value to most Inuit. It is essential, therefore, that in the presentation of these interviews we indicate exactly which elder made which statement.

As traditional knowledge is not objectively given, but always produced in relational terms, we must remain aware of the context. In traditional Inuit society, knowledge was related to practice. That also pertains to the transmission of knowledge. There is no value in talking when it is not functional. In the course, a group of young students interviewed elders because they wanted to learn about traditional culture. The context may have been artificial to some extent, but elders as well as students adapted immediately and made good use of the opportunity it provided. The production of traditional knowledge required the exchange of questions and answers. The elders emphasized repeatedly that they could only talk if there were questions. Here we are dealing with an essential feature of traditional knowledge; it is produced as an exchange.

The questions of the students triggered the memories of the elders. Their experiences come to life again and prove to be of great value to the younger students, who can now profit from these experiences. The elders acknowledge that the students
bring their memories to life again; the students are grateful that they are allowed to share those memories. This exchange creates the particular atmosphere of the interview sessions, characterized by great concentration by all the concerned parties.

The texts
The book consists of interviews with the elders, essays by the students, and stories collected in the context of the oral traditions project. The first part consists of the life stories of four elders, with the lifestories taking shape in the course of the interviews. Thus the interviews themselves constitute a process: the flow of the lifestory and that of the interview cannot be clearly separated. In a way, this corresponds to the way elders instructed children in the past: knowledge is constructed in practice. The elders were well aware that the students were sometimes having a hard time; sometimes they were out of questions and sometimes they were embarrassed. But the elders encouraged them to go on and tried to make it as easy as possible for them. In this way, the interviews present not only the contents of traditional knowledge but also its form and mode of production. We therefore thought it essential to maintain the basic structure. In editing the text, we have tried to preserve the style and character of the interviews, only omitting repetitions and interjections due to misunderstandings, etc., as well as affirmations which break the flow of the text. The first interviews required the most editing, as students still had to explore the idea of a lifestory. Gradually, they became aware of the various ways to handle a lifestory and how to explore various issues. The interviews of the last week were therefore more clearly focused in many respects, concentrating on such issues as midwifery and the transition to Christianity. Maaki Kakkik took care of the translation of the first week, Ooleepika Ikkidluak those of the second week. The translations are often quite literal and follow the Inuktitut closely, and we have tried to keep them like that in the editing process. Conveying the spirit of the interviews was most important to us.

The purpose of the course was not only to assist the students in collecting life stories, but also to support them in the development of their own research. This research was shaped in the form of essays presenting the ideas and customs of Inuit. This way of presenting Inuit knowledge obviously comes much closer to traditional Western ideas about the presentation of knowledge, and it posed quite a challenge to the students. It forced the students to think about their own traditions in a more or less qallunaat way, and they were only prepared to do that to a certain extent. Whereas we tend to attach great importance to the ethnographic literature on a subject, for the students the information of the elders remained much more important because it was more specific. In reading the essays, it became immediately clear how much the students opted to rely on the interviews. The essays may therefore appear at first sight to resemble essays produced by Western students; but on closer scrutiny it becomes clear that they are
written from a totally different perspective, in which the authority of the elders remains unchallenged. In this way, the students succeeded in connecting traditional patterns of thought and knowledge to modern Western ones. We hope that in the future, young Inuit will be more and more successful in integrating their own ways of thinking with the requirements of modern Western society. It is quite clear that if Inuit are to succeed in preserving their own cultural identity, they should not just adopt Western ideas and values, but transform them so that they make sense in their own society and culture.

The book concludes with stories collected by students as well as by Alexina Kublu. Inuit are great storytellers who love to tell and listen to stories (unikkaaqtauq). They convey ideas and values, as illustrated by the story told by Hervé Paniaq about the woman who concealed her miscarriage. Susan Enuaraq developed her essay so that the history of her grandfather would become a “legend.” A good story gives history a new meaning and sense: the stories not only relate what happened in the past, but the storytellers also provide them with a sense that makes them relevant to the present. A story is still a privileged means of conveying knowledge in Inuit society, and these stories therefore constitute an excellent ending for this book.

We wish to thank the elders as well as the students. As instructors, we learned much from them.

Alexina Kublu
Frédéric Laugrand
Jarich Oosten

The whole group at the end of the course.
Elisapee: I was born on January 6, 1931 where it’s constantly dark near Qausuittuq. They returned to Mittimatalik when I was a year old.

Who was your mother, and where did she come from?
Elisapee: We call the Mittimatalik area Tununiq. She was originally from Tununiq and her name was Ataguttiaq. Her father was Qamaniq, and her mother was Makpainnuk. My father’s father was Kipumii Qaaqiuq. His mother was Kautaq, who died when he was only a young boy. He ended up having a stepmother.

You’ve always lived in the High Arctic?
Elisapee: Yes, we’ve always lived in the Tununiq area.

Do we have to ask you questions? Do you want to tell us about your early years?
Elisapee: If my experiences will be used as an example, yes, I would like to be able to contribute.
We’d like to hear you tell us your lifestory.

Elisapee: My family moved away from the RCMP in 1932. We moved to another area of Tununiqu. After spending a year there, we moved back to Mittimatalik. I recall a bit when we were living at someone’s camp in 1936. I remember when we had our own camp. My father did not have his boat at that time because somebody else was using it. He had been given a boat when he was working for the RCMP. He had equipment which he had acquired from them. He had left his other boat in the Tununirusiq area. At the camp where we were, there was no material to make a boat, but I do not really remember as I was six years old. There was an old boat that had belonged to the whalers, which was near our camp. My father got some wood from there and built a small boat. It only required five sealskins for the cover so it was really small. He made it so he could fetch the seals he shot from the water. He was the only man of the camp, even though my older brother helped him. That summer, my father caught twenty whales. I do not recall that myself, but my brother does and he used to write about these things.

When winter came, thirty-four whales were trapped by ice and they were all caught, not only by my father but also by men from nearby camps. We never went hungry. As my father grew up an orphan, he was a determined hunter and he provided well. There were days when the weather wasn’t hunting weather. Then we would run out of food, as the food caches were far away.

Back then, children didn’t used to have money. The only source of money was fox skins and narwhal tusks. Even though my father worked for the RCMP, as soon as he quit his job, he had no more income from them. That’s how it used to be.

We can remember even when soap was scarce. We would go for long periods of time when we didn’t have contact with qallunaat. Only when the ice froze over, would we go where there were qallunaat, to get supplies such as tea and sugar. My father and my mother would go without smoking for the whole summer, but that didn’t seem to be a problem as we weren’t unhealthy then.

We lived a life which is completely different from today. We had lice on our heads and clothing. It didn’t seem to be a problem then as it was a way of life. There wasn’t an abundance of soap so we weren’t washed regularly.

I do recall my grandmother washing her face regularly though, each morning when she woke up. She did not have a basin so she would take a sip of water and use it to wash her face. That was how they used to wash their faces. There was never a question of how there must be saliva in the water she was using to wash her face with. She would take another sip of water and use that to rinse her face. The aroma of the soap used to smell so nice, and the smell of a match that was lit outside also had a nice smell. Even when I was a little child, it seemed to smell so good. I never considered it an awful stench. It doesn’t smell good in a house, but the odor of a lit match has a nice odor outside.
How many siblings did you have?

Elisapee: When I was a child, there were just the four of us. When I wasn’t a small child anymore, we had another sister. She died when she was two years old. When I was an adult, just before I had children, I had another sister so there were five of us then.

I do not know your siblings. Were they girls? I know you mentioned earlier you had a brother.

Elisapee: He is the oldest one, and his father was also a policeman back then. My mother’s husband was arrested as he had killed a qallunaat. My brother was conceived while he was incarcerated. The name of the man who was the murderer was Nuqallaq. My mother got pregnant from a policeman she was working for. They had a son, Samiuli Arnakallak. And when she married my father, she had a daughter, and I was the next child after her. She is still alive today.

Did your brother write in Inuktitut?

Elisapee: Yes, of course.

From whom did he learn it?

Elisapee: I was able to write by the time I was six years old. We were taught ai - ii - uu - aa when we were little children by our mother. And we would ask how certain syllabics were written. We would be taught, maybe because we did not have anything else to do. My brother could even read in English as he lived with the RCMP. He probably raised questions and he was probably taught. He wasn’t the smartest one, but he did have knowledge.

Did you have radios then?

Elisapee: I don’t think even the qallunaat had radios then.

When you were living up there, did you listen to children’s songs sung by your mother and grandfather?

Elisapee: In 1936 when I was small, my parents were baptized. They were told to give up their old traditions so they wouldn’t be singing ajaajaa songs. They only sang hymns from the Bible on Sundays when we gathered together. My mother wasn’t much of a singer, but our grandmother always sang hymns. I knew songs that the children sang. Only when I became an adult, I learnt ajaajias as I should know them too.
Were there a lot of people in your camp?

Elisapee: In 1936, there were seven adults in our camp. Sometimes there were other people in our camp, and sometimes it was just our family. There used to be eight or nine members in our camp.

When one was injured or cut, were you assisted by your relatives?

Elisapee: When we were children, we used to be attended to, if we got a cut. We would be bandaged with cloth. I often received big, deep cuts when I was a child. One time, I received a big cut. My father tied a piece of cloth around it and held it up so it would stop bleeding. That was probably how they treated big cuts, tying them and holding them up. My relatives weren’t prone to injuring themselves. It was me who often got cuts, although I recall my brother, Asarmi, before he was a year old. He had a swelling around his neck for what I think was a long time. My father made a small knife. It wasn’t a pocket knife. He probably made it from a saw blade. It was small, and he made it really sharp and put a wooden handle on it. He punctured my brother’s neck while he was sleeping, as it was really swollen. Once he punctured it, the abscess really started to flow. And soon after, it started to heal. I don’t recall too well, as I was only a child, but it must have been hard for my parents wondering what was going to happen next. My brother was really crying for a while and once he stopped, he started to walk around on the floor. I’ve known of a person being punctured on more than one occasion.

There were no doctors?

Elisapee: Yes. Mittimatalik only got nurses in 1954. Not a doctor but a nurse.

Inuit were your only nurses. Did you ever hear that there were nurses in other areas?

Elisapee: We did not hear of medical people. It was only in the 1960s that we got a radio. I often listened to Greenland as we did not get any programs in Inuktitut. It’s only these days that we can hear programs from other communities.

You shouldn’t be wary of asking us any questions as we are not at home. You can ask us if we were really dirty as we did not have an abundance of soap, and you can say we probably had a lot of lice even though we tried to remove them. What did we eat for breakfast, what did we clean our hands with? We are not ashamed to answer those types of questions.

Introduction to the Oral Traditions
I did not get it clearly. What were they punctured with when they had an abscess?

Elisapee: Do you know the saws that are used to cut wood and also to make ulus? They used saws when they made the little knife as it was probably the sharpest type of metal.

What was the word used to say that particular knife... killuuqsirngait?

Elisapee: Killuuqsirngat.

Knives made in that manner were called killuuqsirngat?

Elisapee: If anything is made out of a saw blade, it is called killuuqsirngat. The metal that barrels are made of is not very sturdy and it cannot get really sharp, so it wasn’t used to make knives.

I really wanted to ask you how you got a husband and how your husband took you as a wife.

Elisapee: When I was a small child, my late husband and myself were arranged, even though he was a relative of mine. Back then, it was seen to be more appropriate to be betrothed to a close relative as long as it wasn’t a maternal first cousin.

My father used to travel with the RCMP, even when he was no longer working for them, to Iglulik and Kangnitugaapik and also to other places such as Tununirusiq. When he was going to travel by dogteam, we went to Mittimatalik so we could wait for my father there while he was travelling. There were myself, my mother, my sister and my brother. That was the first time I had seen him [my betrothed] from afar, for a long time. I had seen him when I was younger, but now his father worked for the RCMP, and they lived in Mittimatalik. I hadn’t seen him for a long time. I was fifteen then. I was really shy of him, so I never even made eye contact with him and he was to be my husband the following spring.

We were not used to being amongst males other than our brothers. I did not know how to relate to a male. We did not know how, and we were not into admiring the looks of men. I was only fifteen, and we weren’t used to being amongst other young males.

After seeing him a few times with other people in Mittimatalik, we went back to our camp. My brother then went for supplies to Mittimatalik and apparently my future husband rode back with my brother and he started to live with us.

I knew my older sister was betrothed for quite a while. My parents said because she was under sixteen, they had to wait a year. Once she turned sixteen, they came to get her.

I expected my parents to treat me in the same manner. When men weren’t your brothers it was very hard to relate to them as one wasn’t used to having other males...
around. He arrived when I was fifteen. He had been with us for a while when my father arrived from bear-hunting. My mother told him that his future son-in-law was here. I don’t know how he reacted because he was not my biological father, but he smiled and happily replied that he would have an additional helper now.

You didn’t even feel like touching the person at first, but eventually you got used to it. For that reason, I had to try and be happy about my future husband, even though just making eye contact with him was hard and there was nowhere to flee.

I am not just talking about myself. I think that’s how couples got to be together. Not too long after I met him, by summer time, he was a really close friend. When [a man] was keen on getting married, [he was] not going to let you go. Even though you didn’t want to be touched in the first place, you eventually got used to it.

The way I understood marriage back then, and I used to write about events, I considered ourselves married when we started to go together. We were approached by three different ministers who wanted to marry us, but I always refused. They said we had to be married in church to make it official, but God can see what’s happening and he was already our witness. I won my arguments and we still weren’t married in 1994.

What do you mean when you say that they would get used to it?
Elisapee: As I said earlier, you didn’t feel like touching your new spouse at first and it was impossible when you had never touched a man before. From the way he talked to you, followed you around, you eventually got used to being around him. They would not try to hold our hands. We did as much as we could to avoid sexual contact. Because I was intimidated by my parents, I didn’t try to pick something up and hit him with it.

Some were like that?
Elisapee: Yes, I was intimidated by my parents. Even though I tried to resist, I wasn’t permitted to do this too much. I didn’t want a husband back then, but I ended up having a wonderful husband. It was because I wanted to be a child longer. It must be embarrassing for you to listen to this.

Was the husband that was arranged for you already known when your mother was pregnant with you?
Elisapee: No, it was probably arranged when we were really small. Our parents got together. Both myself and my future husband were chubby little babies, so then they decided we would be man and wife.
How did you learn to sew?

Elisapee: We were not told directly to learn how to sew. Our mothers and our grandmothers would say we could not do it, so we used scraps and sewed them. Even then, they wanted to do it instead, out of fear that the needle might get lost. Sometimes, when we asked again, we would be given materials. I mainly liked sewing with duffle, the duffle we use to make duffle socks. I liked sewing them most. They were often reluctant to share the duffle. We would practice softening skin, even if we weren’t asked to do it. I think we started working with scraps. I am sure our mothers didn’t have the time just to teach us as they were constantly busy. I am sure we practiced sewing, even though our work probably wasn’t noticed at first, and we were really keen on finishing it. And when you thought you had done the perfect job and showed it off, you were told that you had made the seam too high.

For that reason, sometimes it confuses me why our students get positive praise. When we praise our students they seem to learn sooner. That’s not how I used to treat my older sons about what they were learning. When they wrote, I would tell them, “You are not very good at making something,” following the way I was treated. I would tell them that although they had been in school a long time, they were still not good at what they were doing.

Even though this seems painful, when I was a child, my feelings weren’t easily hurt. Some people would tell me that I did not take things seriously and some would say that I talked too much. My parents would tell me to be quiet and stay put. I do not know why these things didn’t make me give up. I was often dealt with in a negative way. I would be told that I was not good at making anything. Yes, I would start to think that I’d like to do better. We are all taking different journeys, and I am the type of person who just doesn’t lie back and be lazy during life. I do not know why I walked that path. I was never lazy, even [doing] a man’s job to my capability.

My older sister who was next to me wasn’t like that. She didn’t like working with meat or skins. I was completely different from her. I found it comfortable to be different from my sister as she didn’t really do anything, and I did mostly everything. We were treated equally. When we were growing up, around the age of twelve, we were different from each other, from what I know. She wouldn’t do anything. They would speak to her in a not-so-nice way. We were treated equally, and thanked by our grandmother. Our grandmother was starting to be limited in doing things and she was always thankful for the help. When you are part of that, you want to be able to do more.

My father did not have a son who was able to help him. I had a brother, but he had his own dogs too. We were taken care of by the dogs too. My father did not have anyone to help him, so I would help him in the morning in the dark by harnessing the dogs. I loved my father so I wanted to help him. I’ve been speaking of myself as if I were perfect. There were times I was scolded too, and I guess I didn’t listen well at times, and I teased a lot. Do you know what I mean when I say tapasuk- [tease].

Life Stories — Elisapee Ootoova
Yes.

Elisapee: I would tag them fast. My oldest brother would hit me. It's painful when you are hit like this and punched like this, but I would abstain from crying so I could tease again later. That was probably why I was told that I didn’t take things seriously, as I tended to tease everybody. And when I learnt songs from our camp visitors, I would sing them a lot. I guess that’s why people didn’t like me either. I was the type of person that didn’t heed what I was told. We were often reminded that we weren’t supposed to listen to conversations, but I was an expert listener. I’d pretend I wasn’t listening to anything and here I was listening. Eventually I would be able to ask, “How come you fear men; what will they do?” “Stop asking questions for a change,” would be the reply I was given. It turns out I would be saying the same sort of thing later in my life.

It is difficult to touch someone on their flesh, it turned out. I knew my brother’s biological father was a qallunaaq. I wasn’t aware of myself then, and I probably didn’t see myself like that. I saw pictures of qallunaat, policeman and ministers, and they would be smoking tobacco with a beautiful aroma. I asked my mother when I was quite small, as I had heard that she had a qallunaaq for a husband, I asked her if the qallunaat were good in bed. I was scolded then because I tried to find out a lot of information. My mother should have just said, “Yes.” She should have said that they are good in bed if they are clean.

They do not all smell good.

Elisapee: I think qallunaat smell good. I mean if they’re clean and they don’t have lice, they must smell good.

Can you tell us how women had to be when they had to abstain from something?

Elisapee: We have only heard of that. We did not experience it ourselves. As I said earlier, my parents were baptized in 1936 and they took on the lifestyle that was recommended. My mother did have to practice abstaining, as there were a lot of things that women had to abstain from. The monthly period that women go through...it had to be known when a woman had her period. She was not allowed to sit where men sit, since a man is a hunter and goes after animals. I have written about this, but I myself have only heard of it.

A pregnant lady had to follow certain practices, if she knew that she was pregnant and if others were aware of it. She was felt around her abdominal area by an elder trying to feel the foetus. They can be felt. There is something in there that wasn’t there before. They tried to find out early, as a woman had to practice certain things if she was pregnant. She was not allowed to eat raw meat, only boiled meat.
She wasn’t allowed to eat raw meat when she got pregnant?

Elisapee: Only boiled meat. And when she woke up, she wasn’t allowed to stay in bed. She was supposed to get up right away but not to jump up. She had to get up and go outside. When she came back in, she could do whatever she wanted to do, as nobody wanted anything to happen to her foetus. I still feel this practice is necessary as the foetus inside the woman needs a comfortable place. Even though we don’t have to abstain from anything now, I feel it is necessary to listen to advice one is given about abstaining. You are told not to smoke while pregnant. You have to absolutely abstain from smoking. I believe in that.

I think that our ancestors also believed that the foetus should be well taken care of for its future. A pregnant woman had to go out early. She had to meet her husband each time he arrived from hunting to help him. Even if she didn’t help him, she had to meet him. As her stomach grew, she had to follow certain practices. She was not allowed to relax too much as the placenta might stick to her womb if she just tended to lie around. Even if it isn’t true, that’s how it was seen. If we sailliq- relaxed too much, as a mother and in charge of our body, we would rub and try to move the baby around.

I don’t understand what you mean by sailliq-?

Elisapee: By sailliq- I mean just tending to sit around and watch television and do nothing else. They are called those who tend to relax too much, sailliqtujuq. Some have no room for relaxation, forever being busy. Some pregnant women were asked to take naps in the day time if they felt tired so they wouldn’t be tired. They weren’t allowed to nap or sleep for too long, and they didn’t have a choice, even when certain customs or prescriptions were practiced. We had no choice. Our husbands weren’t allowed to be angry when we were pregnant, even if we tended to have a bad temper. I started to listen as I didn’t want to tease any more, as if I were scared. No wonder; I was no longer a child then.

Were you taught about being in labour?

Elisapee: No, I was never taught. Only when I was going into labour was I advised by my mother and mother-in-law as to how I should be. I tried to follow the advice I was given. Because I couldn’t find a comfortable position I was advised to lie on my back. When I was on my back I became more comfortable. I became sleepy. We say that the woman is upright, even though she is not quite upright, when she is in a sitting position, resting on her legs. That’s when we say she’s upright. It’s not like she’s in an upside-down position and standing on her head [napa- can have both meanings]. When you are in an upright position, you can be quite uncomfortable when you have to try to stay in that position and you are not allowed to lie down. I don’t think this is a good position, lying down is a more comfortable position.
This is while you are in labour?

Elisapee: Yes, so the delivery would go faster and I wouldn’t be in pain for too long. Following the contractions, you tried to get it into position so it would come faster. And when you accept the pain, the labour goes faster. It is not the mother’s job to let the baby out. It’s the womb that decides when the baby is coming out. With each contraction, the baby gets into a lower position. The women in labour seemed to be taken better care of back then. I have delivered twice in the hospital and I was scared. It was the first time I was in labour without my mother-in-law being present and I was alone. The bed that I lay on seemed to be too narrow and short, and it seemed as if I was going to fall off the bed, and on top of that I was having contractions. I had to open my legs to the nurses and I was really scared. That is not the way we used to deliver. Our legs used to be covered with blankets, and we didn’t have to open our legs to anyone. I have delivered nine children in my home. At my tenth delivery I was at the hospital here. It was as if I were in labour for the first time. I was afraid of falling and I didn’t know what was going on. I didn’t have an interpreter and I was scared. It isn’t a very good memory when I think of it. There were no interpreters in the hospital back in 1968. It’s a wonder that I delivered. The next time I delivered in the hospital, it was in the hallway on a bed as there was no other bed available. There was a helicopter crash at that time, and the passengers required medical attention. They needed the beds. I was in labour and delivered in the hallway. On top of that the bed was very soft. I was in labour for a long time, and when the baby was born, he didn’t cry for a long time. I was told that his lungs didn’t expand properly, but then he was fine afterwards.

We used to be in labour while being closely taken care of. The legs were positioned so that they were equally placed, so it wouldn’t be so painful in the pelvic area. They wouldn’t feel so much pain in the lower back, as the legs would be equally parted. The woman in labour was carefully attended to, so that her body was in balance in every position. People were more concerned with the woman than with the baby that was going to come out. The woman isn’t the first priority in the hospital. It is always the foetus they are more concerned about and it is better taken care of. The mother has to be well taken care of as well, as she is scared. It is not proper care of a woman in labour when one of the legs is in a higher position than the other.

I was present when a woman was in labour in our community. It wasn’t her first delivery. She bent her legs and then straightened them. The nurse did not do anything. I told the nurse to look at the leg, for if a leg isn’t positioned the proper way, it might break.

Was it a taboo for a pregnant girl to cut her hair while she was pregnant?

Elisapee: I don’t believe in this. I believe that a pregnant woman shouldn’t just be idle. She is not to be in a really angry state that affects her mind. I don’t know about the visual
taboos. If a woman believes in them, and she’s told this might happen to her, it might end up a reality. Our mind is very powerful in its control over us.

*I wonder why a pregnant girl wasn’t allowed just to go ahead and take a sip from the cooking pot.*

**Elisapee:** I have never heard about that. I was trying to talk about women in labour who today are no longer alone. When a woman was alone in an iglu and had blankets, she would be advised through an opening in the tent or through the entrance. She had no physical contact. After she had given birth, she had two pots. One was bigger than the other. The bigger one would be used for those things that were boiled with fat, the rib part where there’s meat. I think she also had a separate soup bowl. I have never heard if she was supposed to drink from it [or not].

**You said you yourself have given birth nine times at home. Did you have midwives?**

**Elisapee:** Yes. Even though there were other members in our camp, I tended to get scared when I was in labour and I was alone with my mother-in-law. I have also delivered when I was away. I was attended to by a person other than my mother-in-law.

**When a women delivered, was she up and about the same day and doing her chores already? Was it like that?**

**Elisapee:** Myself, yes. I cannot sit around, probably because I am a teaser. I just can’t be idle. It is a great feeling once you have given birth to a child. Once I was in my bed I would put on my pants. Once I became comfortable, I would try to stay still but I would begin to do more and more things behind my mother-in-law’s back. You feel like you just opened up. You feel wide awake. You feel like a beautiful woman. It is a joyous time when you wake up. You just went through labour and it’s over. When a woman who just gave birth was bleeding heavily, she was advised not to just lie around.

**What was done to help a woman who was bleeding heavily?**

**Elisapee:** There weren’t many births where women bled heavily. I know from my own personal experience. After I’d given birth three times, I was bleeding heavily with my third one. My husband was away at the time. It seemed as if my belly was expanding but it was from blood. My mother-in-law asked me why I was not up and about. She said I looked as if I were pregnant. I suddenly was aware of it, and I said, “Yes. It is painful.” Apparently my uterus was full of blood clots. I seemed to be having contractions, and it became worse during the night, and I was losing my sight. My child
was being taken care of. I kept my eyes closed, and then opened them again and went back to sleep. After I had slept I woke up in a better condition. My skin was completely white. Even after I was like that, I recovered. I was not made to walk around. I wasn’t meant to die then.

_Today we see people adopting a lot from everywhere. Was it like that back then, too?_  

**Elisapee:** Absolutely. Babies were not treated like dolls then. We have come across those who were adopted when they were not so small. The child would be mistreated and I’ve known of another family wanting to adopt the abused child. I never knew of anyone adopting a newborn child where we lived. Adoptions were arranged by elders. They were allowed to adopt after a birth if a woman had had a problem having children. The mother or the mother-in-law would search around as to where she could adopt from. My firstborn was taken by my mother-in-law when I bore the second one, even though I didn’t want to let him go.

*She was the one who wanted to adopt...the old lady?*  

**Elisapee:** The grandmother. As if she were able to take better care of him. Maybe that’s why she took him. I do not know why she took him.

Once they’re born, they are very adorable. So while they were still in the mother’s womb, it would be known that they were going to be adopted. If a particular mother had too many children, it must have been hard to look after them all. Even looking after one is tiring.

There’s a limited number of jobs available for our children. It is easy to see they do not know how to live the Inuk way, and they do not know how to live the _qallunaaq_ way. I think it’s not knowing the future which puts us in a scary position. Women have to pay attention as to how to use contraception. As for the women who go for abortion, I think abortion is wrong. When women miscarried, they used to keep it a secret because of the taboos they had to follow. The camps would go through hunger and lack of food. Or camp members would get sick, or something would happen to the community if anyone was keeping a secret. It’s probably the same when an abortion is performed, but a woman is not aware of it. If she _tunuallak_- [slipped], she could be injured.

_How did they tunuallak-?_  

**Elisapee:** Slipping while walking. When you land more on one side, it can be dangerous.
It’s more dangerous to land on your side?

Elisapee: Yes.

When a girl got pregnant, did the man who was the father have rules to follow too?

Elisapee: Yes, the pregnant one.

I mean the father, the husband?

Elisapee: Yes, in some ways. He abstained from eating raw meat with his wife, even though he could eat it if he was out hunting. But at home, he had to abstain from it. The woman was only permitted to eat what her husband had caught. She was not allowed to eat from elsewhere, if that were possible. The women who were married to men who weren’t successful hunters were said to be often hungry. The term kilingajuq was used when a man had to follow rules because his wife was pregnant. The men had rules to follow while their wives were pregnant. Those are the ones that are called kilingajuq. A man followed the rules as he loved his wife.

I wonder if the men were told, as I have heard, that they weren’t allowed to hurt their [wives’] feelings?

Elisapee: If the issue wasn’t that important, he had to try and be more understanding while she was pregnant. If she didn’t listen, then he had to be tactful [nikaginngilugu]. If she still didn’t listen, then she started getting abused. If she listened, then she wasn’t abused.

What do you mean, nikaginngilugu?

Elisapee: While she is pregnant, you should try and be tactful with her.

Paniaq: I shouldn’t give a person a hard time, that’s what is meant by nikagilugu, not putting a person through hardship.

Elisapee: Let’s get back to adoption. The daughter or the daughter-in-law would adopt only when elders advised adoption. But the one who delivered the child was reluctant to let the newborn go. They weren’t given anything by the adoptive parents. If one was reluctant to give a child away, the child’s life would be short. It is very different to how adoption is handled today. Some say, “I don’t want to keep this child. Are you willing to adopt it?” Now this is done without informing the elders. A woman doesn’t even
consider the fact that the child she is carrying has feelings. The foetus she is carrying is human also. He will find out later where he is from. The ones that are adopted tend to break the law and face court. We deal with them through the community justice program. It’s the ones who were adopted who tend to break the law. The adoptive mother says she loves him very much. I think if one shows too much love when they are young, that’s probably why they tend to break the law. You should treat them equal to your other children. Don’t favor them. They have to be well taken care of and given a good home like the rest of us as they are only human. Don’t tell them you love them more than others, or then they will start breaking the law. If they have a short temper and aren’t like your natural children, you shouldn’t tell them they take after their natural family. Or, if they tend to sleep a lot and it’s really noticeable, you shouldn’t tell them that they take after their natural family. This is their own personality. When one is called “half-white,” there’s nothing you can do to change that.

I am going to ask something about teaching. What do you think of the way students are taught today?

Elisapee: In our community, school started in 1963. It seemed to be good then. Not all of my children attended school. The younger of the two older ones was in school. It turns out it was wrong of us to agree to send them to school when the teaching material was irrelevant to the North. We were wrong in some ways and right in other ways. It is good to learn to read and write in English, to be able to understand the language. But they were not taught about the lifestyle in the North. All our children in Mittimatik have been taught as though they were to continue on to Ottawa. They are not taught the way of life in our community. They are not taught what to do when food becomes scarce. They start asking, “Do you have money?” They have no qualms about asking that question. They sure know how to ask for money now in our community. We were not like that. We wouldn’t ask for anything. We were respectful and didn’t want to ask for anything. If we didn’t have it, then we didn’t have it. Children today seem to think it’s okay not to eat meat; as long as they have junk food they are happy. And we are not used to having Inuit teachers. They are teaching using the qallunaat method, doing paperwork. Kids today need to be outside more. Back then, before our children went to school, they tended to be more relaxed if they had been playing outside. Now they sit in school all day. You probably get students who can’t settle down, because they have a need to be outside. They are in the building all the time. The girls enjoy being in the school. They should be taught in Inuktitut if they’re going to be in the North.
I would like to have more information on your family. Your late mother was Ataguttiaq. Have you found information as to who your father is, the policeman?

Elisapee: Yes, I am aware of who he is now, but I won’t release it.

Yes, that’s okay. Kipumii’s father was Qaaqiuk and the mother, Kautaq. When the mother died, who became the stepmother?

Elisapee: When the mother died he was raised by his uncle Amarualik, who was married to my mother’s older sister.

Qaaqiuk remarried your mom’s sister?

Elisapee: No. He had two wives, Qajaq and Kautaq. Kautaq died after giving birth to Kipumi. He continued to live with Qajaq. My father did not have a mother, so he was raised by his uncle Amarualik as an adopted son.

You mentioned your grandmother yesterday. Who was she?

Elisapee: My mother’s mother’s name was Makpainnuk. Her husband’s name was Qamanik. She bore six children. Only two survived. The oldest is Inuujaq and the younger was Ataguttiaq.

Due to illness?

Elisapee: Probably. They often died for the same reason. Once one didn’t survive, the others tended to do the same.

Were the ones without parents considered orphans?

Elisapee: Even if they had a father and no mother, they were considered orphans. Or if they had a mother and no father. We can imagine them living in an iglu or a qarmaq and the father died, the provider of the fuel for the qulliq. They had to be supplied by other camp members when they caught seals. It must have been hard for them. Then the relatives and the people who were not related to the family had to provide for them. There was no Housing Association that they could turn to. Then the time came for the people to move on to different camps, where seals and their pups were available, or where there were caribou, according to the seasons, and the bears roaming. In March, they would go down to the floe edge to catch seal pups, as they knew what animals were available at various times. That’s when the orphaned family had to be considered.
Were they taken along or left behind? The only method of travel was the dogteam, and that probably made it even harder.

My grandmother’s father also died. She was raised by her uncle. Her uncle went down south. Maybe you have heard about him from the books. He often killed people who had tried to kill him first. He ended up killing them instead. At least two or three people. He was taken down south as he was considered a hero. He came back an old man. He’s buried somewhere around our community but I don’t know where exactly.

*What was his name?*

**Elisapee:** Iqilaarjuk

*Was he a shaman?*

**Elisapee:** Most likely. One had to have powers to be able to go forward. There was no RCMP or Social Services to keep everybody in check. So they would be handled by the elders as they saw fit. Some were probably hard to deal with, as some murders did take place. When someone was considered dangerous, and the people started fearing him [tillirijau-], he would be killed with a bow and arrow, or a knife.

*What do you mean tillirijau-?*

**Elisapee:** When one started thinking, “Maybe I’ll be approached soon,” or “Maybe he’ll attack me.” Even today we tilliq- when we hear that somebody is drunk, out of concern that something might happen to them.

*So Iqilaarjuk was finally caught when the RCMP arrived after the 1920s?*

**Elisapee:** He was never arrested by the police. He was considered a hero, so he was taken down south. He was greatly admired, so they took him down to see the great south. He did not murder anyone in cold blood. He just had the job of removing some bad people.

*When we heard that he was taken south, I thought it was because he killed people.*

**Elisapee:** He was not arrested; it was because he was a great man. He was the wisest amongst the group of Inuit he was with. For example, we see cowboy movies where the cowboy is sleeping or relaxing; yet when someone approaches him, he is aware of it right away. That’s how this man was. They were camping where they were hunting for seal. He went out of the tent, sat outside and napped. Now, he was an old man, and he
wasn’t a hunter anymore. The men started talking amongst themselves. One said, “Let’s see how the man who used to be alert reacts.” One of them went around, approached the man, going towards him from a distance and from behind. Pretending to go get him at a very slow pace, while he was nodding and napping. He was still very alert. Even though the man approached him quietly, sure enough, he glanced at him right away. If we strive to be a person like that, we can be like that too.

He was from Mittimatalik, the Tununiq area?

Elisapee: Yes, he was from the Tununiq area, around Iglulik. That’s the area where he used to travel.

I’m going to move on to something else, to the months of the year. I have heard there was some great singing to celebrate the return of the sun. Can you tell me the story behind the song?

Elisapee: Yes. There’s no specific time for the song. During the summer, the seal and the bearded seal were cached if there was an abundance, even if it was far from the main camp. When you go hungry, you have no one to turn to, to let them know you are hungry. The distance to the cache is no barrier in times of hunger. The weather does not always cooperate either, for hunters to hunt daily. If they did not have caches, they would wonder if they would starve, even though they were constantly hunting for seals under the ice. Right now the dark season is coming to our land. The sky is getting darker. November, December and January are dark months. Sickness comes at this time. When you are recovering from an illness, the sun starts to come back. You know it’s a new season again, even though nothing is written. They probably used their fingers to count the months and used the stars to identify what season it was. You can see them shining out there and eventually they disappear. Two stars that are like this [demonstrating], akuttujuuk. When they start disappearing, you know that the days are getting longer. One is no longer ill, the stars are disappearing at longer intervals, and you know that daylight is returning.

So the two stars are called Akuttujuuk?

Elisapee: Yes, that term means that they have a certain distance between them. They look like this [demonstrating]. We can see them in our home community when the daylight arrives. So once the signs of daylight arrived, my grandfather made the song.
So that’s Qaaqiuq’s song.

**Elisapee:** I will sing the song but some of the words have been changed.

Alianaittuqaapuq inuunialirama uluq suli tauva
I’m so glad I’ll be alive with the daylight out there
Ajajaajaaja ajajaajaaja
akuttujuuk anggutivuuk uluq suli tauva
The two with a lot of space have caught up
Ajajaajaaja ajajaajaaja
quvisuliqpuqunga inuuariama
I am happy that I’ll be living
Ajajaajaaja ajajaajaaja

That’s the song that he sang, for he’d be living again after the dark and cold. It’s not easy to find the seal breathing holes and to hunt caribou in the dark when caribou are hard to see. It gets really dark around our land, and it’s colder than Iqaluit. Though we can still survive, even when it’s like that.

**Yes, I was up there in the winter. What do you mean they were able to nikpaq-?**

**Elisapee:** Around our land there is a lot of snow. The hard surface of the ice is hidden by soft snow. When it’s like that, they have the dogs sniff it to find the seal holes. Once they’re found, they use the harpoon to find the hole, and set up to wait for the seal. They can stand and wait up to an hour, just standing there waiting for a seal, ready to harpoon it. Even though it’s very cold, they stand on rabbit skin for warmth and to keep their feet from making any sound. Even if the seal is not present, they cannot make any sound at all with their feet. They are doing everything they can so they can provide food for their family and also for their dogs. If they have no dogs, the area is too broad to hunt on foot and it requires too much time. They loved their dogs too. Paniaq probably knows that he loves his dogs as he loves humans. Dogs were his means of providing survival. If they are sick or if they have a problem he loves them less than humans. But he doesn’t want them to go hungry. He really wants them to eat. When we started having **qallunaat** supplies, this is how we used to be. When a seal was caught, we’d keep just enough to cook and gave the rest to the dogs, as we could have tea and bannock. So it wasn’t so important that we had the whole thing. As long as we had food in our stomach, our husbands didn’t seem to make us their priority, knowing that we wouldn’t starve. The seals used to be caught by being harpooned, prior to our time. By the time we were around, there were rifles so it wasn’t too hard for us. The spears would be attached to the rifles, and when the breath of the seal was heard, it was shot, if it wasn’t actually up
on a floe. They would also use a wire which was put into the snow over the hole and when the wire got pushed up they would know the seal was there and push it. Paniaq can probably tell you that if you find an aglu, a seal hole, you have to stand up facing towards daylight. This is a known fact for those who wait for the seal. Men know the movements of the seal and the caribou. Men have a lot more knowledge then we do. They shouldn’t just be thrown in prison as they have a lot of capabilities. They can build an iglu in the coldest weather, they can start snowmobiles that we give up on, and they can fix anything even if it is cold. Even if they commit a crime, they shouldn’t just be thrown in prison. They can be put to use for many purposes.

Now I’d like to ask about 1936, when you switched to Christianity. Before then, [people] were never baptized. Did you have a different name before baptism?

Elisapee: Yes, my parents were baptized in 1936. Children didn’t get baptized then, so my siblings and I didn’t get baptized. In 1942 when I was eleven years old I got baptized. I became Elisapee when I was eleven years old. My name had been Qiliqti since birth. Now, I abhor that name as there are other Qiliqts, and I don’t want to have the same name as they. When I am asked who I am, I reply, “Quinangnaq,” as that was Qiliqti’s other name.

Who was that, your relative?

Elisapee: Yes, my mother’s relative. You are trying to talk about belief. I don’t think there was a term for this before Christianity arrived. They were considered Christians only after they had been baptized. I do not know how it was before Christianity arrived. The Bible has been around for quite a while. Even when my mother was a child, she had heard about God. Then the things that were considered taboo were no longer practiced. Women were no longer required to deliver a baby alone in an iglu. The Inuit were asked to let go of all of these things when we were children.

Even before they were baptized?

Elisapee: They were given sections of the Bible and some hymn books. We had to start gathering to pray on Sundays, even though there was no minister around. The wisest member of the community was the one leading the sermons. We did not understand how we had to live in Christ. Even myself, I became an adult before I fully understood what Christianity meant. We probably believed in Christ just in our heads and not in our hearts. Probably it was not coordinated properly. Only today are we starting to understand what it means to live in Christ. It seems that it is only proper now to call us
Christians, knowing what we know now. We used to believe everything that we were raised to believe, such as abstaining from certain things, abstaining from eating raw meat. Christians today are just starting to understand the things that they shouldn’t be doing as Christians. Back then, when we no longer followed the traditional way of life, I think we got lost along the way as there were no set rules to follow, once the traditional ways were condemned. The only requirements we had to follow were no hunting on Sundays for the men, no sewing for the women and not doing anything on Sundays. Those were basically the rules we had to follow. It did not matter if we judged other people or disliked them. It was because we had no rules to follow that we were doing these things.

You mentioned abstaining from eating raw meat when Christianity started.

Elisapee: Yes, I mentioned earlier that women who had just delivered babies would be required to abstain from eating raw meat. This practice was followed as it was one of the rules that the women had to follow. All along we had to follow God’s rules too, as they are just as valid. As He is our Creator we must follow what He wants us to do. We can look up to how our ancestors followed the required rules. If we let go of them, we should have the respect for the rules that apply to Christianity. We are told that we should love one another. I cannot say that it changed suddenly, as it was gradual.

We used to say and think that the Catholics were following the wrong religion. The people around the Iglulik area were more into this religion. Maybe Paniáq is not Catholic, but we called the Catholics the people who made the sign of the cross. That was before we really understood the word of God. We were also told by our own ministers that we were not to go to them as they were following the wrong religion, which probably influenced us more to turn against them. That was one of the things that changed our life as well. It had always been the way of Inuit to help each other, without thinking twice about what type of people they really were. If they required dogs, they would be given what they needed even if they were from Iglulik, for the Iglulik people used to help those who were from the Mittimatalik area. It was a way of helping each other. Even that way of life was destroyed by the arrival of Christianity. We started to look down on each other. Myself, I thought I was following the perfect religion, since our minister was a non-smoker and the Catholic priest smoked a pipe. I definitely saw that as a sin and a reason to go against their religion. He would be smoking a bent pipe and the tobacco smelled awful. It used to smell like cigars. Do you know what cigars are?

Yes.

Elisapee: Our minister didn’t smoke, and his house had a beautiful aroma. I thought because of that I surely was following the perfect religion. I guess we just believed in our
heads, and it was wrong of us. I am not ashamed to admit how we were, when we were against the other religion. It was not only us. The Catholics were against us, too, but they were not as bad as we were. We, Anglican people, seemed worse in this area then they were. We were not allowed to play with them as they made the sign of the cross. They were even made fun of by making the sign of the cross at them and asking them when they would ever complete making the cross. It was because of our lack of understanding of religion. Even today we do not fully understand.

What do you mean by Iksirarjuaq?

Elisapee: The people living around the Kivalliq area, around Naujaat, once noticed the way the minister was reading the Bible, very fast, and they named them Iksirarjuat.

When your parents got baptized, were there a lot of people? Was it just adults?

Elisapee: Yes, there were a lot of people, couples mostly. Even people from other camps were there, as it was a gathering place for people from all around. While they were there, they were baptized by the minister called Mikinniqsaq, who died by shooting himself. Have you heard about the minister who shot himself? Around 1947, he accidentally shot himself while he was seal-hunting, when the gun went off as he dropped it. He baptized the people around the Tununirusiq area. Once they were baptized, they were allowed to participate in Holy Communion even if they hadn’t been confirmed by the bishop.

For what purposes did the Inuit gather at Mittimatalik?

Elisapee: We knew the reason why we would gather at Mittimatalik. We often camped on the other side. Then we would start traveling towards Mittimatalik while hunting for jar seal, so we could trade the seals when we got there. That was the reason why we would go to Mittimatalik. Also, the shacks (minguktuutiit) had to be filled up with seals, and the HBC’s shack had to be filled up with them.

What do you mean by shacks? (minguktuutiit)

Elisapee: The place where they kept the food for the dogs, where the old meat was kept. The RCMP, HBC and the Catholic Mission all kept food for their dogs. We brought what would be used as dog food to the community and stayed just for a few days, maybe up to a week. We’d get tired of being in the community right away as the dogs were all loose.
Did you stay away from Mittimatalik for long intervals before the ice froze up?

Elisapee: Absolutely. We’d be there around June as there was an abundance of birds on the island across the bay. There would be a lot of geese. We’d live off the birds on our way back in July. We’d spend quite a while at our camp. Then we’d move on to another camp and then they would go fishing up the fiord or go caribou hunting while we were heading towards what would become our main camp. When we got there, the beach ice was still intact. We’d stay there all summer, and not go any place where there were qallunaat. Yesterday, I mentioned the month of news-hearing. Only then we were able to go for supplies, towards the end of the month or depending on the conditions of the ice. We, children and our mothers, only went where there were qallunaat in June. It was always amazing when we arrived where there were qallunaat. Their dumps were full of cans. They had beautiful paints on them. We would only collect them from the beach in cracks of the ice when the qallunaat were sleeping. We were afraid that they might say we were going through the garbage, so we waited until we thought that they were asleep. We were told by our mothers not to collect them while the qallunaat were awake. It was not because we were looking for something to eat; it’s just that we wanted a collection of cans for our own. There was nothing edible, as the edible things were devoured by the dogs. There was no sewage amongst the garbage either. There were outhouses where they could go when nature called. The sewage was probably taken to a flat surface and it was quickly devoured by the dogs. You didn’t even see traces of human feces anywhere as they were eaten by dogs.

I will ask questions regarding beliefs. I want more information on the gatherings that took place and on the celebrations of the return of the sun. What kind of games did you have? Did you have celebrations for the return of the sun?

Elisapee: Around the Mittimatalik area, there were very few caribou. We were lacking material for warm clothing, even though there was still some and that’s what our clothing was made of. We had some sealskin clothing, so some people were probably worried about the coming winter. At the later part of summer when the sun started going again, the blueberries were ripe in August. It seemed as if everyone was preparing for winter. They started to gather plants that would be used for insulation and wicks for the lamps. One could tell that fall had arrived when preparations for winter were visible and the heather and grasses were collected that would be used for bedding. The grass is nice and dry, it stays drier and it is nicer to look at than the heather. The large blades of grass called kilinarluit, they are good too, but they had a higher moisture content and were used more often for dogs that had puppies. When the ice had just frozen over, the season to trap foxes began. When the ice just forms, it’s easier to catch seal as there is no
snow yet, even though winter’s coming. There were joyous seasons such as ptarmigan season. Ptarmigan is a priority over other birds as it is a delicacy. We eat it raw without cooking it and we eat practically the whole thing. We cook the other birds that we eat. It’s not a taboo, but that’s how we eat them. The ptarmigans are fat in the fall, when everything seems fresh and fatter. There are beautiful parts to the fall in some ways. Everything seems to be much more fresh and fattened up. It has its own beauty even though it’s autumn.

The Inuit used to gather at Mittimalik. Did they play games?

Elisapee: Absolutely. When the people gathered, children and young people would play with a ball, though the adults weren’t involved, to my recollection. They used to have up to four teams if there were a lot of people. Sometimes two teams would try to take the ball from each other. The young men would have wrestling matches as well. They never seemed to get angry at each other, even though they really tried hard to win, to the point where their clothing was ripped when they tried to outdo each other. They’d stop only if the ball was taken by a girl. Do you understand what I mean by wrestling? We children also played a game called aattaujaq.

What do you mean by aattaujaq?

Elisapee: A form of playing ball, catching the ball and throwing it to your team members, that’s called aattaujaq.

What about the games that are played today? Such as the game of high kicking, when little seals made from skins are hung on a pole. Do you recall those?

Elisapee: That was not played in our community. They’d play jumping games though, trying to hang by their arms from a bar of wood. They would just play for fun and not even worry about winning. It was just trying to outdo each other.

Was this at a special time of the year or was it just when it was daylight?

Elisapee: Anytime when it was not so cold anymore, usually in the early spring when people gathered together, when they didn’t really have to worry about hunting, and there was an abundance of food. When they had to worry about hunting, there was no time for games. Just the younger people and children often played. We children had a way of playing, too. Now that I look back, we were pretending to be adults. We’d pretend to have babies. Our babies would go hungry and we’d feed them. They’d soil
their diapers and we’d change them. We carried them on our backs and we’d take them out and pretend to sleep with them. We were actually pretending to be adults and copying our mothers. Maybe we didn’t talk exactly like them, but we pretended to be someone we looked up to. We’d pretend to share our dwelling and we’d talk with our voices high pitched. “So you’ve come to visit?” and the boys would talk in a really low pitch pretending to be the men, and they would say, “I have arrived.” Even as boys, they would talk like men. That is how we used to play. We would ask, “Are you making kamiik?” and one would reply, “I’m making kamiik.” I do not hear children playing like that [today] though. I’ll have my grandson leave his toy cars and other toys while I play with him. I’ll give him a toy boat and ask him to pretend to go seal hunting. I actually teach him the words that he can use when he plays. Once he learns, he asks me to play with him. I see that children don’t know how to play these days. They don’t pretend to be adults anymore. Toy cars are their basic toys, and they aren’t human. All they say is “vroooom” when they are playing with their cars or their airplanes. They don’t say, “I have arrived.” They don’t talk like that. It is very obvious to see that your children can’t play these days. If they play with dolls, all they do is hold them and walk around. We used to play with miniature dolls called inujjait. We’d pretend to go visiting, pretend to eat, pretend to go hunting. Those are the games we used to play. We did not use computers or watch TV. Those are the only things we had to play with.

Can you describe a day in your childhood so that we may be able to imagine what it was like, starting from morning until night?

Elisapee: We’d get up in the morning, probably at dawn. We’d wake up after our father’s departure to go hunting. That was when I was a little child. When I was old enough, I’d get up with my father and help him prepare for hunting. I would harness the dogs for him and once they left, I’d be busy with chores such as filling the ice bucket or fetching water. We’d clean up what mess there was to clean up, while the men were out hunting. We would not eat just because it was noon. The day would just go along and we’d eat whenever we were hungry, or when our mother was preparing food. It seemed as if the evening was our common mealtime, when our fathers returned from hunting. The way I remember it, the man would be out hunting for the day and he would return hungry. So our mother would be busy preparing a hot meal for his return. Sometimes we’d request cooked meat without checking what time it was, but our mother often told us to wait for the return of our father. If there was frozen fish or caribou, we’d eat together as well when our father returned. Eating together was always our custom. There were times when not everybody ate together. It depended on individuals who were hungry. After our father returned, sometimes we children would play games outside, such as a game called amaruqiyaj, or go visiting. When the time came for us to go to bed, we’d all go to bed at the same time. That was our usual daily routine.
I’d like to go back to Christianity, if you don’t mind. There were probably some people who did not turn to Christianity right away. How were they dealt with?

Elisapee: From what we heard from the minister, we probably changed gradually from what he was saying. There were some people whodid not pay attention to Sundays, so they would be told by others that they should not be doing anything on Sunday. The people were also told they should not have any intimate relationships with anyone who wasn’t their husband or their wife, especially after Christianity had arrived and people were baptized. Everybody told or reminded each other that they shouldn’t be angry at anybody. They would refer to verses written in the Bible when they approached each other. People seemed to start adapting to the commandments of the Bible, or they just started doing things secretly. The way I see it, people started becoming nicer people. I was never aware of people cheating on each other anyway, as everybody seemed shy of me in the first place. I talked a lot and I would tell on anyone if I thought they were doing something wrong. I would tell on anybody that was smoking if I knew that they were smoking behind their parents’ back. I think everybody was shy of me as I always reported anything I considered wrong.

Did Qaaqiuk have two wives?

Elisapee: Yes, my mother’s mother was of that generation.

This practice stopped due to Christianity?

Elisapee: Yes, they had heard of Christianity which does not allow those things. Yes, they knew of people who swapped wives.

I guess they stopped swapping when Christianity arrived.

Elisapee: Yes, in front of the people anyway. Couples probably still swap secretly these days.

I’ve been changing the subject frequently as I am at a loss as to what to ask.

Elisapee: Yes, it’s hard to ask questions. It used to be this way, two women had one husband. The women used to be advised not to be angry at each other or told not to try and outdo each other. The man didn’t take both women at once. He would take one wife, then the other wife. He would take her at a later time. If the woman didn’t have a provider or if he just plainly liked her, he would take her as a second wife. One wife would bear more children, the other wife less children or none at all. The woman who had less children or had none at all, would often be left to look after the children, while
the other wife traveled with the husband. The woman who didn’t have children was advised that they shouldn’t be together if they were going to be unhappy. If the man wasn’t going to treat both of his wives equally, he was told that he shouldn’t have two wives. A husband and a wife used to swap their mates with another couple, and the women would be told that they shouldn’t be jealous of each other. The men were told that they could not get angry at each other. Even if they swapped wives, they were not to have hard feelings towards each other. They had to agree that they would not fight. Maybe this fellow (Paniaq) might be able to give you more information, as we did not live in the same area. He is from the Iglulik area, so maybe he was more exposed to this lifestyle than I was and probably lived through that generation of wife swappers. People from the Mittimatalik area were exposed to Christianity before Iglulik people were.

Paniaq: My late grandfather Ittuksaarjuat was reported to have had two wives. I know of one wife he had, but I do not know much about the other one he had at the same time. He had stopped being with her before she died.

He didn’t abandon her?

Paniaq: He didn’t just abandon her. He still provided for her and left children with her when we needed someone to look after the children while we went out on the land. I was too young, so I can’t really tell a story about her. I know that if a woman didn’t have a provider, a man would take her for a second wife so he could provide for her. That’s how it used to be. I don’t know. Probably they didn’t want to just abandon those who did not have a provider, so that’s how they used to take a second wife. He’d take her and be intimate without keeping it a secret from anyone.

Were women allowed to take two husbands as well?

Paniaq: Yes, I’ve heard of that, but I cannot really tell a story about it.

How about you, have you heard of that? Were women allowed to have two husbands?

Elisapee: I don’t know. I have never really heard of that. The only thing I have heard of is wife swapping. I have never really heard of a woman with two husbands. I have heard that’s how it used to be too. There would be one woman with two husbands, without keeping it a secret either.

They would all sleep together?

Elisapee: No, that’s not how it was. She would have two husbands, but they would not be there at the same time. I have heard about a man with two wives. I lived through that
era. I have seen a man who had two wives. He had left the other wife, and she had moved in with relatives when he left her. She stayed with relatives as she had no husband. The wife that remained with her husband died and although the other wife was available that man who had been her husband also died.

I was only a child so I did not think about it at that time. When I heard about it later, it occurred to me, “Oh, I knew them.” You know what I mean. I do not really know of them, but I am talking only from what I have heard. I don’t really understand trying to talk about people if you don’t have the whole story.

Can you tell us about the rules women had to follow?

Elisapee: Rules for women? I already talked about rules for women yesterday. The girls were not allowed to go around visiting too much as they would one day grow up to be women. Once they were old enough to menstruate, they were to start following the rules that their mothers had to follow. The girls were not allowed to sit where the men sat if they were menstruating. Not because they were disgusting, but because of the fact that these men were hunters, and it was a taboo for the girls to sit at their place. There were other rules that girls had to follow, but I do not remember them all.

Some rules were based on the birth of a newborn boy. Rules were based on the situation people were in. If a family had lost someone who had died, there were certain rules to be followed. If a person died by drowning or under other circumstances, certain rules were followed so that the same thing wouldn’t happen to the newborn child. Or, if they were named after a certain person, rules had to be followed so the child would end up being a mighty person. They had to follow rules which were established when the baby was born. The rules even applied to newborn girls. There were rules that depended on the person after whom the child was named. Maybe the person was blind, or a murderer...then different rules applied. If we were told about how the rules were applied and handled, I think we would all be appalled as they would be really serious about applying the rules.

We know some people are named after those who have died. In our family we do not practice naming our newborns after someone who died, if he is not our own relative. For example, some names are common within our family and not so common in another family because we did not name our children after those who weren’t our own relatives. In our community of Mittimatilik, Ilupaalik is not a common name. It is quite common to hear that name in Iglulik. The name Uuttuvak is common in Mittimatilik, but not so common in Iglulik. Today it is different. Suppose a woman goes to Iqaluit to have a child and the child is born. If a person from Kinngait who has just lost a relative happens to be there, she names the newborn after his relative. That is not a practice our ancestors followed. Only if a couple were barren and didn’t have children to name after their
parents or relatives and I was aware of their situation, would I name our own or our grandchildren after theirs, because they had no children to name. That’s how it would be in those days, and it’s still practiced today. My parents and I had our own tradition in that we didn’t go around naming our newborns after other people’s relatives. My mother did not agree with the Anglican minister baptizing and naming whomever he baptized as he pleased. I am just following her footsteps. I name newborns, but I don’t often name them after a person who died. We are all different; we name newborns as we please. I am not saying you should do as I do; I am just saying that’s how I do it. What was your original question? I am talking without thinking of your question.

No, it’s fine. I would like to ask you [something about] my son who is named after my cousin who drowned.

Elisapee: Jupie?

Yes, he’s named after Jupie. My cousin drowned…. well, they drowned… shortly after my son was born. Should I keep him from water as much as I can for that reason?

Elisapee: As I stated earlier, it is not a common practice for me to name a person after someone who died. The people of Kangitugaapik seem to practice naming after a person who died more than the people of Mittimatalik do. They name the child and treat it as if it is the person who died. They are two separate people with separate souls. It is a different body. It is noticeable that they name newborns after people that have died. I have noticed that even the people of Mittimatalik are starting to practice naming their newborns after those who have died. Among us, if we had parents or parents-in-law, they named our children. Some of us never named our own children. Even my grandmother Makpainnuk is named among my children, but I did not name her; my mother-in-law did. My mother-in-law was the only one who named my children. One of my sons is named Kipumii after my father, and I did not even name him. It is not his first name, but it is his name. I do not want to follow other people’s customs, I have my own. I am not saying follow my way.

I have a question regarding names. Was it allowed to name someone after a person who was still alive?

Elisapee: Our grandmother left by the ship C.D. Howe to go to a sanatorium because of tuberculosis. We just saw her as she was passing through, but she died within the same year, as she was an elderly lady, in Montreal or Hamilton. There was a baby who wasn’t a newborn anymore who was named after my grandmother by my mother. The baby
was really sick with an infected mouth and my mother said that there was someone who was wishing she (the baby) was with them, and that’s why the baby was sick. So she named the baby after my grandmother. Sure enough, the next day the baby was no longer sick and her infection was gone. She was named after someone who was yet alive. Some used to name their child after someone who was still alive.

I know of a person in Iglulik who named a child after himself when he was still alive, as he wanted to live on through him. I know of more than one person who did this.

**Was the one requesting the name elderly?**

**Elisapee:** Quite elderly. When he was alive and well, he named the child so he would have a namesake when he was gone. I know of more than one person who made that request.

**I have named my child after Anugaaq, and I have been told that the elderly tend to live longer if they have namesakes before they die.**

**Elisapee:** Yes, there can be positive meanings to the naming too. Our words are powerful, if we make them have a positive meaning. Yes, they can be useful. I have heard about a woman whose pregnancies weren’t successful. When the husband went out hunting, he caught a seal and the bladder was removed and drained. It was inflated and hung above the area where the woman often sat so that her next pregnancy might be successful and that particular child would outlive its siblings. Qannguq, who travels here, is still alive, and he is the only one left of his siblings. He is now elderly, and the naming seems to have had a positive effect.

**Do you believe in being told something through a dream?**

**Elisapee:** I am the type of person who doesn’t have beliefs which aren’t written in the Bible. Some say that they dream after a person has died. The person who dreams is pregnant. She dreams that the person who died approaches her looking so well and alive, asking her for a drink of water. Then she says it is his way of saying he wants the baby to be named [after him] when it is born. Once the baby is born, she goes ahead and names him after the dead person. That is a belief some people have.

**I have a question about defending your own child. If another child mistreated him, how was that dealt with?**

**Elisapee:** If it was a boy, you were told not to come to their defence, even if they were mistreated or hurt by another child. One day, he will be a hunter and he will be pursuing fierce animals such as walrus and polar bears. If he were trying to kill a polar bear, the bear wouldn’t even notice him; it would be paying attention only to the dogs. This
would show that a child hadn’t been defended when he was young. Regarding a child who was defended, the mother would go to the mother of the child who was fighting in a state of anger and say, “Your awful son has hurt my child.” The bears and walrus tended to attack these types of children, when they grew up to hunt. That was a belief and it was probably true.

There are hard times now and then. How did they deal with a person who was going through hard times?

Elisapee: We used to live in small camps. If a camp member was sick, he was well taken care of. When he passed away, they used to prepare the relative for a burial on their own, because the family members were the only ones there. They would dress the deceased person. If there was no container for the body, they would wrap up the body. Even when they were grieving, there weren’t enough people to tend to the family at loss around the clock. Today, we are very well taken care of. We do not have to make preparations ourselves. Our forefathers went through really hard times when they had to deal with someone who had died.

Sometimes people go through depression. How was that dealt with, when a person died?

Elisapee: There didn’t seem to be much depression back then, other than grieving for the person who had died. We were asked what we were down about, if we showed any sign of it, and advised right away not to be depressed, and it soon went away. Today, there seems to be so much more depression; and some have no one to advise them. We aren’t really aware of who’s depressed anymore as they keep to themselves. They get weak as their mind is overpowering them.
Who were your parents?

Paniaq: Yes, I will tell you a story from before that time. My grandfather was Ittuksaarjuat. My grandmother was Ataguttaaluk. On my mother’s side my grandfather was Inuaraq and his wife was Ilupaalik. My father’s name was Piugaattuk, who was Ittuksaarjuat’s son, and my mother’s name was Alariaq, who was Inuaraq’s daughter. These were my parents.

Where did you live before?

Paniaq: We lived around the Iglulik area in a place called Avvajja. That’s where I start remembering, from when we lived there.

Is that where you were born?

Paniaq: I was born in Avvajja.

Do you know what year you were born?

Paniaq: Yes of course. I was born in 1933 in the month of October on the 7th.

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Hervé Paniaq

Interviewers: Susan Enuaraq and Julia Shaimaiyuk
Translation: Maaki Kakkik
You know the date? October 7, 1933? Were there qallunaat around then?

Paniaq: There were no qallunaat there, but there was a Catholic priest who would travel from Mittimatalik. He recorded my birthdate, so that’s how I know.

Who is your wife?

Paniaq: She is called Tuurngaq in Inuktitut and she is baptized as Yvonna.

Do you have children?

Paniaq: We do not have our own children. The only children we have are the ones we have adopted.

How many have you adopted?

Paniaq: I don’t know how many. We adopted a baby, but the baby died when it was small. The one who sometimes spends time here (at Arctic College) is one of our adopted children (Melanie). And there is a Paniaq child who is called Itani. We also have another one that is in Iqaluit. And we have an adopted daughter who is residing in Igloolik. We call her Qajaq. She also has a younger sister whom we adopted too. Her name is Cindy Paniaq. She just had a baby recently. We also adopted a child from Sanirajak. She is around twelve or thirteen years of age. And we also adopted another girl and another boy. How many is that?

Seven. Did one of them die when he was a child?

Paniaq: Yes.

What about the one that is twelve or thirteen years old? What’s the name?

Paniaq: Her name is Aula.

What about the little girl?

Paniaq: Yes, Nina.

What about the little boy?

Paniaq: The little boy is called Moses, but in Inuktitut he is called after my uncle Piugaattuk. That’s it.
Yesterday, it was said that they used to adopt only from their relatives. Is that how you adopted too?

Paniaq: No, not at all. Well, they are related to my wife. We never really asked for any of them except for one that I asked to adopt. We never asked for the rest of them, but we were given them. Do you understand what I mean by asking?

Yes. When you were a little boy, do you recall when you started remembering? Can you tell us a story?

Paniaq: I recall a lot of things, when I was on my mother’s back and we were going inland to go caribou hunting. I recall them walking when I was on my mother’s back and I had to urinate. After that, I would have to reverse the events to talk about them. The ones I remember. Even though I could venture outside I did not, as I got scared easily. I didn’t have much sense and I got scared easily.

Did you have any siblings?

Paniaq: Of course, but I was not with any of my siblings. My oldest brother was raised by my grandparents, Ittuksaarjuat (and Ataguttaaluk); the next one was raised by my grandparents, Inuaraq (and Ilupaalik); the third one was raised by Kalluk (Ittuksaarjuat’s second wife); my older sister was raised by my grandmother (Ataguttaaluk). I was the first one raised by my parents. I had two younger sisters but they both died. I remember one of them, but I do not remember the other one. And after that a boy was born. I remember that, and another sister. Another sister was born, but she was adopted. She is no longer alive. We had another sister and we had another brother, but he died just after birth. The last one is our youngest brother who runs for election when it’s election time.

Who’s the youngest one?

Paniaq: John Ilupaalik. He is on television from time to time.

So he’s the youngest sibling?

Paniaq: Yes.

You said earlier that you used to live in Avvaja? Can you tell us a story that you remember about it?

Paniaq: Yes, of course. I was born and raised in Avvaja, and they used to trap fox over there. When springtime came, we would go to a place called Iglulik by dogteam, and when fall came, we would return and live in the same huts during the winter. That’s what I remember.
Did the Catholic priest reside in Avvajja?

Paniaq: He used to live there from time to time. But when houses were constructed in what we now know as Iglulik, they moved there and so did our grandfather.

Were there houses in Avvajja then?

Paniaq: There was always a small house in Avvajja. When another one was constructed in what is now called Iglulik, they had a priest in both places. The other one would go to the other place.

Are there still people living in Avvajja?

Paniaq: Absolutely not. There’s nobody left there. After we left the place, people lived there for a short while, and then nobody lived there.

When?

Paniaq: I cannot say what year it was as I was not thinking about years.

When you were an adult?

Paniaq: Before I was an adult, we had moved to another place. Other people were left to live there. When I was big enough to travel but not big enough to be much help yet, we left the place.

You said you were big enough to travel. Can you tell us about travelling for the first time?

Paniaq: I cannot tell you about the very first time I travelled. I would travel with my brother to nearby places. I do not recall when I went travelling for the first time.

Tell us just what you remember.

Paniaq: I did not travel very far. I went along when they went to check their traps. I was not allowed to go if they were going to sleep over on their trips as I tended to wet the bed.

Can you tell us about the first time you caught an animal, or about an event that you really enjoyed?

Paniaq: The first animal I killed was one I did not catch. We would travel to Ikpiarjuk for our supplies in the springtime as there was no trading post in our area. After trapping foxes during the winter, we would go trade the fox skins in Ikpiarjuk and
Mittimatalik, but that was before I could remember. We would go to Ikpiarjuk with my grandfather. We used to camp out in the bay of Ikpiarjuk, while our fathers went to trade. While we were camping on the ice, my father broke the ice by jumping on it. He caught something yellowish and I did not know what it was. Apparently it was a seal pup. They put it on top of the qamutik. They used to have a wooden stick that was used to remove snow from kamit or skins called a tiluktuut. I was given this stick and used that to beat the seal pup until it stopped moving, and everybody said I caught my first seal.

And after that, we saw a seal that had wandered away from its breathing hole, which was called a paarnguliaq. My brother took my hand and brought along the dog whip which had a wooden handle. He used the handle to beat the seal. I caught a bigger one. Those are the animals that I recall vividly as the first ones.

Can you tell us about the time you were first aware of a baby being born?

Paniaq: I cannot really answer that as I did not take things seriously. I used to hear about the babies, but I do not recall which ones they were. I used to hear about women having children. I would hear about a person who had had a child. When we were told to go see the baby, we would run over and shake its hand.

The newborn’s?

Paniaq: Yes. They weren’t named right away so we were never told their names.

I guess the newborns were always treated like that long ago?

Paniaq: I don’t know about our ancestors. In our generation, we had to go see the newborns to shake their hands. I don’t know what our ancestors did. Maybe Elisapee has more information.

Elisapee: It was just the same. They weren’t named right away. When someone had lost a relative recently, then the baby had a name. And when we went to see the baby, we would be told that it had arrived and who it was. And if he were named after a relative, we would be told what we would call him.

Paniaq: Yes, definitely.

Elisapee: “You have a nephew, a sister-in-law.” That’s how we were taught to address newborns amongst relatives.

Paniaq: When we were little children, we were taught to address a person in a certain way, as we were not allowed to call any adult by his/her name. And we would be told not to listen to people talking. For that reason we have less information than we would otherwise have. I was naïve and I heard only a little bit. While they were talking, I
would play with my seal-bone dogteam on the floor. At the same time I would be listening to the people telling stories. When they realized that I was listening, I would be told, “Go play outside.” I knew I would be told that whenever I felt like listening.

So you had information you were not supposed to have?

Paniaq: It was only because I was so naïve that I gained some information. I mainly listened and I learned a bit from there.

Were you told stories or was it just from listening?

Paniaq: I was always asking questions. I asked my mother questions, and she would tell me stories that she had heard. So I heard a little and I would know who was related to whom just from questioning her.

Did you live apart from all your siblings?

Paniaq: No, my father and my grandfather always lived in one dwelling. He had adopted from my parents and from our fellow camp members. The ones they had adopted came back with us when he died. Only one who was adopted wasn’t raised with us.

The one who was kidnapped?

Paniaq: No, I had forgotten about her. The second oldest, who was called Amarujaq, is the one I’m talking about. The one who was kidnapped and taken up there? She wasn’t kidnapped. She was adopted, and then she was taken to the Kivalliq area. She wasn’t kidnapped.

Can you talk about the games you used to play when you were a child?

Paniaq: Yes, of course. We used to play a game called amarujaq, pretending to be a wolf. And when someone started howling, we’d run off and then we’d look back to see where the howling was. That’s how we used to play. And when it was springtime, we used to play a game like baseball. I was able to participate in this game. Maybe you don’t know that one. And when I became able to play amarujaq I would do so. We would also play tiigaruuti, trying to outdo each other. One would be called a name and one would try to go this way while the other went the other way. I just used to watch that as I could not be a part of it. Walrus bones were rounded and caribou hip bones were used as they were rounded; that’s what I used to see. And I know how they made baseballs as I have seen them being made. They used to make a ball from caribou skin, fill it up with caribou hair and sew it up. We used that for a baseball.
What did you use for the bat?

Paniaq: Wood. All I’ve known to be used was wood.

Even though you were easily scared, you used to play amaruujaq?

Paniaq: That was when I was braver. It was only when I was smaller that I used to be scared, so I never went outside alone, only with a companion. I used to go visiting and when I couldn’t go home alone, I was taken home. When I was able to go home alone, someone just watched from outside while I ran, saying, “Further, further.” That would make me confident as I used to get scared. Even as I was entering I could still hear, “Further, further.”

When do you remember seeing qallunaat, or do you remember the first time you saw one?

Paniaq: I don’t recall the first time I saw one. When I was born, there were already qallunaat around. I can remember the RCMP coming in from Mittimalik, so they’ve been around as long as I can remember. It’s not too long ago. But qallunaat were already around when I was born.

How about airplanes?

Paniaq: When we were little children there was an airplane. By that time, there was a Catholic mission and a trading post in Iglulik. Ukumaaluk was shot in the buttocks by his son and he had to be flown out. At that time, we had an iglu at the point near Iglulik. The airplane circled around our camp, constantly making noise. Then it landed near the houses and the noise finally stopped. Only then I realized the sound stops when the plane lands. The man who had been shot in his buttocks was flown to Igluligaaaruq, and there wasn’t an airplane for a long time after that.

Which son shot him?

Paniaq: Nuvvijaq.

On purpose or accidentally?

Paniaq: Accidentally. What else?

Did you play a game called taqqiujaq?

Paniaq: I did not often join when they played taqqiujaq (acting like the moon) because it’s kind of scary. We also played a game called uqsuutaq. We’d play hide and seek, and it used to be called iqqullirautit and ijiraaq.
That's the first time I've heard of iqqullirautit.

Paniaq: Yes. We'd say we're playing hide and seek and we'd hide an object. That's what was called the iqqullirauti.

Can the eraser of a pencil be called the iqqullirauti?

Paniaq: Yes it can be called that. I hide it while you are not looking, and then you start searching for it, and it can be called the iqqullirauti. The one who finds it gets a chance to hide it. That's in our area. I do not know what you call it in your area.

Do you recall events in a qaggiq?

Paniaq: I do not know about the events in the qaggiq. I didn’t see drums for a long time either. I’ve never been to a qaggiq. The only time I saw drum-dancing was when my uncle wanted me to accompany him to Naujaat to the Catholic mission, and I saw a drum-dancer. I cannot say I’ve been to a qaggiq.

Have you ever heard about tarriassut or inurajat?

Paniaq: I have only heard of them; I don’t have any personal experiences. I have never met any tarriassut.

Who was it that went to meet a tarriasuk and attempted to get on the qamutik?

Paniaq: I don’t know who it was. That was before our time. Our grandfather told us a story about a man who had been waiting at a seal hole, and started walking. When a dogteam caught up to him and he tried to get on the qamutik, he landed on bare ice.

Were you told scary stories?

Paniaq: No, I heard the story of Niaquktittuq, the small-headed man. I had heard that he couldn’t talk and had gone to Itikuttuk’s wife’s dwelling during the night. I had heard of that and I feared going out alone because I might see him. I have never had a supernatural experience. It was just me who was scared.

Can you tell us about the first time you caught a caribou?

Paniaq: I cannot tell you at all about my first caribou story because whenever I try to recall the first time I caught a caribou, I cannot remember it.
Can you tell us a story about any other first catch?

Paniaq: Yes, of course. I remember when I caught a walrus for the first time. I harpooned it first and then shot it with a .22 in the head. Apparently it was a baby walrus. When I started using a rifle, I started catching seals. I also caught a bearded seal that was on the ice. Those are the animals that I recall catching for the first time.

How about the first time you had a dogteam and went on your first trip?

Paniaq: I did not have my own dogs as I had two older brothers and a father and I could borrow their dogs. I finally got my own dogteam when I was an adult. I used to train dogs for other people, so I never really had my own dogs. The time I got to own a dogteam was when I got puppies from my second oldest brother’s dog. I did not have the best dogteam, but I still have a dogteam now.

I didn’t have dogs for a while after I lost my dogs. I wanted to have dogs again, so I left Ikpiarjuk to get dogs from my brother (Kupaaq). So up to now, I still have dogs. I have travelled by dogteam to Naujaat, three times to Mittimatilak, and I can travel by dogteam to Ikpiarjuk. I would still like to travel by dogteam to Iqaluit as well. It was when I didn’t have dogs that a trip was made to Greenland. I really wanted to go with them.

Next time?

Paniaq: I have gone to Mittimatilak twice, attempting to go to Greenland. The first time, I just went back because it was thawing in Greenland in the springtime. The second time, I went with my brother-in-law (Tatiggat) by plane before anyone had ever visited Qaanaaq by plane. Two flags were erected as a sign that we were the first visitors, but we weren’t really the first ones.

When a first catch was made, were there celebrations?

Paniaq: Yes, definitely. Even now we celebrate first catches. We are so proud when that happens. Whenever we catch something the first time, we are always proud for the people making their first catch.

What did you do when a first catch was made?

Paniaq: We’d just be happy for the person. Myself, I wasn’t too happy when our adopted son Itani caught his first bear.
Why?

Paniaq: I was scared rather than proud because he caught a bear when it wasn’t bear season. The RCMP came by right away. We were out camping. There were just three of them, my wife, my son and little Qajaq was one of them when they were approached by a bear in the camp when we were out seal hunting. It was while we were away that he caught his bear. I wasn’t too happy that he caught a bear when it wasn’t bear hunting season, though I was glad he defended my wife and daughter. It was because it was not bear-hunting season that I was scared for him.

Was the pelt taken away because he caught a bear out of hunting season?

Paniaq: It was taken away and he was paid $400 for it.

Did you get to keep the meat?

Paniaq: Yes, of course. The adults were really happy, so it wasn’t so scary anymore.

Did your children or you yourself have to give gifts to what we call the midwife who was there when you were born?

Paniaq: No, we did not practice that. When he got paid for the skin, he bought things for the elders who had named him certain names, though.

Do you recall any feasts or celebrations?

Paniaq: I recall Christmas feasts we had when I was a child. Some food would be saved for this occasion, and there would be caribou meat with fat, which was eaten during Christmas.

Do you recall times of hunger?

Paniaq: I cannot tell about times of hunger as we had a boat when I was a child and the men would go walrus hunting. They would cache some of the food. I learnt they did that so they could have dog food. Sometimes they would save the food. There were times we ran out of food, but I do not recall that we suffered from hunger.

Were you told unikkaaqtabat?

Paniaq: Just any old story?

Can you tell us a story that you have heard?

Paniaq: Yes, are we also here for that?
The reason why we are here is to leave words behind for our descendants.

Paniaq: There is one person (Alexina) who can tell a story now. She taped one today and two the other day. If we start story-telling now, the day is going to be too short.

Frédéric did not teach us about traditional beliefs in depth. What we heard was about the switching over of beliefs called siqqitirniq? Have you heard of this?

Paniaq: When they switched to Christianity, I have heard about this.

What do you mean by Siqqitirniq?

Paniaq: Changing a person’s way of life, becoming a Christian. Yes, I have heard that they would go through changes in life so they could become Christians. People would admit the things they had done wrong and admit the taboos they had followed. Then they would chew on a piece of animal meat to show that they were changing their lives.

Ittuksaarjuat, who was your grandfather... did he used to tell stories about these things?

Paniaq: He did not tell stories. The information we have is what we have heard from our mother.

Was the word siqqiqtiq also used to refer to when people went out on the ice from the land. Did they have to talk before they went out on the ice?

Paniaq: I do not know about that. I only know that Inuit would say that they were siqqiqtiq when they were changing their lifestyles.

For example, they would go through siqqiqtiq when the ministers came?

Paniaq: It is like this: they would stop practicing the old way of life and the traditional taboos and follow Christianity.

Was your mother present when they went through siqqitirniq in order to be able to tell about it?

Paniaq: Yes, she was aware of what was going on. Our father would tell stories about what took place. Our grandmother was found when she had been eating human flesh which kept her from starving. The people around her died of starvation. Because she ate human flesh, we are here today. When she was found, our grandfather Ittuksaarjuat
took her for a wife. They had a son, and that son was our father. He was the oldest son. She had had children before, but they also died of starvation, but the oldest son she had with our grandfather was our father. When she wanted to switch to Christianity, it was a big event. Our father heard her voice from outside. She called her husband her uncle, and she asked, “Uncle, should I come in or not?” Of course he said she could enter. They used to use pieces of clothing for pillows, and her clothing was still inside. The wife was outside and the entrance was blocked. There was a bag of summer clothing in the porch. She had put them on and pushed her way in. No one could explain how she had ended up outside the iglu. After that event, which couldn’t be explained, our grandfather wanted to become a Christian. Therefore, they went out to catch what they would use to siqqiqiq. They went to hunt seal through a seal breathing hole and they came right back with their catch. They each took a small bite of the seal, maybe the heart. That’s the way they changed over from their old way of life. That’s how it was done, yes.

What was the name of your grandmother?

Paniaq: The story of my grandmother has been written [by Rasmussen]. Her name was Ataguttaaluk, and she had this (gesturing across his forehead) around here. My grandfather had one eye and it seemed like a big lump.

Ataguttaaluk wore a headband?

Paniaq: She had a headband around her forehead. It was metal and it was polished. I started remembering her when she was wearing it. She always wore it.

I have heard that people who had eaten humans before had some sort of identification. Was this her identification?

Paniaq: When they were young they wore head bands as hair ornaments. Even men used to wear them under their hair above their ears. They would have a clasp at the back to hold them up. It was used as a hair ornament.

Elisapee: I do not know about that myself.

Paniaq: She ended up outside, even though there didn’t seem to be a way outside, and she was without clothing, this is hard to explain. She had had to have a power greater than herself to go through that. That in itself is a miracle. This unexplainable event was what caused her husband to decide to siqqiqiq. It was due to the taboo rituals that considered the event not an ordinary event. They had different ways of dealing with matters. This woman had gone through an extremely difficult ordeal. If she had not eaten human flesh she would have died. It was because she had eaten human flesh that when they came upon her she was still alive.3
She went out while she was asleep?

Paniaq: It seems that way. It must have been while she was sleeping, because the clothing which she used for a pillow was still inside the iglu. She had dressed outside in her thin summer clothing. She asked him if he wanted her to enter or not, and he wanted her to enter. Had he refused her she would have disappeared. We can see that some entity loved her and was taking care of her. Yes, she went through an experience that no one else has gone through.

How did your grandfather lose his eye?

Paniaq: He was probably born like that.

I didn’t understand what you meant by “nagliktau-“.

Paniaq: It’s a term that was used but I really don’t know the meaning behind it.

I did not understand allijjivik either.

Paniaq: You will understand. When an iglu was built, there was a section where you would put items that were not going inside the iglu. That part was called the allijjivik.

An area where you put things that you don’t want the dogs to get at?

Paniaq: To keep things like our ropes away from the dogs. We can still do it that way if we’re going to leave our dogs loose. We can make it big or small depending on the amount of supplies on the qamutik. That’s called allijjivik.

You don’t really understand siqqiqtiq either?

I understand that a bit now, but I don’t really understand what you considered a miracle.

Elisapee: That woman is the only one who went through that experience. Something helped her to survive. I can’t understand that myself either, but I have heard of her experience.

I assume that your grandparents experienced the traditional ways of life and avoided the things that were considered taboos?

Elisapee: Yes, they certainly did. Even our grandmothers delivered their babies in their tiny iglus. Our mothers did not experience it for they grew up after siqqiqtiq had taken place. They started bearing children when the Inuit weren’t following the traditional
taboos anymore. They were allowed to deliver their babies in the iglu. Looking at the way they used to deliver in the little iglu, it was like treating them like dogs and leaving them to deliver on their own.

*An iglu would be made where they would deliver?*

**Elisapee:** Yes, an iglu would be built where they would deliver the baby.

*Have you heard that in the summer they had to be in a tent?*

**Elisapee:** That was the only way as they were not allowed to have a baby in the tent where the other people stayed.

*When they say siqqitiqtuq are they trying to say siqqatiqtuq, wetting them with water?*

**Elisapee:** No, that’s not the meaning. Following another belief, or changing one’s way of life, but it doesn’t mean going through baptism.

*Maybe the word has more than one meaning?*

**Elisapee:** No. For example, if we’re on land, we’re on land. If we go on the shore into the water, I would say *siqqippugut*. When they leave an old way of life that way, it’s *siqqitiqtuq*, going on the right path. That was probably what the word meant.

*Was that different from saagiaqtuq?*

**Elisapee:** It’s not the same word. When they first started changing their way of life, they were submitting themselves to a new life. The people actually changed, even the shamans. They’d leave behind their powers. Those were the changes that took place when they went through *siqqitirmiq*.

*I feel for the shamans, who were powerful leaders when they were shamans. They must have become poor when they let go of their powers.***

**Elisapee:** No, they were just grateful for their new way of life and they were more comfortable. They did not have to seek answers anymore. They didn’t have to wait for the possible revenge someone might be plotting against them. They could just discuss problems with the person they were angry at and they found it a lot less stressful. This was expressed by former shamans who spoke of this.

That’s how it was in our community. They did not become poorer as a result. They actually had a better way of life. When they’d go seal hunting, it wasn’t long before they
would catch one. It wasn’t a taboo anymore to eat raw meat. They were much happier. Now they could eat the liver and the heart, bits of meat and blubber. It was as if they were having a holy communion, taking small bites of everything and taking their time chewing it. Not everybody took to the new way of life right away. There were some people who did not take to this way of life. There were some who tried hiding their ways from people. It seemed as if the perfect people were more imperfect than the so-called imperfect people. At least, that’s how my in-laws recalled them.

I don’t seem to have any more questions so if you have any stories to share, go ahead.

Elisapee: I seem to have run out too, due to the questions that were asked. I’d like to talk more about the person who experienced cannibalism. The way we see it, we don’t think it’s right for a human to eat another human. She ate her husband and she ate her children when they were going through starvation. There was another child that she was looking after at that time which wasn’t her own, which she ate as well. We can state that we will never eat a fellow human being, but we do not know what our future holds. If it were our only chance for survival, we just might end up doing that too. She went through an experience which she had to go through. Amazingly, she was discovered and she pulled through it and had a chance to bear children again. If she didn’t do what she had to do, there’s no way we would be around today. We can see life meant a lot to this person. A lot of us today want to kill ourselves, hang ourselves because we can’t deal with life’s problems anymore. Imagine what she went through. It must have been hard. Alone all winter in the dark, and her husband dead. Imagine our own husbands; she had to eat her own husband and her own children to survive. It must have been hard. Yes, she must have had some rope to hang herself with, but her life meant something to her. She eventually died from sickness. If she had just given up on life, we wouldn’t be around today.

They had gone inland and they had nothing left to eat. Their grandmother had a child and the child died of illness, where they were camping. She refused to leave her dead child as she was really grieving over him. There’s an area up there that the caribou leave when it’s time to move on. If only they had listened to her husband when he wanted to go toward the coast, they would’ve probably survived, but she refused to leave the dead child. Sometimes we women think we’re wiser than our husbands, but in some cases we are not. She loved her dead child dearly and didn’t want to leave him, so in the end it cost practically the whole camp their lives. Men know more about which camps they should be in. When we refuse to comply, sometimes we put ourselves in unfortunate situations. Is this understandable? As women we have great capabilities but there are some things we are not as wise as men about.
Can you tell us a story of anngiaqatuviniq, having something undisclosed?  

**Paniaq:** I will tell a story about the hunters of the camp who caught walrus. The hunters came back with their catch. One of the hunters’ wives went to help her husband when he arrived as he didn’t really have anyone to help him when he was trying to go up a slope. She was pregnant at this time and when she was helping him carry the meat she felt something come out between her legs. She thought she had started menstruating so she went behind the tent to urinate and she passed a very small but fully-formed stillborn child. She put the dead child on a flat stone, and she was about to go tell her husband about it but she got scared and changed her mind. They had flat stones they used for a bed platform and there was gravel beneath it so she dug a small hole and put the dead child there and buried it. Once she had done that she went back to her husband to help him with the work. Then hunger came to the camp and there were no animals around. The hunters even gave up looking for animals and just stayed around the camp. Even people in other camps were experiencing the same thing. There was a young adult shaman in another camp who was starting to ask questions about why they were going hungry. Once he found out why, he went in his qajaq to the camp where the woman was. The couple had moved their tents away from the main camp as the husband wanted to be in a quiet place. The shaman had the people gather from the main camp and he started asking them what they thought could be the reason that they were struggling. The people started talking about possible reasons and they all admitted all the wrongs they had done. When he was finished with them, he went to the couple’s tent, and the couple were older now. He said to the woman, “You are the reason why we are going through hard times. You hid a dead baby under your bed platform and you buried it.” Her husband picked up a knife as he was quite depressed from losing a child. He took his wife by the shoulder and slapped her. She admitted that she had been scared to tell him the truth as he was the type who was abusive. She then told the story of what happened, that she was helping him when he returned from hunting and she felt something come out and she delivered a very small stillborn baby. She was scared to tell her husband so she buried the baby instead. She said she had nothing more to say. The shaman returned to the other camp members and made them go through confessions again. When he finished, he left as he had arrived, by qajaq. After his departure, they could hear ice creaking throughout the night, and they could hardly wait for daylight. Next day, sure enough, there was this big sheet of ice with an abundance of walrus. The walrus were bellowing and the hunters got their catch that day and they didn’t go hungry again after that.
We’ll be asking some questions on words we didn’t understand.

Paniaq: She (Elisapee) will be able to answer your questions.

What do you mean by aksunnguqtuq?

Paniaq: When the child is no longer crawling, has been walking around for awhile... like a toddler, I guess.

What about the word you used, savvi&aqpaa?

Paniaq: Taking a knife that he’ll use to scare someone with. The man was going through a depression as he had lost a child. He was grieving for the child. They had a tent away from the other tents as he couldn’t stand being around noises.

You mentioned earlier about, aniattunik, letting go.

Elisapee: Yes. People go through healing today to get rid of their pain. They talk about the bad things they have done, admitting they’re sorry and seeking forgiveness, letting go of their wrongdoings.

Was that also practiced before Christianity came?

Elisapee: It has been practiced since the beginning of time. They used to be told by elders to make sure they admitted anything that they did so they would not end up being ill.

For example, if I were to abstain from eating raw meat and I ate it anyway, I would have to admit that?

Elisapee: Yes, exactly. If a woman has a child and the child was experiencing difficulty and she had broken a taboo she had to confess, was made to confess that and this was called aniattuq and that’s what was called pain.

Were there any warnings like, “If you haven’t confessed when you die, this will happen to you...”?

Elisapee: I may think that I don’t have a problem and yet have one at the back of my head. You have to go ahead and admit your wrongdoings for your own good. Even if you are scared to confess, you have to or you may shorten your life. That’s the teaching that was given by elders.
I did not quite understand something. The woman that delivered the stillborn, she kept it a secret?

Paniaq: She never meant to keep it a secret but she got scared so she ended up keeping a secret.

Because of her secret, the people went hungry?

Paniaq: Yes, they were going through hard times.

The shaman discovered the reason?

Paniaq: Yes. Because she kept a secret, they went hungry.

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1 From Alexina Kublu: I remember this to be around 1958 because I have a vivid recollection of the death of that baby as it was the first death close enough in my family to make an impact on me.

2 Paniaq’s younger sister Paumik clarified that their mother kept her children up until the birth of the next child. In the case of Kupaaq and Aaluluuq, they stayed with Ittuksaarjuat and Atagutaaluk; therefore, they moved back and forth between parents and grandparents. Arnarjuaq ended up remaining with Inuaraq and Illupalik (up in the Tununiq area); Nutarakittuq remained with Kalluk until her death. Both Kupaaq and Paumik claim that their sister Qannguq was “stolen” because the couple who took her picked her up out of her mother’s amauti and took off by dogteam. They then returned to the Kivalliq area and settled in Churchill.

3 When Ataguttaaluk was found, the family Quliktalik was with the party, as Susan Enuaraq heard from her aunt Qaapik. The family Atagutsiaq were practicing Christians at that time. At the time of the interview Susan was not aware of this.

4 Alexina Kublu recorded another story told by Hervé Paniaq that can be found in the last chapter of this book.
When were you born?

Saullu: 1926. In Uummanarjuaq.

Who were your parents?

Saullu: Leetia and Naujuk.

Where were your parents born?

Saullu: I don’t know where my father’s mother was born. She wasn’t born in our area. I think she was from the Kingait area.

How many children do you have?

Saullu: I have given birth twelve times.

Who are your children?

Saullu: Laimi is the eldest. The one before him died, therefore Laimi is the oldest. Mosesie, Jacopie, Ooleepa, Leetia, Joneeli, Jeela, Silasie: these are the ones that are alive; and I have three adopted ones.
Who are they?
Saullu: Meekai, Eva and Peter.

When did you move to Pangniqtuuq?

Where did you grow up as a child?
Saullu: I became aware at Qimmiqsuuq. I probably grew up in Qimmiqsuuq. We moved to Qipisa from Qimmiqsuuq after camping at another place.

Where was your camp?
Saullu: We camped at Itilliavik before moving to Qipisa.

What did you enjoy doing as a child?
Saullu: I most enjoyed qitinniq (playing). It was a lot of fun when we were playing. I most enjoyed anau- (baseball).

What’s qitik-?
Saullu: Such as when we were playing outside, amaruujaj and others.

Were you born after there were already qallunaat?
Saullu: Yes, my father was a qallunaaq.

Did you know who your qallunaaq father was?
Saullu: Jason was my father’s father. Jason was my father’s father, maybe a Scotsman.

As a youth, did you ever work?
Saullu: Only when we were residing in Pangniqtuuq. I started working in Pangniqtuuq as a sewing instructor.

Your parent’s parents, did you know them?
Saullu: Yes, my mother’s father was Kulluruqtuq. My mother’s mother was Taunguliquq. My father’s father was Jason and my father’s mother was Sikuliaq.
You can talk about whatever you want to.

**Saullu:** I want you to ask questions.

*As a child you played qitik- and anau-?*

**Saullu:** Yes.

*Were there many participants?*

**Saullu:** All the children at Qimmiqsuuq participated. Back then, there weren’t so many children, not like today. They didn’t have children every year, but it’s like that today. I used to play house. I used to carry a puppy in my *amauti.*

*You were born in 1926. What month were you born?*

**Saullu:** Well, when I was registered they told me I was born in March. I was not born in that month. Spring had arrived shortly after I was born. They say my husband’s date of birth and mine are reversed. But there were no dates; they only registered by month. The date was not indicated.

*When do you celebrate your birthday?*

**Saullu:** In March, but with no day.

*When did the whalers arrive?*

**Saullu:** Well, they came before I became aware. I don’t remember, but they told me the whalers arrived right after I was born.

*What did they do?*

**Saullu:** They were whalers. The whalers came right after I was born. When they were whaling, that was called *sinaalisimajut,* because they were whaling while there was still sea ice, because there was *tuvaq.*

*What’s *tuvaq?*

**Saullu:** When the sea has ice, I say *tuvaq* (sea ice) [not *siku,* ice], because I’m Inuk.

I was born during the time when there are blizzards, while there was only one policeman in Pangniqtuuq. When the policeman used to go back and forth from Uummannaarjuaq (Blacklead Island) to Pangniqtuuq, that’s when I was born. Even the policeman was happy when I was born. The *gallunaat* were happy about my birth. I grew up with a blanket that the police officer gave to me.
**How old were you when you started to learn how to sew?**

**Saullu:** I don't know how old I was. I still cried easily when I started to learn how to sew. I would only cry when what I was sewing wasn’t done right. I don’t recall having learnt how to sew, but I was a young child when I learnt it. I practiced by watching my mother, as that was her duty.

**Did you ever attend school?**

**Saullu:** I’ve never attended school as I am an Inuk.

**Was your marriage arranged by your parents?**

**Saullu:** Only by my grandfather Kulluruqtuq. It was my grandfather who gave the approval.

**How old were you?**

**Saullu:** I don’t know how old I was. I was able to get a husband only when I was able to make everything. That’s the way it was. Only those women who were able to make everything were allowed to have men.

**You said you had worked in Pangniqtuuq. What year was that?**

**Saullu:** The year that we moved there. That same winter we used to make clothing out of caribou skins and we would soften seal skins. I was made to participate in this. Maybe in 1984. When we got there that same winter, or the same fall, I started participating at the sewing centre.

**Have you participated since then?**

**Saullu:** No, I don’t participate any more. Back then when Kanajuq was still alive, I used to participate.

**Where were you before 1984?**

**Saullu:** I was an inhabitant of Qipisa. We lived in Qipisa.

**Were you long-time outposters?**

**Saullu:** Yes, we used to be. When our father went there [to Pangniqtuuq], we followed him there. After we moved there, he died that same winter.

**Did your children go to school?**

**Saullu:** Only the younger ones. Silasie is my youngest child. His two adopted sisters
and his adopted younger brother are the only ones who have gone to school. When we got there, Silasie, my youngest one, went to school for a short while, but then he started to work.

What kind of games did you play when you were young?
Saullu: We played games like playing house, illunguaq, illukitaq, juggling and all kinds of other things. I can be asked what I know. I state only what I know.

You juggled?
Saullu: Yes, and things like igunaujannguaq. Yes, we did all of them. Playing house was a lot of fun. We played dolls. We carried someone else’s baby, and we also carried puppies.

You also played ajaraaq, string games?
Saullu: Yes, we also played string games. I also liked to play with inuujat, the little wooden dolls. I still have the head of one of my wooden dolls, made of ivory.

Did you play the whole day?
Saullu: No, because we had to carry out errands for our mother. We didn’t play the whole day. There were things we had to do for our mother.

What were the things you had to do?
Saullu: Things like going and fetching ice, fetching uqsuq, softening skins. These are the things I grew up with, because we lived in a qammaq.

Who were your mother’s parents?
Saullu: Taunguliqtuq was my mother. Leetia was her baptismal name. My oldest daughter was named Leetia, which was my mother’s baptismal name. That became her atiq. That’s how they used to do it back then.

She was baptized Leetia?
Saullu: Yes, my mother’s mother. My mother also had that name because she was the oldest. That’s how they used to do it. They had Inuit who baptized people, who were still alive when I became aware, Tulugarjuaq and others. They also performed marriages.
Tulugarjuaq who lived in Pangniqtuuq?

**Saullu:** He was from Qimmiqsuuq and Uummanarjuaq. I recall him being in Qimmiqsuuq.

**How did he become a minister? Was he taught by a minister?**

**Saullu:** By Uqammak. And those people Naullaq and Killaapik. They had been taught by him. I saw them both.

**Who did he teach?**

**Saullu:** Killaapik. Maybe that one was your mother’s maternal uncle?

**Killaapik and Tulugarjuaq?**

**Saullu:** Yes, and Naullaq. Those he taught in Uummanarjuaq.

**This Tulugarjuaq, had he been in Uummanarjuaq a long time?**

**Saullu:** Yes. He probably died in Qimmiqsuuq. I knew him to be there a long time when I was a child. He was our minister while I was growing up. Peter was his baptismal name. His son Markusi and his children use Peter as a surname.

**And here are his descendants growing up!**

**Saullu:** Yes, here [pointing] and here [pointing].

**Oh, you are related, look, you’re related!**

**Saullu:** This is my **anniqaq** (child of brother/or a male cousin) Eena, who is my first cousin’s child, and this is my **nuaq** (child of a sister/or female cousin) Myna. My younger sister’s child is Myna.

**Eena:** Your mother and my grandmother were sisters, weren’t they?

**Saullu:** Yes, the oldest was my mother.

**Who taught you to read in Inuktitut?**

**Saullu:** I taught myself, by looking at letters. They used to get mail only, because they didn’t have phones in the settlements. I would read the name in Inuktitut. That’s how I learned, even though I don’t have anything written in my possession anymore. My grandmother could also read in Roman. I was taught finals once by this one’s grandfather.
Once?
Saullu: He taught me once to use finals. That lesson also helped me to read Roman orthography.

You read in Roman?
Saullu: Yes, I used to. I haven’t done so for a while.

Who taught you syllabics?
Saullu: I learned by reading names on letters. I used to know people’s names. I used to know adults’ names. When I read “Taunguliqtuq,” I didn’t know that my grandmother had that for a name. I didn’t like that name because she wasn’t ugly. I am called by my name. I did not know she had that for a name, so I didn’t like it at all.

What did you call her? Did you just call her ananaatsiaq (grandmother)?
Saullu: I thought she was my cousin, because I called her illakuluk. When I was a child I didn’t know adults’ names. I was called by relationship-name by my grandparents. That’s why I didn’t know they had the names they had. When we were children we didn’t know adult names. Nowadays, children say the names of adults, including their mother’s and father’s names.

Is that because you were born before there were schools?
Saullu: Yes, long before there were schools.

How were you taught by your parents?
Saullu: We were taught only such things as sewing, and also I was taught by my father’s sister to read.

Did you practice sewing by making doll clothes?
Saullu: Yes. For wooden dolls (inuujanut) we used to make clothing not only from cloth, but out of seal skins and caribou skins. We even made short pants for wooden dolls. We were told what to do even making doll clothes.

Did you use your own needles or did you use your mother’s?
Did you have your own?
Saullu: Only a thimble, that was all I had. My father had gotten a thimble for me.
The needles were from your mother?
Saullu: Yes.

How did you get needles?
Saullu: We got needles from Uummanarjuaq. That was when Uummanarjuaq still had people from Pangniqtuuq, before it became uninhabited. When the qallunaat left, the people left. The people spread out. That is, they moved to other places when the place became uninhabited. I remember when it was still inhabited. That is, I remember some of these things.

Did they leave because they were told to leave?
Saullu: When Uummanarjuaq became uninhabited, they moved all over the place where there were animals. There was a lot of wind because it was a sound.

Were you born while they were still whaling in Uummanarjuaq?
Saullu: I was born while there was still whaling, but I don’t recall anything about it even though I was born while there was still whaling.

Have you ever been down south?
Saullu: I have never been down south.

You were only there in Uummanarjuaq. Is that where you grew up?
Saullu: I grew up in Qimmiqsuuq.

Who are your siblings?
Saullu: A lot of my siblings are dead. The only ones I know are my brother, and Taina and Elaija and Aiga. Those are my remaining siblings.

How many siblings did you have?
Saullu: Three of them drowned, and two of them died through sickness.

Three drowned?
Saullu: Yes. Silasie, who was my youngest brother, drowned here. Two of my brothers drowned shortly after Davidee and Jonah had been born.
Did they drown while they were out hunting?

Saullu: They were out hunting on the other side of Qipisa.

Can you give us the names of those who died by sickness?

Saullu: Yes. Mosesie died in Pangniqtuuq, and Ooleepika died in Qipisa.

Those that drowned, who were they again? Silasie and who?

Saullu: Silasie, who was adopted by Quaraq here. They say he drowned up the river.

Those that drowned while they were out hunting, had the weather been bad?

Saullu: The day before, somebody else had gone out on the ice that the two brothers later went out on.

On the ice?

Saullu: Yes, on the ice.

Jason was your grandfather. Can you talk about him?

Saullu: I didn’t know him. I’ve only heard about him. Before [my grandmother] had a husband, she had given birth to my father. She ended up marrying someone else.

Jason, he was your grandfather? Your father’s father was a qallunaaq? And she ended up with another husband?

Saullu: Yes, she ended up having an Inuk for a husband who was the father of Jusipee and his siblings. They – my father’s younger brothers and sister – had Qaurniq as a father. It is from him that Jusipee’s children are Qaurniq. [They took their grandfather’s name].

Did you consider Jusipee as your real grandfather?

Saullu: No. Qaurniq was the one I considered my real grandfather. The one who was the father of Jusipee and his siblings, Tauki and Joanasie. Those were his children and their only sister probably also had him as a father, my only aunt. They say it is so.
Did your grandfather Jason die there?

_Saullu:_ Maybe down south. I don’t know. Probably down south.

Before, when you lived in small camps, did you move to other places?

_Saullu:_ During the summer, when it became ice-free we did.

How, by boat?

_Saullu:_ Yes, by boat. We used to go to a place to spend the late spring.

After you went out for the spring, is that when you moved?

_Saullu:_ We used to go along. Those of us who were able to, would row.

You would row?

_Saullu:_ We used to row the boats. My grandfather would steer the boat.

What grandfather?

_Saullu:_ Kullurutuq. We would gather eggs.

Can you tell us what is the first thing you recall in your childhood?

_Saullu:_ The thing I enjoyed the most was when my brother Pauloosie was about to be born. That seems to be my first significant recollection. He was my mother’s only son and when she was in labour somebody else looked after me.

Did you used to be alone when you were in labour?

_Saullu:_ No, my husband used to be with me, and I used to have another woman with me. I gave birth to the oldest out in the middle of nowhere at Kanajuqtuuq’s Lake. That was before I had ever assisted at a birth. I gave birth to the youngest one where there were _qallunaat_, in the old hospital. I didn’t want to give birth around non-Inuit.

For whom did you act as a midwife?

_Saullu:_ To a lot of people. I would only be a midwife when those other than myself were pregnant.
Where did you learn about being a midwife?

**Saullu:** When I was a young person, I used to go along with my mother when she was assisting in a delivery.

You used to go along with her?

**Saullu:** I would be taught. When Moses Atagujuk’s wife was born I was to have been the midwife and she was to have been my “arnaliaq” [for a male it's angusiaq] but I refused. I wanted to go berry picking instead.

What were you asked to do?

**Saullu:** I was asked to be behind the woman who was giving birth, Alivaqtaq. I didn’t go to the delivery, I went berry picking instead.

When I was a young person, I used to attend many births. There are a lot of children for whom I was the kisuliuqti [maker] or midwife. I was a maker for all my younger sister Taina’s children.

Were the ones behind, the kisuliuqtit?

**Saullu:** Tunumiaq was what they were called. Only those behind the ones giving birth were considered to be the kisuliuqtit. Nowadays, all those who see the birth are considered kisuliuqtit, even though they have been of no use to the one in labour. If I am of no use, I don’t want to be there. I assisted Akpa [Abigail Ootoova] in her delivery when she went into labour at the hospital in Pangniqtuuq, because I was requested to come. The baby was considered to be my arnaliaq although I was only present at the birth. I have been requested more than once to assist in births in Pangniqtuuq, in the hospital there.

When you were the kisuliuqti, would you state what qualities you wanted them to have?

**Saullu:** Definitely. They are better people because of this. I was the kisuliuqti at my arnaliaq’s son’s birth so he thus became my angusiaq. My angusiaq’s son is also my angusiaq because I was again the kisuliuqti. That is the way it is because I don’t have much fear. That is the person I am. [Saullu was present for the birth of three generations.] Because I didn’t have much fear I used to enjoy doing this. Also the male whose birth I assisted in, his son is the one I made into a male. I have given some of them qualities so they can be helpful to others in need. They have really become better people because of this. It seems to be useful. Maybe because it is easy for me to speak my mind, I can do this. Nowadays, I get asked by my children, “Have you stopped enjoying
assisting in births as much?” That’s because I used to assist in a lot of births and I don’t assist in as many any more. I have even put my hand in up to the middle of my arm, it’s not that big, to make sure that the placenta was not stuck to the uterus.

I am capable of doing this. But for those who give birth among qallunaat, it is different for them. They are in more pain. A person is not going to be born when it’s over here [demonstrating]. A person can only be born through here [demonstrating]. It is only through checking the opening that one can see how the baby is placed. This is how I feel it. I have also burst the water. I have even burst my own water while I was in labour. I have assisted in a lot of births. There were many times when I was the only one available.

Were you afraid the first time you were a midwife?

Saullu: There is nothing I’m afraid of. I’m not afraid of people. I’m not afraid to cut a person. I’m even not afraid to have to cut off part of a person. There is nothing that I consider not worth saving. No... dogs I do not consider worth saving. All that I have talked about is what I have experienced. I have not talked about what I have not experienced.

We used to have to loosen our kamik ties when we were assisting in a birth, in order for the birth canal to be loose.

You used to have to untie things?

Saullu: We would have to untie them all. We would even have to untie our hair ties in order for the birth canal to be loose. That’s the way they did that back then.

You had to untie everything that was tied?

Saullu: Yes, we would loosen [everything]. Those of us who were assisting in a birth were made to do that.

Even hair ties?

Saullu: Yes. My niece went into labour while we were in our camp. I told them what to do over the radio. They would get back to me on the progress using the radio.

How did they need to prepare when a female was in labour?

Saullu: Just a place where she’d deliver, a bed and a mattress. They had caribou skins for mattresses, or they used heather. She would deliver on the bed.
Would it be soft?
Saullu: Yes, that’s why we used heather for mattresses.

Was it caribou skin on top and heather on the bottom?
Saullu: Yes, the heather was the bottom one, with caribou on the top. The thicker the better so it could soak up blood. Try to have thick caribou fur, so it can soak the blood better. Try not to have a thin layer of caribou skin.

How did they know if it was a girl or a boy when someone was pregnant?
Saullu: The males are narrower in pregnancy (the shape of the belly). It’s obvious. The females are wider. It’s easier to see after a few pregnancies. I used to know. The male does not move too much; but when in labour, it takes longer to deliver if it’s a female.

When you were pregnant, did you used to help a hunter so your child could be a great hunter?
Saullu: I have never seen or experienced anything like that.

When did you learn to deliver? When you were a young teenager or an adult?
Saullu: Before I was an adult, I used to be present at births. I didn’t think I was learning from them. That is how I learnt. But they did it differently from the way I do it.

Why did you learn how to deliver babies?
Saullu: Inuit do not live forever. We were the next generation. My mother used to deliver babies. I used to follow her because she told me to.

Because you wanted to help?
Saullu: She wanted me as a helper. She wanted me to learn.

What did you prepare when you were delivering?
Pauloose: I mentioned this earlier. I only helped once [when I was a child], because there were no other people to help. I followed the words that were told to me about how to deliver. If I had not heard about delivering babies, I would not have been able to help because I wouldn’t have known how to do it. I was often requested to be there when women were delivering, but I didn’t actually take part in it. Saullu talked about the
object that is used to keep the feet in place (tukirummmiaq). I was there to sit on it as the weight.

*What object?*

**Pauloosie:** They used objects such as a wooden box to keep the feet in place. A person sat on it so it would not move.

**Saullu:** Nailed down.

**Pauloosie:** A person sat on it.

*Did it have to be a box all the time?*

**Saullu:** It could not be cardboard. It had to be hard and nailed to the front of the bed.

**Pauloosie:** Yes.

**Saullu:** We used to deliver on the bed in the qammaq.

*Could they use rocks for tukirummmiaq?*

**Saullu:** Rocks are uncomfortable to use. The feet were not to be crossed and had to be the same length when in place, and we had to make sure the legs were not too bent so the mother would not be harmed. This is how we did it – well, myself – and I’ve used the position with a lot of other people. [Demonstrating]

**Pauloosie:** If I helped in the birth I would either have an angusiaq or an arnaliaq.

*When people delivered, was there ever a time when a child did not breathe after delivery?*

**Saullu:** I have not seen that. I used to wipe the inside of the mouth with material, because it’s not like clean saliva. It’s fine once it’s wiped off.

*Were you asked to come once a woman was in labour? Or did she tell you [as soon as] she found out she was pregnant that she wanted you to come and deliver the baby?*

**Saullu:** Qallunaat know the due date of the pregnant lady. I used to know that too, when the due date was.

*Just like that?*

**Saullu:** No one ever told me or showed me how to find out about the due date. In her first pregnancy, the woman usually delivers at the beginning of the month. I was told

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that once a woman has been pregnant more than once, her insides are bigger and the belly sticks out further than in the first pregnancy, because the body has gone through that stage before.

*They are pregnant longer?*

**Saullu:** Those who are not pregnant for the first time will not deliver at the beginning of the month, as our insides have stretched, but the females on the first pregnancy deliver at the beginning of the month. This is what I tell my children too. They will not deliver until the end of the month if it’s not a first pregnancy.

*If she has a larger belly, does that mean that the pregnancy takes longer?*

**Saullu:** Not necessarily the ones with large bellies. I’ve only heard that the inside of the belly is stretched, because a woman has been pregnant more than once. I gave birth to my youngest child on the 29th. Some women get pregnant very easily.

*Have you heard that a pregnant woman is not supposed to eat animals that were shot in the heart?*

**Saullu:** I don’t know. I have not heard of that before.

*How many people were there at a delivery?*

**Saullu:** Sometimes three, sometimes more than three. Sometimes, only the experienced used to deliver. If they did not live in the same camp, some people used to go and get them from another camp.

*Far away from their camp?*

**Saullu:** Yes, as long as they didn’t have to go too great a distance to pick up an experienced midwife. There were not that many people who delivered babies. Even if that person was old or an elder, they used to get them from another camp by dogteam.

*Any time? Even in the morning?*

**Saullu:** I asked my mother why she went into labour really early in the morning. I even thought she tried to deliver really early in the morning, because I wanted her to deliver in the evening. But [women] delivered at any time, no matter when it was, early in the morning or during the day, anytime. People used to come and ask us to come even during the night. We didn’t have telephones so they just came and asked us to come. We just put on our clothes very quickly. When my younger sister was close to delivering, I
did not sleep too well. I knew they would come and get me when she was ready to deliver. I did not even cut the nail of my middle finger.

*Why?*

**Saullu:** This is the only thing I used to break the water with. I used to have the fingernail long because that was the only thing to break the water with. Some [sacs] are thick, some are thin. That is why it takes so long to deliver. Once it’s broken, the baby comes out.

*Is this one of the things that your mother taught you?*

**Saullu:** She did not teach me that. She used to be scared, but she used to deliver. That was the only way, and you knew how to do that so you did it?

**Saullu:** Yes, because I used to see it, and that is what I tried to do.

*If the umbilical cord was tangled up, how did they handle it?*

**Saullu:** That is how some babies were born. The head came out and stopped, then it came out further. Some babies had the umbilical cord wrapped around the neck. People used to tell me not to have one’s kamik strings too long. Even our husband’s kamik strings were not supposed to be too long. Tiglik told us not to have our kamik strings too long, because that would affect the baby. He said that his strings were too long and the umbilical cord was wrapped around a baby. That is what he said and I believe it. If the umbilical cord tightens up the baby can get strangled. Babies do not come out right away. The whole baby does not come out right away.

*What did you have to bring when you went to deliver?*

*When were asked to come, what did you bring?*

**Saullu:** It was already set up at their home, the string (to tie the umbilical cord) and scissors to cut it with. I’ve never used an ulu to cut the cord, just scissors.

*Have you ever seen anyone who miscarried?*

**Saullu:** When I had a miscarriage, it came out really smoothly.

*You had a miscarriage before?*

**Saullu:** Yes, I have miscarried three times. I lost a lot of blood that way. Nothing else happened. Well, nothing else happened to me.
Have you ever seen anyone who had a miscarriage?

**Saullu:** I have not seen anyone who was not able to get up after that, but they leave Pangniqtuuq right away. From Pangniqtuuq they send the person out even though she should not go. The nurses probably worry about her, but they are not in danger. I was never in danger. Well, I was always able to walk. I did not have a problem.

What did they use before they had scissors to cut the cord?

**Saullu:** I heard that they used an **ulu** or a piece of broken glass. I’ve only heard of it. I did not experience it myself and I have never used a piece of glass. I think they used to sharpen the glass with stones.

When you were in labour, who was there with you?

**Saullu:** My younger sister, Taina, and my stepmother Aluki, I have had them behind me. My husband and I were alone twice. I have had both my stepmothers with me, but not at the same time. The first one was with me twice. She had two of my children as **kisuliaq**, my second step-mother, Ittupasaat, she was alone with my husband and my sister who sat as the **tukirummiaq**. This was in the spring while the others had gone out spring camping.

Were you ever told that when a woman delivers [someone’s child], she could be asked by others to bestow certain qualities on the baby?

**Saullu:** Yes, that is what we said. [It was done] by talking to the babies. They would say this one will be a provider, a good hunter if it is a boy, or this one will have long hair, so the child would have long hair, like my **arnaliaq**. I think we did that because our ancestors did that, because we followed what they did.

If I were pregnant now, and if you were going to deliver my baby, would people tell me, “This is what Saullu is going to say”?

**Saullu:** I don’t know. They only got the people that were available. They did not choose who would be their midwives. But my younger sister did not want anyone besides me, because I was the only one that was comfortable to her. That is what she told me. All her children are my **kisuliaq**. Another **arnaliaq** of mine, Ida is also here.

There were three that were at a delivery?

**Saullu:** One here by my knees, holding on to the box, one sitting here [demonstrating], and one behind her. In a camp if there were only a few people, then only a few people...
attended, if there were more people there would be more to help. Any number of people could be there. But we were told not to make too much noise, because it would cause the woman in labour to *kussasuk-* if there was too much noise.

**What would happen?**

**Saullu:** The baby would not come out right away because the noise would cause the woman to *kussasuk*. Even though the baby was trying to come out the woman would *nunu-* or hold back on delivering. That happened to me with my youngest. I delivered him at the old hospital. The person working there said, “Maybe we should leave so that you will deliver, as you are *kussasuk*,” That’s what she told me, because there was some noise. Once they left, I delivered right away.

**Maybe you were used to having quiet?**

**Saullu:** Yes, we were not supposed to make noise when we were assisting in a delivery. We were not supposed to make loud noises. That was in the *qammaq*, but I don’t know about today. I gave birth the first time in a tent when we were in camp.

**Did you talk to the woman giving birth?**

**Saullu:** Yes, I would tell her to stay still, not to move around too much. That’s what we told them, because it isn’t good to be moving around so much. They say when they move they tend to *paggiq-*.. They do that following a contraction. I used to reprimand some women and tell them they had to go through with it, there was no other way.

**What is *paggiq-*?**

**Saullu:** When they tear during delivery, they called it *paggiq-*.. I’m not really sure. I heard the term *paggiq-* from my maternal aunt Naqi when I was no longer a very young child.

**Did you ever see a woman crying during delivery?**

**Saullu:** Yes, some of them cry.

**They only cry very gently?**

**Saullu:** Yes. I used to notice some of them cry, but I told them that even if they cry it won’t help, because there is no other way around it. Some of them did not have a smooth delivery, just like today. Once I gave up trying to push the baby out, I told my husband to come and help me with my sister-in-law Malaija, the wife of my brother Pauloose. That is why their only daughter goes down south for medical reasons. My husband said he had to use all his strength to push her out because she was stuck.
What happened?

Saullu: The baby got stuck and my husband used all his strength to push it because I was not able to do it, so I asked someone to get him for me.

How was this baby Leah adopted?

Saullu: She used to faint sometimes, when we were camping in the summer shortly after she was born. I think it was because the membrane covering the heart had been torn due to weak contractions.

Maybe this happened during the delivery?

Saullu: Yes. A long time ago they said the baby would have heart problems if contractions were too weak and if the passage of the mother was too narrow. Then we had to push it out. That was the only way to deliver the baby. The baby seemed to be stuck that time, and I think he saved the mother because she would have died if she had not delivered.

When the water has broken and there is no more fluid, is that when the baby has difficulty coming out, is that when it is time to deliver?

Saullu: Exactly.

If that happens then the baby cannot come out?

Saullu: No, not because of the water. She had a narrow passage when delivering. We as females have different sizes of passages; we are all like that. We all have different sizes, some longer than others. We used to be told not to wait too long before getting a husband. If we did, our passage would set. They used to tell us not to wait too long so our passage wouldn’t set. These bones, the pelvic bones, would not be able to separate anymore. That’s what I heard. If it had been a while since the female had been pregnant and if the pelvic bones were not able to separate; an asimautta would be placed here [demonstrating] and someone else would kneel on it and separate the bone. This would happen to women who had not had a husband soon enough.

What is an asimautta?

Saullu: Someone puts the board on her lower back and kneels on top. That is how they separated the pelvic bones.
That is the first time I heard of that.

**Saulu:** Her step-mother used an *asimautta* on my sister-in-law Leetia because it had been a long time since she had been pregnant. Although she had had a husband for a long time, her pregnancies were far apart. She delivered fine [after using the board].

*I forgot what asimautta is.*

**Saulu:** A wooden object. It’s made of wood. We used them to measure and cut up skins. Some people separated the bones in this area [demonstrating at the front], some around this area near the tail bone (*ingiiqsauti*). That is how they separated them. That is what they said.

*I don’t quite understand. Were the bones broken when they didn’t separate?*

**Saulu:** Someone first put the *asimautta* on the female’s lower back and knelt on it applying pressure until the bone separated.

*When she was in labour?*

**Saulu:** Yes, because she could not give birth. She was in labour, but her pelvic bones couldn’t separate. Sometimes it was a problem too, when one side of the pelvis moved too much.

**Pauloosie:** You all have pelvic bones that have separated.

**Saulu:** Yes, all of you, yes. All of your pelvic bones are separated. They told us not to wait too long so our bones would not stick together.

*When they get too old?*

**Saulu:** When they get too old.

**Qallunaat wait until they are much older.**

**Saulu:** Most definitely.

*They wait until they are 35 to 40 years old, because they put their work first. That’s why they wait.*

**Saulu:** Yes.
It must be a problem.

Saullu: Yes, it must be a problem for them. They seem to be just waiting, unlike the Inuit.

Right. They don’t know what to do.

Saullu: I wouldn’t say that if I didn’t know this field, but I agree with that.

So do you think that when they get pregnant at an older age they are more in pain?

Saullu: Some deliver really fast and some deliver really slowly. I delivered really fast one time. We were out collecting eggs, and a group of people came to our camp, so we went down to welcome them. Then I went home, because I needed to urinate. We used to have a jam can, the old large kind, so I sat on it and urinated. Then I realized that the baby’s head was sticking out. I thought the whole baby came out.

It was coming out?

Saullu: Yes. I was giving birth to it. Then I thought, “How am I going to do this?” I loosened my pants and lay down. I don’t remember exactly what happened, but I yelled out. We were in a tent in the summer. But I know it was a wonderful experience. You know, like when you have been constipated and need to have a bowel movement and you feel good afterwards. It was almost the same feeling. It was a wonderful feeling.

You almost gave birth while you were alone?

Saullu: Yes, somebody came in after I yelled out. I tried not to push but when someone came in I gave birth. It was a wonderful feeling, and easy when I gave birth to it. The child is named after my mother. My mother used to get easily scared when I was in labour. The baby was born in the summer soon after my mother passed away. Some of the women were not able to deliver well. I never used to be in labour for a long time. Maybe because my husband and I used to practice as midwives. That is what I think.

My husband used to get up right away when he woke up. He used to snore, then the next thing I noticed, he would be up. His mother and his father used to tell him to get up right away when he woke up, so that when he got a wife, the wife would not be in labour for a long time. Even during the night, if someone needed his help in the camp, he would get up right away, or during a storm.
Did you ever assist someone who had a breech delivery?

Saullu: No, I haven’t seen anyone like that. Breech babies do not have enough space in the womb. They are pushed back in, right in this area [demonstrating], and then it would turn into the right position. It is known that the doctors do not push the babies back. I used to show them (the mothers) that if they have a contraction in a certain area it could mean one thing, but if the contractions are only on one side, it means the baby is breech.

On the other side?

Saullu: Yes. I know, but I have not delivered someone with a breech baby. If I had, I would have broken the baby’s leg.

Did you ever have to push a baby back in for any reason?

Saullu: No, I did not have to push a baby back in. I would just tell the women to push, and I pushed the body slowly and harder. That’s what I used to do following the contractions. There are three strong contractions. On the third one, the baby comes out. I know that because I have experienced it. After the third one when the contractions speed up that’s when the baby comes out.

Did you say that Nutara was your mother’s cousin?

Saullu: Our mothers were cousins.

Were you ever told not to soften skins with your feet while you were pregnant?

Saullu: I used to soften seal skins with my feet a lot while I was pregnant, so I would go into labour.

I thought you were not supposed to do that while you were pregnant.

Saullu: I even softened skins with my feet when I had a big belly.

Sealskins?

Saullu: Yes, and I used to stretch caribou skins as well.

What did they tell the pregnant woman to do if she started bleeding?

Saullu: I have never experienced a pregnant woman bleeding.
Well, [don’t] we bleed a little during our first trimester?

Saullu: I’ve never spotted. Some people have spotted. I’ve heard that their pregnancies are longer, well, Inuit not qallunaat. I’ve heard that from the elders. That’s what Inuit elders told me.

Do you have any funny stories regarding when you were delivering?

Saullu: It is never funny when you are with someone who is in labour.

Were there any unusual events?

Saullu: Yes, it’s always a joyous event when a baby is born so we start laughing. We find it a joyous occasion once the baby is out, for we are grateful that it’s over for the baby and the mother. There were times we had tears of joy. Thankful to God because we cannot create human beings on our own. For that reason, we had tears of joy. There was a time that my grandmother delivered a still-born baby. I remember that too. I remember her father’s prayer, Tulugarjuaq’s prayer. I recall my grandmother gave birth to a stillborn child, as I was with my mother as usual. Mothers used to bear children at the same time as their eldest child. I know that for a fact. I had children at the same time as my mother had hers. We used to be told that we would bear children at the same time our eldest child was having theirs.

Only if your eldest was a female?

Saullu: Even if it wasn’t a girl, the same thing. These are things I know. Yes, that’s what I was taught, that I would be having my children at the same time as my eldest child. But my eldest child passed away not too soon after my second child came along. When my eldest child was really sick, I was told that I was going to be having my children at the same time as her, but I thought to myself, “With her?”

Whose child was it that was still-born?

Saullu: My grandmother’s, the woman I referred to as Taunguliqtuq, gave birth to a stillborn child. I left when her father was praying. It is more difficult to deliver a stillborn baby as it is unable to do anything. I have heard that it’s harder to give birth to a stillborn. I remember that quite vividly, as I tagged along with my mother as usual.

What was done for the stillborn child?

Saullu: Because the child was born dead it was buried.
Were prayers said for it also?
Saullu: Yes, prayers were used for those who died. But the prayers wouldn’t be repeated at the burial site. That’s how it used to be.

Did they have to cut the umbilical cord too?
Saullu: Yes they would. It was probably pulled out. Some pulled out the placenta. Some are difficult to come out and some women would have to really strain to push it out. Myself, I never had to do this when I bore my eldest child. How the placenta comes out at the first birth tends to be the way with following births. I would press around the abdomen and the placenta would come out, for any baby I helped deliver.

Would the women who had just delivered start doing chores right away?
Saullu: I was quite active after my first deliveries, but not so much in my later ones. There was a doctor who arrived at Qipisa shortly after I delivered once. He ordered me to stay in bed for three days and he said he’d be leaving shortly. Soon after he left, I ran all the way up the hill for I really wanted to watch the ship that was departing. I was often asked if I could really feel anything at all. If you are not in pain you have no difficulty moving around but if you are in pain you are not energetic. When I was in labour, I went to the tidal flats so I could dig clams, and when I was digging, I could feel my child’s head about to come out. I almost delivered on the beach!

Did your eldest child die when she was an infant?
Saullu: No, she had a younger sibling then.

Was she sick?
Saullu: Yes, she had diarrhea and she could only feed from my breast as she could not swallow anything else.

She died before her [first] birthday?
Saullu: No, she died when she was probably two years old. We’d start menstruating only after they had their second birthday. That was often the case. There would be longer intervals between our children. My mother told me when I had my first child, that I would not menstruate until after her second birthday. I was scared for a while as I felt different. It turns out that’s the way it was.

When they were two years old?
Saullu: Yes.
After that you got pregnant?

Saullu: Yes, it was the same for me and my mother. Back then it seems we didn't get pregnant right away. But these days everything seems fast. It's as if everything is rush, rush, rush in the world.

I wonder if this was from breast-feeding.

Saullu: Yes, we always breast-fed.

Was the reason menstruation took so long to start?

Saullu: When I adopted a child, I automatically took my breast out to feed, forgetting that I had to feed it from a bottle, as breast-feeding had been my way of life with my own babies. I would wake up during the night attempting to feed from my breast. I used to have a lot of milk when I was breast-feeding. When we were younger, we used to be told that we should wipe our hands often on the front flaps of our amauti or parkas, when we were out berry picking unless they were really greasy and dirty. I used to do that and it worked for me. I had a lot of breast milk. I have fed a lot of newborns my milk.

Even when they weren't your own?

Saullu: I fed a lot of babies that were not my own.

While at the same time having your own baby?

Saullu: Yes. Even as they grew, I still had milk. When a mother had a second child, the first child would stop feeding from her. Even if she cried for the breast, she would not be given it. It is too much work to breast-feed two at the same time.

Did you breast-feed your youngest child the longest?

Saullu: Of course. Only when he became aware of himself and became shy, did he stop. He’d play and run around a lot, and then stop for a feeding. My arnaliag got shy when I told her to stop breast-feeding as she was really big now. Children who are breast-fed don’t eat a lot of solid food if the mother has an abundance of milk. They don’t eat a lot of solid food. That’s how it was with my children. Jaalu was the one who was breast-fed the longest. When I told him he was too big, he became shy, and he didn’t want to be breast-fed anymore. Even when he was old enough to pretend to be hunting, he was still being breast-fed.
Is that how it used to be back then?

Saullu: Yes, that’s how it used to be. I was not aware of bottle feeding before I had adopted children. When I had two adopted children and I ran out of powdered milk, I would feed them broth from the bottle.

Have you taught midwifery?

Saullu: While delivering a baby, I would train anyone who was present at the delivery. I would tell them this is what they would do when I passed away. I have even given advice on the portable camp radio. I did that too when Lypa was assisting in delivering a child, through the radio.

When the baby was born, what was it wrapped in?

Saullu: They would be wrapped in qukturaut thigh-warmers. Their mother’s thigh-warmers, with the bottoms sewn. I have heard that some would be wrapped in rabbit skin. I was told that rabbit skin would slow down the child, so I never used it. I never used rabbit skin. Rabbit skins slows one down. Those who are slow are called pijaitut.

Qukturaut?

Saullu: They were from our knees up. They were used at Ammalik, the thigh-warmers that were made. They were worn with short pants. They were not part of the pants. They were not attached to the shorts. Men have one piece pants.

One would not be cold without them?

Saullu: The ones made of cloth are not warm for the body. I grew up with good clothing. I never had improper clothing. While I was growing up, my father was a successful hunter, even using a qajaq to get a caribou, when the caribou had summer fur. I always had a caribou parka. That’s how I grew up, never wearing worn out clothing. My mother would make them. If she hadn’t made them, I know I wouldn’t have proper clothing. My old clothing used to go to orphans who had no parents. Qiluja and Miluqtittuq, who were from here, were always grateful to me, to the day they died, that they got my second hand clothing. I would also feed them, when they had nothing to eat as orphans. I wasn’t an orphan. Both my parents were alive.

The Qiluja who died?

Saullu: Yes, and Miluqtittuq who used to live here. She used to live here in Iqaluit.
Julia: I’m named Qiluja, after her.

Saullu: Qiluja passed away not too long ago. She was Lucassie’s wife. That tiny one. The other Qiluja was Akisuk’s wife.

Can you tell us about what you were taught, how you were taught, that sort of thing?

Saullu: Yes. I was taught how to sew and cut patterns. I can do them because I was taught this. I can work better with skins than cloth. I mean it when I say that. I can work with cloth but it is not the same. I don’t enjoy working with cloth, only with caribou and seal skins. I can make a caribou parka in two days, even if it’s for a qallunaat, as long as the skins are softened. That’s how I work. I can make a caribou parka in two days. I’m telling the truth when I say that. I only state what I can do. I only say what I can do, I am not saying I am the best. Myna’s mother knows as she is my sister. I never had improper clothing when I was a child, so I was often admired.

Those who didn’t come from the same camp did they have a different style of clothing?

Saullu: Yes, they were different. But now they copy, as you can see, long parkas made from cloth.

Were you told not to sew when your husband was away?

Saullu: No, I sewed all the time. I only feel good when I’m sewing. I only stop when I’m about to go to bed, as it is my way of life. That is the way I am. You can only do it if it is your way of life. You can’t do it if it’s not. It has always been my way of life.

When he came back from hunting, did you have to meet him right away?

Saullu: We would have to help when my father returned from hunting, removing harnesses from the dogs when they were using dogteams, or putting them on when my father prepared for hunting. My siblings and I would help our father. When he became a widower too, we would help him, even when we were pregnant, as we loved our father.

The need to help is part of the Inuit way.

Saullu: Yes.
Were you told to do chores?

Saullu: Yes, we followed what we were told to do. One who just sits around tends to grow old faster. That is why we were told to be mobile and energetic.

Do you know what was done to women who were bleeding heavily after giving birth?

Saullu: They were given sips of warm water when they lost lots of blood, warm water, not too hot, gradually increasing the sips of water as it strengthened them. That’s how the blood starts getting better for those who lose a lot of it. It never happened to me but it always happened to my younger sister. She took after my mother, as we tend to follow our parents. I do not take after my mother. My mother always seemed to lose a lot of blood when I was a child. She used to be given sips of water. I am an expert in this area as I have done this myself. I don’t do that today, but in the past I did.

You mentioned that when a woman delivered, the baby would have visitors?

Saullu: Yes, there would be visitors who were happy for the baby. A lot of children would come to see the baby as it was a new joyous event.

Did people shake the newborn’s hand?

Saullu: Yes, that used to happen. When newborns were kissed, I used to say that they were too small to be kissed. Yes, they would be considered reincarnations of their namesakes, and children would do this [shake hands] with the baby.

They were probably listening and waiting outside for the baby to be born?

Saullu: Some of them were probably listening. When someone said the baby had arrived, they would come in, if it wasn’t the middle of the night. My husband would ask if the baby had been delivered when I came home in the middle of the night. He would ask if the woman had managed to deliver. He knew I would never just leave a woman who just gave birth.

Can I ask you about ajaajaa songs?

Saullu: I do not know how to do ajaajaa songs. I’m telling you the truth.

Do you know anything about ajaajaa?

Pauloose: About ajaajaa?
Were you asked to sing too?

Pauloose: There is no such thing as ajaajaa.

Qilaujjajaq, drum dancing?

Pauloose: Yes.

Was it only women who sang the ajaajaa?

Pauloose: I have never heard about it.

Saullu: We did not practice that in our area.

Did you do katajjaq, throat singing?

Pauloose: Throat singing is called katajjaj here, and I think it’s real term is irngaaq, irngaaqtut. There have to be two people. I think that’s what they call katajjaj here.

Did they practice that in your area too?

Pauloose: They called it irngaaq.

You never knew of men doing this?

Pauloose: I cannot do throat singing, which is called katajjajtut today. I’ve never heard of men doing it although I often heard of women doing it.

You’ve never heard of it?

Saullu: I only know of Naatanai and Uqittuq, that used to throat sing when I was a child. The late Uqittuq and Naatanai, who was Siipa’s late mother. Panapaasi’s wife is one of the ones I heard. I used to watch them when I was a child. They are the only ones that I know of.

Do you use the term irngaaq too?

Saullu: We call it katajjaj. The ones who use katajjaj were originally not from this area. I do not know of anybody who did that around here, at least in our home area. When they would gather for egg hunting, two people from different camps would throat sing when they got together. They were the only ones I knew of.

This is how they are positioned when we see them on television [demonstrating]. This is how they used to throat sing. I used to pretend to do that when I was a child.
from what I learned from those two. We used to pretend to do that as children. I used to be the youngest. Naqi was older and she would be busy softening skins with her teeth. I used to want to be the only one throat singing. Naqi was aware of that.

**In one area it’s called irngaaq and the other kataajjaq?**

**Saullu:** I have only heard the term kataajjaq from women who were not from this area.

**Pauloose:** Yes, they were not from the Pangniqtuuq area.

**Saullu:** They did not grow up here.

**Pauloose:** Yes.

**Is it called kataajjaq because they repeatedly bend their knees?**

**Saullu:** I don’t know. I have never understood that. We see them with their hands on each other’s shoulders now on television. They used to move in the rhythms of each other’s breath.

**Why is it called irngaaq?**

**Pauloose:** I don’t know. I didn’t make up the word. I have only heard it.

**When would this take place? During celebrations?**

**Saullu:** When members from different camps gathered in a place, they would do this.

**Pauloose:** It would be a time of joy.

**Saullu:** That’s what I saw. Pauloose grew up moving around the Pangniqtuuq area while I grew up more around here.

**Did boys get more affection when they were babies?**

**Saullu:** When I had a daughter, I loved her very much. I made clothing for her all the time.

**Did boys get more affection?**

**Pauloose:** I can not really comment on that. We were all loved equally, both boys and girls, so I cannot really comment on that.
Did you hunt?

**Saullu:** I never hunted because I am a woman. I don’t know anything about hunting for I am a woman. I am telling the truth. I am only aware of elders waiting for seals. Birds are what I’ve caught. No caribou. I’ve never caught a seal either.

Maybe some women hunted?

**Saullu:** Yes, some did. I have caught birds but I have never caught anything else. My father would always leave me a rifle when he went hunting and he was going to sleep out. I have fired a rifle before, but I have never caught anything, even though I was supplied with a rifle.
When were you born? I would like to know.
Pauloose: Since you’d like to know, it was October 1, 1911. I was born on the islands around Pangniqtuuq.

Who were your parents?
Pauloose: Miqquksia was my birth mother.

How about your father?
Pauloose: Really and truly, nowadays I’m now able to say it. I think my mother had been raped by my father. I was fathered by someone other than my mother’s husband.

Maybe your mother had committed adultery?
Pauloose: She had been raped. I would like to know where the term qunujurniaqtaq has come from. It is an old word, but not among the Uqqurmiut. Qunujurniarniq is a new term. It is only now that people use it.
Who do you think was your real father?
**Pauloosie:** Kuupali. He was called by two names, Kuupali and Aqqalla.

I had forgotten to ask. **Where were you born?**
**Pauloosie:** Among the islands of Pangniqtuuq. At Qikiqtan, where they were whaling.

**How many siblings do you have?**
**Pauloosie:** From my birth mother, I had two sisters. I had three older brothers. I know of having had five siblings from my birth mother. The oldest was Aittainnaq, then her sister Miali. Among the boys, Atungaujaq was the oldest, then Ikkirat and Uquuqu.

**Were you the youngest?**
**Pauloosie:** Yes, I was the youngest.

**Do you know your grandfathers and grandmothers?**
**Pauloosie:** I had a grandmother Qimiqpik through my mother. I don’t know who her husband was.

Who were your father’s parents?
**Pauloosie:** I think his father was Aaparalaaq. I knew him well. The name of his wife I’ve totally forgotten for now... Oh yes! Mamattiaq.

**Who was your wife?**
**Pauloosie:** I first had Aittainnaq as a wife. Kullu, her younger sister has recently passed away. Do you know her?

**Pittiulaaq?**
**Pauloosie:** Yes, she was my wife’s younger sister. Naqi was the older sister. She had Naqi as her nukakuluk.

Oh, so you’re closely related to them. When your wife died, **did you not re-marry?**
**Pauloosie:** Definitely not. They would just die on me anyway [he had three wives].
Did you have any children from your first wife?

Pauloose: Yes, but they have almost all died. Only Siimi Ammaalik, my youngest one with Aittainnaq, is still alive. He is now my only son. He was our youngest.

How many children did you have with this woman?

Pauloose: Siimi, Jaipiti, Aami, Saimu. There were four of them. They were all sons. Aittainnaq suffocated our first daughter shortly after her birth.

She hadn’t been given a name yet?

Pauloose: Yes, even before she was able to get a name. That is, I don’t even know if she was ever given a name. It was not long afterwards that Aittainnaq suffocated her with her breast, while she was feeding her while she was asleep. She had covered her with her breast.

How did you get your first wife? Was it arranged from childhood?

Pauloose: I did not have her as a future wife when I was a child. Viivi’s daughter was my future wife as a child. Somebody else married her around the time I was able to take a wife. Aittainnaq was the adopted daughter of the older stepsister of the wife of my adopted father, after whom I am named Ammaalik. My first wife had Arnaq as a real mother. She too was adopted.

Who were you adopted by?

Pauloose: I am Ammaalik by the person who adopted me. Aasivak was his wife, and so she was my adoptive mother.

Did you grow up in Qikiqtan?

Pauloose: Yes.

When you took a second wife, who was it?

Pauloose: She too was Aittainnaq. I had two Aittainnaqs as wives.

Did you and she have children?

Pauloose: I have an only daughter in Pangniqtuuq, Miali.
Oh. Another wife...

Pauloose: No, I would like another wife, but I’ll probably die before then. I was told to marry a qallunaaq, a qallunaaq in Pangniqtuuq. I’d been told to marry a nurse, a qallunaaq. She was not able to work with skins. I never used to give in to the ministers, the police, and the government workers. When we had Tulugaq (Keith Crowe) as the area administrator, these people used to tell me to marry a qallunaaq. Since she was not able to work with skins, and since I thought I was going to be hunting all my life, although it turns out it wasn’t so, I wouldn’t give in. A woman who had been originally from Qivittuq was brought for me, even though I had not iqqulik [asked for a wife]. I ended up being thankful afterwards.

Where was she from?

Pauloose: She used to be from Qivittuq. She’s now from Qikiqtarjuaq.

Who was she?

Pauloose: Miali.

You didn’t have children with her, did you?

Pauloose: Yes, [but] it turned out it wasn’t me. Even though she was able to bear children, I had become no longer able to have children. While she was out in the hospital in Toronto, she got pregnant. She came back quite pregnant. She must have thought that she was not able to bear children, but she was impregnated while over there.

She had committed adultery?

Pauloose: Yes. We did have a child, but it also didn’t live very long. He was a little boy.

He didn’t have a name?

Pauloose: Yes, he was not yet able to get a name.

Had you ever adopted any children? Do you have any adopted children?

Pauloose: Today, there is Jaipiti Ammalik, you know him?

Yes. He was yours and Miali’s adopted child?

Pauloose: Yes, he was our adopted child. And a girl also, Aapia. She would be from Kangiqtugaapik (Clyde River) now. She was originally from Kangiqtugaapik, but she
was born here in Iqaluit. They started looking for a home for her because her mother was not going to take care of her, because she was not her mother’s husband’s child. When we heard that they were looking for a home for her, we decided to take her, based on the fact that she was itsimajaujuq (not treated very well). Therefore she is my other adopted child. She is my adopted child. Very soon after she was born, even before her umbilical cord had fallen off, a nurse brought her to us in Qikiqtarjuaq.

Did your wives die of illness?

Pauloose: Yes, although they did not uggasuq- (suffer in pain). My first one, my dear Aittainnaq, died because her lungs collapsed.

How about the other one?

Pauloose: I’m not exactly sure, but probably from her lungs as well. Also the same with the last one. Even though I wish there were more, this is the end.

You said you had been born at Qikiqtan. Did you grow up there as well?

Pauloose: Yes, I spent part of my childhood there. The person after whom I am named Ammaalik seemed to have two homes, at Qikiqtan and over here at a place called Illungajut. Since he had two homes, both of these were places where I spent my childhood. It was at Illungajut that I really grew up, where I became an adult, where I learnt to hunt. That’s the way it was for me up there.

Do you recall if there was (bowhead) whaling taking place around the time of your birth?

Pauloose: Yes. Even though I was aware of it taking place, I did not participate in the whale hunts because I was too young. There was one spring in which the person for whom I am named Ammaalik allowed me to go along on a whale hunt. They didn’t catch a whale, even though there were some whales then. He had me go along on hunts all spring. It turned out that he was trying to get me to learn about whaling.

Was it at Qikiqtan that they used to hunt whales?

Pauloose: Yes, it was at Qikiqtan that they used to hunt whales.

Did you say that you had been born at Qikiqtan after there were qallunaat?

Pauloose: Yes. There is another event which I can talk about, because I recall it even though I was still in the amauti. I remember still being in the amauti.
What would you do whenever the (supply) ship arrived?

Pauloosie: The ship. They would all be out, full of joy.

Over there you were all Inuit. None of you were able to speak English but you’d get by with qallunaat?

Pauloosie: Some of them. The person for whom I’m named Ammaalik would always speak English. Yes, some of them were able to speak a bit of English. We, however, were not able to speak English.

Had the ships been arriving while you were a child, or was it not until you were an adolescent?

Pauloosie: When I was a child I was living at Qikiqtan. But even when I was a child the ships would arrive.

I have heard that women used to get pregnant from qallunaat in exchange for tobacco. Have you heard of this?

Pauloosie: Yes, before my time, it used to be like that. This practice was carried out. This is something I’ve only heard about.

It is something that you’ve only heard about?

Pauloosie: Yes. It is something I have only heard about. I didn’t see it, but I think what has been said is the truth.

Can you tell us a little bit about Inuit becoming pregnant from qallunaat? Can you tell us about what you have heard?

Pauloosie: I have not experienced it, however. I have really only heard about women being made pregnant. [Regarding] this thing that you asked about women getting pregnant in exchange for tobacco, they say that some husbands used to send their wives because they wanted tobacco so badly. This is what they used to do.

Their husbands wouldn’t be selfish about letting them be shared, as long as they got tobacco?

Pauloosie: They would give their wives to a qallunaaq so that she would obtain tobacco. This was something that I had actually heard about. It is something about which I’ve heard more than once which is why I’m able to talk about it. If it were something about which I was told only once, it would seem nonexistent to me.
Regarding hunting, did you go along when you were a child?

Pauloose: Very much so.

When did you get dogs?

Pauloose: Even when I was a child, the person for whom I’m named Ammaalik taught me to drive a team by myself. The person for whom I’m named Ammaalik really taught me a lot regarding hunting. Yes, I appear to be well learned about hunting because he taught me very well by having me come along. Real hunting took an incredible amount of energy.

What do you recall as being the first animal you ever caught?

Pauloose: A seal. That person that I referred to as my birth mother, even after I was adopted out, she used to go hunting when the breathing holes were opening up (qulangiqaq-) in the spring. The women would go seal hunting while their husbands went out whaling to the floe edge.

What? Their wives were waiting at breathing holes?

Pauloose: They would be taken out by dogteam. That is how they would qulangiqaq. There would be a lot of seals caught. That is how my mother made me catch my first seal. By harpooning it while I was out with them hunting at the open seal holes.

Was this in the early spring?

Pauloose: This was in the late spring. That was the first time that I caught a seal. I will never forget it.

I’d like to go back to your dogteam. How many dogs did you have?

Pauloose: In Illungajut I had a lot of dogs. Because I wanted them to be able to pull a lot of meat for me to distribute, I didn’t want to have only a few dogs. Because I was able to provide them with enough food, I was able to have a lot of dogs. Although they didn’t number twenty, they were always more than ten because that’s how I liked it.

You stated earlier that women used to hunt at seal holes. They were brought down by dogteam?

Pauloose: Yes, the dogteams had to have a driver who was able to control them, just like a skidoo has a driver (aquti). Therefore dogteams also had a driver (ingirrattiji).
Yes, so these women would be left. How were they brought back?

Pauloosie: After the dogteam stopped they would disperse and search for a hole to wait at.

Did the dogs wait?

Pauloosie: The dogs were looked after by their driver.

Yes. Did they have rifles, or was it before they had rifles?

Pauloosie: They only used harpoons then. They used harpoons only, and some of them would catch a seal right away. These were seals caught by women.

Were you in awe when you caught your first seal?

Pauloosie: Very much so.

When they caught their first animal, did they have a celebration for them?

No? They were only hunting for food, weren’t they?

Pauloosie: Yes, but the midwife who brought him into the world always had to be given a piece of meat.

Did they have a feast for a person who caught his first animal?

Pauloosie: Yes. This first animal had to be eaten in its entirety. This was only when it was possible to do so. If it was not possible, then they didn’t do it.

When did they stop really using dogteams?

Pauloosie: It was only after they moved to Pangniqtuuq during the year that dogs were dying, around 1962. That was the beginning. A lot of people lost their dogs then.

Were you still in an outpost camp then?

Pauloosie: Yes.

Did their dogs become sick?

Pauloosie: Yes.
I have heard that my grandfather, James Alivaqtaq, used to come over here by dogteam. Do you recollect that?

Saullu: He also used to *kinnguaq-* They are said to “*kinnguaq-*” when they come from over there (Pangniqtuuq) to here (Iqaluit). From here, they used to say “*kangivaq-*.” He was one of that group.

Why did he come here?

Saullu: Maybe they used to bring all sorts of things here, such as letters, as there were no people with phones. So when the *qallunaat* came here from Pangniqtuuq, he would be one of the group. He was not always one of them.

What was it that they did?

Saullu: We would “*kinnguaq-*,” over to here (Iqaluit), and “*kangivaq-*,” from here. To “*kangivaq*” and to “*uivaq*” it was just the same. Going around the land, they would “*uviaq-*.”

Saullu: So, those are the terms they used to use.

At the time the dogs were dying, did all your dogs die?

Pauloose: They didn’t all die. There were some left. I don’t know of anyone who lost all their dogs. I didn’t lose every last one of mine. Even though we didn’t lose all our dogs, we were brought together to Pangniqtuuq by plane.

Did they know where the people were?

Pauloose: Everybody knew which places were inhabited.

In the old days when people lost their dogs, did you know of people who went hungry?

Pauloose: Yes, people used to be hungry. From the time that I can remember, I never knew hunger in the family of the person for whom I am named Ammaalik. When people tell about the time that they were hungry, I almost envy them being able to talk about it. Since I was never hungry, I have no stories to tell. It was only when I started being on my own [avuti], away from my adoptive family that I started to see that food does run out.

I don’t understand at all what you mean by avuti?

Saullu: *Avutijuq.* Moving away from whom you’re living with.
When you were trying to do things on your own?

Saullu: Yes, trying to do things on our own.

Pauloose: Yes, when I started trying to do things on my own.

Saullu: That is avuti-.

Pauloose: That’s when I was trying to be on my own, like that. It’s the same as if you are now living away from your father’s place. This is its meaning.

Where was it that people used to be hungry?

Pauloose: We used to hear about people being hungry all over. It wasn’t always in the same place. It was all over.

When you were made to move, was that the first time you saw an airplane, when they came to pick you up? You were picked up by plane, weren’t you?

Pauloose: No [it wasn’t the first time I saw an airplane], and yes we were picked up by plane.

Was that the first time you saw an airplane?

Pauloose: No, during the war I used to see American airplanes.

Was it scary seeing an airplane for the first time?

Pauloose: Yes, a little bit.

Where did the plane land?

Pauloose: On the water. There were two American airplanes that came to Pangniqtuuq while the war was on. They used to land on the water then.

Do you know what year it was?

Pauloose: 1945 maybe, around then.

Was that when you were made to move to Pangniqtuuq, in 1945?

Pauloose: No, it was around 1962 that we were made to move to Pangniqtuuq. That fall, in 1963, Elaijah, the one who was known as Anirmiliaq, and I started being taught to be lay ministers.
When they came and got you, did you want to move?

Pauloose: Even though I didn’t want to go because I still had a few dogs, I had to go. Since I had to agree, I was brought to Pangniqtuuq.

Why did you give in? Did you resist? Were you afraid of them?

Pauloose: Maybe they thought we were going to be hungry. That’s probably why it was so.

Were you picked up when you were living in a qammaq at Qikiqtan?

Pauloose: No.

Where were you when you were picked up?

Pauloose: In what I called Illungajut. After I’d been there for a long time.

You had a qammaq there and you just left it?

Pauloose: Yes. The one who I referred to as being my only son, Siimi, didn’t come by plane, in order to keep the dogs. He was going to bring the dogs to Pangniqtuuq. He was going to bring my only remaining dogs to Pangniqtuuq. It is known that those that did not lose their dogs did that.

So when winter came, those teams were brought to Pangniqtuuq?

Pauloose: During that same season we were taken to Pangniqtuuq, when the days got long, when we were able to move into tents, when the sun was up all night, but it was still cold.

Saullu: In March, we went there.

Did you leave all your personal effects behind?

Pauloose: Yes, all we brought was what we were wearing. We were able to go and get some of our things later.

Did you have to get married before you had children? Is this something you had to do back then?

Pauloose: Yes. Now it seems that only if there are a number of children they have to get married. That’s probably not the way it is though. We used to have to get married early back then.
How long after being together, after seeing each other for the first time, did they have to get married? As soon as they saw each other?

Pauloose: Probably not when it was not convenient. Those for whom it was convenient probably got married right away, though I don’t think they just stayed together for a long time.

Did people also get separated, ones that were married, that is?

Pauloose: Yes. I think people have always gotten separated, but nowadays it seems to be almost a daily occurrence.

Even back then, people who were wedded used to separate?

Pauloose: Separation is something that has always been known. But compared to today, they did not get separated as often. Today it seems as if they just follow their whims.

Can I return to your childhood?

Pauloose: You’re free to do so.

When you were a child, what kind of games did you play?

Pauloose: Oh, all kinds of games, so much so that we even played with dog excrement. When dog feces were frozen, we used to play with them when we didn’t have seal bones to use as little toy dogs. Frozen dog feces would be the only things around.

You used them as toy dogs?

Pauloose: Yes.

Saullu: Yes.

Did you hold them?

Pauloose: No, we would arrange them as a dogteam, outside. When we were playing outside.

Did you have other things that you played besides playing dogteams?

Pauloose: Well, yes, we used to make little iglus when there was snow. Also, when it was snow-free, those things that are called playhouses (illunnguaq; rings of stone), we used them as playhouses, and we used to pretend to have families. That’s what we used to do.
I’ll be asking about Christianity. You mentioned that you had studied as (a layreader). How old were you when you started?

Pauloosie: We only got proper training here in Pangniqtuuq in 1963. Elaijah Keenainnaq and deceased Anirmiliaq and I were taught by a qallunaaq. It seems like that we were laying the foundations for the training school for ministers (Arthur Turner Training School) because we were the first to attend.

How long did you study?

Pauloosie: One year.

Were you taught inside a house?

Pauloosie: Yes, Elaijah and I were also using it as living quarters, but now it has been removed. It was moved when I was still in Qikiqtarjuaq. Now it is not there anymore. Now the old Anglican building is there instead.

The qallunaaq who was your teacher, you were able to understand him without being able to speak English?

Pauloosie: We were not supposed to do anything in English. We were not even allowed to deal with English materials. We were taught only in Inuktitut.

The qallunaaq was able to speak in Inuktitut?

Pauloosie: He could speak some Inuktitut, but not like Mike (Reverend Mike Gardner).

Do you remember his name?

Pauloosie: Uikisu. He used to say his name was Uikisu (Reverend Sydney Wilkinson). It must be an English name. I still have his name written somewhere, but it is back home.

Was your former teacher middle-aged?

Pauloosie: Yes, he had a wife, and I think they had three children.

Did you have a set time when you would have classes?

Pauloosie: Yes, we used to start around nine in the morning, until five. We had breaks in between.
Did you earn wages?

Pauloosee: No, we were not getting paid then, but our bishop arranged for our meals during our schooling. The bishop, who has since passed away, used to order food supplies from which we had our food.

Was it difficult in the beginning when you started your schooling?

Pauloosee: Yes, anything is difficult when you try it for the first time. Sometimes, when we had a lot to learn, it was mentally tiring.

When he came to teach, did he bring bibles?

Pauloosee: Yes, he had bibles. He brought bibles. Since we each had our own bible we used our own. When we were being taught he kept them out of our reach. That was not too good.

Where did you get your bibles from?

Pauloosee: We had our old bibles. We always had bibles, prayer books and hymn books.

Did you get them from your parents?

Pauloosee: When we were able to read, we were given them.

From whom did you get the bibles when you were able to read?

Pauloosee: From the ministers. For free.

Your teacher, did he speak to you in Inuktitut or did he read to you while you wrote?

Pauloosee: A long time ago I was able to write along with what was being said, but today I find it difficult. I used to be able to write along with what was being said, but today it is like I am a different person.

Were you given a certificate when you finished your schooling, like today, when people get certificates when they finish a course?

Pauloosee: No, we didn’t, but we were given a pendant to show that we had undergone training in this field.
Were you able to preach after receiving the pendant?

Pauloosei: Yes, I was sent to Qikiqtarjuaq right away, even though I had not been ordained as a minister.

You went there to minister?

Pauloosei: Yes, I was sent there to act as a minister.

How long were you a minister in Qikiqtarjuaq?

Pauloosei: For twenty-four years.

What year did you go there?

Pauloosei: In 1964. My only son Siimi asked the bishop to care for me while he was working since he would not be able to support me if he became unemployed while I was still in Qikiqtarjuaq. At first he was denied [his request] by the bishop. He later phoned to inquire, for the reasons for the denial. He asked me on the phone what kind of help I was getting from the ministry for food, and clothing. I was not getting anything at all for food or clothing except the leftovers from sealifts for government employees. That was before there was any real form of social assistance. That’s how I was getting food. I mentioned that I was not getting any assistance for food and clothing for my children and my wife. I had a wife then. They all needed food and clothing. I was not prevented from going hunting like a real minister would be, since I had not been ordained. That is how I was, but at the same time I wasn’t allowed to be out hunting for a whole week without taking a day of rest.

Did you hold sermons outside or did you hold sermons inside a house?

Pauloosei: The sermons were held outside when I was being prepared while I was still in Pangniqtuuq. They did not have a church building. I was told that materials would be sent there the coming summer that would be for our church. That is when they got the church.

Why were you not ordained as a minister?

Pauloosei: I could have become a minister at that time if I had undergone further education. Afterwards when I was there, new students were being educated for the ministry. Elaijah was one of the students when Quinijuq (Reverend Donald Whitbread) was the minister there. I was asked to join, but somebody else from Qikiqtarjuaq also
asked to join. I declined because of my lack of ability to speak English. Since there were many that could speak English, I thought, why should I be chosen? That was one of my reasons for declining the offer. Then later that year, the one I called Quinijuq was there, and we cast our votes. Quinijuq always liked to sit beside me. When we were sitting together he spoke to me. He was always friendly to me. He turned to me and said, “Pauloose, you received less votes since you didn’t want to be elected.” I haven’t forgotten. I remember it well. I remember that when he said that to me, he wasn’t smiling as he looked at me. It wasn’t funny then, but now it is.

Where were you when you were asked if you wanted to study for the ministry? Were you still living in the outpost camp?

Pauloose: In Pangniqtuuq.

After you had been made to move?

Pauloose: Yes, after we had just been made to move to Pangniqtuuq we started being taught by the ministers. I wasn’t trying to get chosen for this myself, but the minister asked me. Maybe Kisaq told the bishop about my Christianity. That was when I became a student to be a minister. Then afterwards, after we had cast our votes, the one who went to study for the ministry in Pangniqtuuq, was from Qikiqtarjuaq. He got sent back home because he was not showing up enough for school. Quinijuq then again said to me, “The bishop doesn’t mind if someone wants to study for the ministry even if they don’t speak English and even if they are getting elderly.” I think he was trying to talk me into going to the school. He was telling me this saying, “He doesn’t mind even if someone can’t speak English or even if someone is getting elderly.” I think he was trying to persuade me. I regretted only afterward, when the one we had chosen did not finish. I thought he would have followed through with his studies, which was one of the reasons why I had not wanted to run for election. There were many votes cast to decide who would go to Pangniqtuuq to study to become a minister. I would tell them beforehand not to vote for me because I couldn’t speak English, as the letters that the bishop sent to the communities seemed to indicate that they wanted people who could speak English. Because I couldn’t speak English I had said that I didn’t want anybody to vote for me, but I received the second most votes. If I had said that I wanted to be elected almost everyone would have voted for me, I’m sure. This was my only disobedience, due to the fact that I couldn’t speak English. As it turned out, it would have been all right even if I couldn’t speak English like Elaijah.
Let me get back to your childhood. Were church services held outside when you were in an outpost camp?

Pauloose: We’d be in tents and when the weather was good, we’d be outside. But if the weather was not very good we wouldn’t be outside. Tents or qammat (sod houses) that were the biggest would be chosen for the service.

In winter would the service be held in the qammaq?

Pauloose: Yes. Nowadays it would be held in a house. Before there were houses it would be held in a qammat.

Back then, would everybody in the community attend the service?

Pauloose: A larger majority of the community would attend compared to today. There didn’t used to be large communities like today. At the time, it felt like there were many people, because of the way of life. It wasn’t like today at all.

On Sundays, were the services held at 11 o’clock like today?

Pauloose: Yes, I know that the time has always been set like this, in the morning and evening.

Church services were only held on Sundays back then?

Pauloose: Yes, especially when there were not always ministers. We went mostly on Sundays, but when there started to be Inuit ministers in Pangniqtuuq, it was decided that we could gather for church even if it wasn’t Sunday.

On Sundays, what did you do? Were you supposed to abstain from doing certain things? Today, it seems like anybody can do anything even on Sundays.

Pauloose: On Sundays in the communities, there didn’t seem to be much noise. We were not supposed to go hunting on Sundays unless we were out of food. We weren’t allowed to run around as children on Sundays.

Did these rules apply for the whole day?

Pauloose: Yes.
How about Christmas? Is it different now at Christmas?

Pauloose: Christmas is still the same. But back then we didn’t have all the southern goods. We mostly had homemade goods. They would choose the best [item] to give. They would give anything at all at Christmas. The gifts would include things like kamiik, and even skins, because there was nothing else to give. People didn’t mind receiving these. Today, it seems like they only want to receive nice, new things.

Back then there was no wrapping paper either?

Pauloose: No.

How, then, would they be tied, or were they not?

Pauloose: The ones that needed to be tied would be tied when possible, and sometimes I saw some wrapped in cloth, but not always.

Did you celebrate Christmas only on Christmas [Day]? Was Christmas celebrated for a whole week?

Pauloose: More emphasis was put on the real reason for Christmas, and the beginning of the New Year was also celebrated.

Did you go to church on Christmas Eve or in the morning?

Pauloose: In the morning, but we didn’t go twice.

Did you go to church in the evening on Christmas?

Pauloose: Later in the morning or in the afternoon. I know we didn’t go twice.

How about Good Friday...what did you used to do?

Pauloose: I don’t really know if it was always celebrated when I was a child.

What did you do when somebody died? Did you have to wait long to bury them? Where did you put the deceased?

Pauloose: Today, the body is kept, waiting for relatives to arrive. That did not appear to be the case back then.
The deceased was buried right away?

**Pauloosee:** Yes.

*If the person died in the evening, wouldn’t they wait until the next day to bury them?*

**Pauloosee:** Yes, but they did not keep it for days and days.

*It was kept in the house or... where was it kept?*

**Pauloosee:** When it was taken out, it was put in a grave right away.

*Was it put in a plywood coffin?*

**Pauloosee:** Anything was used because there was no plywood back then. There used to be long wooden crates used for building materials which the doctors would have ordered, and these would be used as coffins before there was plywood available.

*How about the family members? Would they be sent for when you were living in the outpost camps?*

**Pauloosee:** Maybe it happened on rare occasions. I never encountered a situation where someone was awaited (before the funeral).

*I’m going back to Christmas. Did the people living in the outpost camps go to Pangniqtuuq to celebrate Christmas?*

**Pauloosee:** Yes, they used to come. We used to go to Pangniqtuuq by dogteam if the trail was good for travelling. But if the trail was not good then it was not possible. Not everyone would go, but when the trail was good, people from the outpost camps would go to Pangniqtuuq now and then.

*Were there lots of people gathered for Christmas in Pangniqtuuq?*

**Pauloosee:** Yes, many used to gather in Pangniqtuuq.

*Did they also gather for Good Friday and Easter in Pangniqtuuq?*

**Pauloosee:** Only sometimes, I think, not all the time. Only if it was convenient. Sometimes we went there to trade at the same time, because Pangniqtuuq was the only place we could go to trade. Shortly after, there were *qallunaat* in Pangniqtuuq. The person for whom I am named Ammaalik used to have his own small shop when we were living in our camp. He used to store goods to sell. He did this for some years until the government stopped him, saying that they did not want an Inuk to have a store.
Who didn’t want him to have a store any more?

Pauloose: The government; that is what they said.

Where were you living then?

Pauloose: I can see it in my mind. It was not far from Pangniqtuuq. We called it Illungajut, that was what it was called, Illungajut. In English it was called Bon Accord.

I didn’t understand something about the dead.
Were they buried right away?

Saullu: Some were buried outside where their body was covered with rocks.

Even after there were churches?

Saullu: Yes, for us out in the outpost camps. For others no, because they were not living in the outpost camps. Only those for whom cover or wrap was available, were covered. Sometimes wood from floors and walls would be used, that is how I remember it. The ones for whom there was no material for a coffin were buried on the ground and covered with rocks. The body would be wrapped in caribou skin tied around the body. This is all I know.

Did they bury it just anywhere?

Saullu: Yes.

The rocks were gathered?

Saullu: They fetched the rocks.

Pauloose: The bodies weren’t buried in line beside each other. They were buried where it was convenient.

Saullu: Where rocks were loose and available. In winter, if someone died, a place would be chosen where rocks were easier to get at and the cover-rocks would be flat large rocks, not easily-crumbling pieces, and placed like that.

Did the graves also have to face the day?

Saullu: Only facing north, the graves had to face the north. I’ve told this to people in Pangniqtuuq, because the graves are not facing north. They should be facing toward where we will rise. This has always been said; this is what I know.

Pauloose: Yes, like that.
Saullu: I will be buried facing north.

The one who was being buried was wrapped in caribou skin?
Saullu: Yes, they were wrapped in caribou skin, if there was no fabric available.

The body was then carried?
Saullu: Yes, or they were pulled on sleds or taken by dogteam if the person had wished to be buried at a specific site on the land. They would be buried at the site they had asked to be buried at. These are the only things I know. Some did not want to be buried nearby, because they didn’t want their children and husbands going to the graves too often. This is what I have heard and know.

If someone in your family died, did you go to visit the grave?
Saullu: Yes, we used to go and see the grave. Only on the third day, like when Jesus rose from the dead.

You could only go and see the grave on the third day?
Saullu: Yes, but we didn’t stop going to see them even after they were buried.

Pauloosie: Sometimes people even went to eat beside the grave.
Saullu: I used to go along when they went to eat beside the grave.

Pauloosie: It wasn’t a big feast, but they used to go there and eat in order to include that person.
Saullu: The act of going to eat at the grave site was called tunillak. The people were said to be tunillattut when they went to eat at the gravesite of the one who was once among them. I used to go along.

Did they only go once to tunillak?
Saullu: No, they would do this now and then, isn’t that so?

Pauloosie: Yes.
Saullu: But not too often. Maybe they were following an old tradition.
Pauloosie: Yes. It’s an old tradition.
Saullu: Yes, maybe they were following old traditions. I only knew about this from old women, not from those who have died recently. I knew about this when we still lived in
Qimmiqsuuq. My great-grandmother used to go see her elder sister with another couple.

_Take my father for instance. Whenever we ask him to move here, he never says yes, because he does not want to leave my mother’s body. He has been like this a long time. Has this always been so?_  
_Saullu:_ Yes, we don’t want to leave our mother’s body. If we die in a different place, maybe it is better if we get buried in the same area. Not long ago I told the people in Pangniquu to save me a spot beside my deceased husband. They would have their bodies taken to where they had requested, even out in the open with just some stones around, without being covered. This was according to their wishes and that’s how they would be left. This didn’t happen to everybody, only to the ones who had requested this.

_They didn’t fear that their bodies would be eaten by animals?_  
_Saullu:_ They didn’t think they would be moved. Deceased Nutaraq’s first husband is buried like that on the land, with just stones around him, at the bay of Uummanarjuaq.

_What was his name?_  
_Saullu:_ Nuqinngaq, her first husband.

_Sometimes it is scary to sleep close to a grave site because it causes you to have bad dreams. Is it because the dead person is said to tarniqsuq (be present)?_  
_Saullu:_ Yes, some souls can’t ascend.

_Because they are unable to ascent they tarniqsuq?_  
_Saullu:_ Yes. People were supposedly scared of them. At least that’s what I heard.

_What was tarniqsuq?_  
_Saullu:_ It’s a soul that cannot ascend. We’ll only understand this at the end of the world, every one of us.

_Was it also a tradition, that if somebody touched a bone from a grave by accident, they would have to whistle?_  
_Saullu:_ I used to quickly take teeth, because I liked them. They used to have really nice teeth.
This was also an old custom?
Saullu: Yes, we used to have to whistle when we were children just after we had quickly taken something.

Did you ever hear that if someone took a bone from a grave, the earth would shake?
Saullu: I have not heard that. We just had to whistle.

How did you whistle, with your hands?
Saullu: Whistle with the hands that took something. Maybe it was an act of trading?

How about if you almost stepped on the grave?
Saullu: I walked on a grave once when I was ptarmigan hunting. There was a lot of snow when I realized I was walking on the very grave that I was so scared of. Nobody ever found out though. I only realized that I had been stepping on the grave that I was so scared of after my footprints uncovered the grave.

Did you have to whistle on your feet?
Saullu: I didn’t whistle on them. I can’t reach them.

If you touched something with your feet, did you have to return it with your hands, was this the custom?
Saullu: No, I don’t know about this. We were told to whistle on our hands as children, so we used to do this.

Were you told to whistle because otherwise you might be whistled at?
Saullu: We were not told that, only to whistle on our hands. I was never told why. I was only told to whistle and nothing else.

Pauloosie: Me too.

I’ll be asking questions now about dogteams.
You said you used to have many dogs.
Pauloosie: Yes.
How many seals would you use to feed them?
Pauloosie: If it was an adult seal, one used to be enough.

How often did you feed them?
Pauloosie: I used to feed them every day during the winter when it was really cold. I was not the only one who fed their dogs everyday. The dogs don’t get as skinny and they don’t tire out as easily if they are fed properly. When they go hungry too often, they get weak and tend to stop more often.

What did you do with them in the spring?
Pauloosie: In the spring camp, I would always have them tied up, not leaving them to roam freely.

In the beginning, how did you start your dogteam?
And how old were the pups when you would start to train them for the team?
Pauloosie: I’d let them follow, not harnessed up, not using them, but just letting them follow along to get them used to going. Once you would start training them later on, then they would be easier to train.

How did you make them stop or turn?
Pauloosie: “Ai, ai, ai, ai,” is how you would have them turn to the right. “Ai, ai, ai, ai.”

How about left?
Pauloosie: I would say, “qua, qua, qua,” and they would turn that way instead. When being taught, they used to learn just like people.

How about if you wanted them to stop?
Pauloosie: I’d call “huu” to them. Also, if I was getting ready to go outside or out on the ice after having been at a place for some time, just saying “attii (go)” would [make them] go. They can really learn, and especially if they are not hit too much they seem to learn better.

Were they trained right from the time they were small?
Pauloosie: Dogs need to get out. You could add new ones every year. When there were too many, I would kill off the newborns. But it also happened that some people grew
attached to dogs that would [normally] have been killed and they would add them to the team that was already large enough. So when some grew attached to little puppies, they were just allowed to live. It was better not to keep too many dogs because you would need to feed them also.

Have you ever heard that dogs come from qallunaat?
Pauloose: I've never heard about that.

Puppies born at which time of year are best for a dogteam?
Pauloose: Puppies that were born in the winter did not lose weight as easily when the weather got cold, as ones that were born in the summer.

Do some dogteams use anchors to prevent them from moving?
Pauloose: I’ve only seen people from Qamanittuaq use anchors.

Did you always have to have a whip when going out by dogteam?
Pauloose: Yes, you needed to have something to keep them in line. They needed to see that you had your whip in order to keep them under control; otherwise they were not scared of anything.

Would your dogs tend to fight?
Pauloose: Yes, they would fight, I was not pleased with my dogs fighting each other. I was not pleased with that but I tried not to let it bother me.

How did you stop your dogs?
Pauloose: By saying “huu,” “huu,” “huu.”

Nowadays they use anchors. Back then your dogs would just stay without an anchor?
Pauloose: In winter camp they were not tied up. Today they have to be tied up.

When you would go and wait for a seal at its breathing hole, how did the dogs stay put?
Pauloose: Even if there was no one on the sled the dogs knew to pass the breathing hole and stop further along. They are very capable and learn very well. Even though they are dogs, they can learn a lot.
After going on their own, they would stop by themselves?

Pauloose: At first they would run, but further ahead they would start to look back and realize and come to a stop.

They would come back for you when you were finished?

Pauloose: I would go towards them. But after you shot a seal the dogs would come right away; that’s how they were. That’s how many hunters’ teams were; mine was not the only one like that. I’m just telling about mine. Lots of hunters’ teams were like that.

So, dogs are good at learning?

Pauloose: Yes, even in summertime we used to go hunting for caribou, walking inland, bringing dogs to carry loads. If they were not trained they would be running around at first, but afterwards they would learn to walk behind the owner. That’s how they were.

Even when there were caribou, they would not run after them?

Pauloose: In that event, it became a rush to keep up because they tended to follow the scent of the animal.

You didn’t have the dogs on a leash?

Pauloose: No, but they were dragging a piece of rope tied to them, so in case of an emergency they could be tied up to a rock.

They would not try to eat the food they were carrying?

Pauloose: If they were trained and they were carrying meat, they would just lick the blood that was leaking on the outside, not try to eat what was inside.

Could dogs be used by another person besides their owner?

Pauloose: They could, but because he was not their master, they would not be as obedient.

They didn’t listen very well to someone who was not their owner?

Pauloose: No, they didn’t obey as well with others. Anybody who wanted to use dogs that were not their own was welcome to, but dogs were less obedient with those who were not their masters. That’s how it was. I’ve done this myself.
Did some people get mauled by dogs?

Pauloose: Ammaalik’s dogs mauled someone, when we used to live in Qikiqtan, among the islands around Pangniqtuuq. It was a traditional camping place. He was from Uummanarjuaq. I am from Qikiqtan. When we lived in Qikiqtan when I was a child, Kiinainnaq’s child, who was no longer a toddler, was mauled by Ammaalik’s dogs.

Did he die?

Pauloose: Yes. He was said to have lived for a short time after the attack. I was a child then.

Myna: Was my father’s younger brother also mauled by dogs?

Saulu: Yes. He was mauled to death in Qipisa.

Were dogs that mauled someone not supposed to be destroyed right away?

Pauloose: Yes. If they killed somebody they were supposed to be destroyed seven days later. They were not supposed to be killed right away, because it was feared that they would take revenge.

The one that was mauled would also die?

Pauloose: Maybe that was the reason, or if the person had died in the attack the revenge might have gone to somebody else in the family. This could have been the reason. I can’t say for sure why people waited to destroy them. I’ve only heard about this.

If the person who was attacked died, the dog could not be destroyed right away?

Pauloose: No, it couldn’t be destroyed right away. I told you that I had three wives. The middle one, who was older than me was the mother of James and the others. One of her children was mauled by dogs, and died from the attack. These were not my dogs.

Your dogs never mauled anybody?

Pauloose: No, they never mauled anybody. When they got too lively, dogs could be dangerous. My dogs did that, but they never mauled anybody to death. They attacked somebody who now lives here. The one who is my stepsister Malaija’s daughter.

May?

Pauloose: May. It was May that got attacked by my dogs. She was bitten.
Are dogs absolutely quiet when they are about to maul somebody?
Pauloose: Yes, that’s what they say. They are absolutely quiet when they are ready to maul somebody. When they are fighting with another dog they make noise. But they are very quiet when they are about to maul a person. I’ve never witnessed a person being mauled.

Were your dogs trained to go bear hunting?
Pauloose: When I lived in Illungajut and used to have a dogteam, there were no polar bears. But when I moved to Qikiqtarjuaq where there were bears, I didn’t have a dogteam. There, I always kept one or two dogs because of the bears. If I was out on the land, I used to bring a dog to warn me in case a bear came.

You said that you used to have your dogs tied up in the spring?
Pauloose: Yes. They were harnessed and the harness was tied to a rope. All the dogs would be tied in groups in the spring camp.

They did not chew the ropes?
Pauloose: If they did not develop the tendency, they didn’t do that. But the ones that would chew the ropes would start eating the ropes. But if they did not have the tendency to chew them they didn’t do that.

They didn’t even chew their harnesses?
Pauloose: No. In the winter we tended to go up north where there were seals and I needed to keep them tied up. I would grease fuel on their harnesses when I needed to keep them tied up during the night. That’s how I would teach them not to chew on their harnesses, by greasing the harnesses with fuel. It worked.

Did you make your own whips?
Pauloose: Yes. They were just swung over the sled, dragging along.

Saullu: She is asking if you made them yourself. Did you make your own whips?
Pauloose: That was the only way. I also even used to sew skin ropes because I didn’t just cut holes in them to make an extension. I would sew it in a way called miqsat (a way of sewing). It is the stitch used in sewing a tent (akittituaq). As Saullu explained when you sew a tent and one is outside and the other is inside it was called akittituaq. Sewing the harness like this is called miqsatuaq.
How old were your sons when you started teaching them how to use a dogteam?

Pauloose: Our learning took place when we went along on trips. We didn’t use paper. Our learning took place outside when we would go along on trips. It’s only now that we understand this. Women also learned by observing their mothers. That’s how they learned. They didn’t go through formal education, but learned through observing and watching. We as men learned more about what men do, and the women learned more about what women do, that way. That’s how it was. Today it seems like men’s and women’s skills are more mixed.

Were you informed what you should do if you were approached by a bear or if you were out hunting and ran into one?

Pauloose: Bears were not a protected species back then. Today, when it’s not bear hunting season, we have to chase them away. Back then, we used to be able to hunt them.

When they unexpectedly approached camps, what were you advised to do?

Pauloose: I was never advised as to what to do exactly. But if they approached, they could not be kept away.

If you were out hunting and you were attacked by a bear, what would you do?

Pauloose: When hunting wasn’t regulated, animals tended to come around if you were a hunter, probably based on how willing you were to catch game. That used to be a way of life, but today with the wildlife officers around, the bears are chased away if it is not bear hunting season. I lived around the Qikiqtarjuaq area and I helped to chase bears away especially around this time of year, when it was still boating season. There were shacks around that could be entered and used by anyone. There were a number of shacks out there. When we were in one, we were approached by three bears. Even though there were attempts to chase them away during the night, the next morning while our canoes were pulled up on land, I saw a bear hanging around the end of the canoe where the outboard motor was. The bear went up to the starter that you had to pull. I have heard that bears think like humans. I heard that a long time ago. He bit it and started pulling at it. My belief that polar bears have the capability to think like humans became stronger after I saw for myself how the bear pulled and released the starter repeatedly. There were a number of us. I started to worry that the bear would damage the outboard motor, so I asked one of the hunters to shoot at it and chase it
away. That was the only way it left. The bear stopped tampering with the outboard motor after shots were fired, as it was really close to the shack where we were. Our canoes were pulled up and the bear was a stone’s throw away, when it was biting the handle of the starter. The bear would bite the starter and suddenly release it. I had heard before that bears think like humans, but I believed it more than ever after I saw that.

The bear was probably trying to start the motor?

Pauloose: Yes, it was trying to start it.

You weren’t supposed to talk badly of bears because they could think like humans?

Pauloose: Yes, it was always said that you shouldn’t talk badly about animals or make fun of them, especially bears. We were told when we were children that if you mistreated or made fun of animals, they could seek revenge, especially the ones that could be fierce.

If a bear attacked, what were you advised to do?

Pauloose: I was never told what I should do if I was ever attacked. Around Pangniqtuuq there was never really an abundance of bears.

What about if the bear was facing a certain way?

Were you told which way you should be seeking safety?

Pauloose: If a bear was positioned here [demonstrating] or if it was sitting, we were told that the paws could be dangerous. We were told that it was more awkward for it to attack something behind it.

Are bears the only animals that were referred to as tikiraaqtuq?

Pauloose: All wildlife that comes into a camp is called tikiraaqtuq. Polar bears are often referred to like that because they can be fierce.

Could people also be referred to as tikiraaqtut?

Pauloose: No. Tikittut is the only term used for people.

Have you ever caught a bear?

Pauloose: Of course. I am a man.
When you caught your first bear, was it a cause for celebration?

Pauloosie: I don’t remember if there was a celebration.

Saullu: Those days were not like today.

Pauloosie: I finally caught a bear when I was an adult.

When you caught your first animal, like a seal, did camp members come for a feast?

Pauloosie: Only if it was one seal. When the camp was quite big, seal meat tended to be given out. Our first catch was never just ignored. If we had a midwife, she would keep the sealskin, or if it was a ptarmigan, she kept the skin as well. Probably because of joy.

Saullu: The midwife would keep something from the first catch. The beak, the spine.

Which animal did you enjoy hunting the most?

Pauloosie: I enjoyed hunting them all. Caribou have always been my favorite. Today, I just sit in the house. I have even gone to Nattilik because I wanted to go hunting for caribou and fox, alone with my dogs. I would be gone for up to two weeks. You could only get there by dogteam. I’m only talking about it now. I’m not living like that any more. I’m just reminiscing now. I’m not living like that any more.
I chose to write about the different traditional names of the months and the different seasons. I once heard about the names of the months in Inuktitut and I thought they were so much more relevant for life up here than the names they now have. I liked the fact that the months described something in nature, like the shedding of caribou fur or the return of the sun. I also wanted to know if seasons were celebrated and how time and direction were told. I did not know very much about these things, if anything. The elders from Northern Baffin still knew the terms for the months and seasons, whereas the elders from Pangniqtuuq could only remember two names of the months, although they had more terms for the seasons in a year. I also gathered information about telling direction even if the stars, moon, and sun were not visible. I found that very interesting. I also got additional information about the different names of seal pups and caribou calves in their various stages of development, about the time of year when they are born, etc.

I learned a lot from these interviews, not only about life as it was, but also about how to do a better interview next time. I was so focused on the past that I totally forgot to ask Elisapee, whom I had to interview about her lifestory, if she had any children. I found it was difficult to get information about the time before Christianity, because Inuit were told to stop using their traditional beliefs and taboos after they got baptized.

The elders were very patient and willing to give information as long as they knew about the subject. In some cases, they did not want to express knowledge about something if they had not experienced it themselves, even if they had heard about it.

Months and moons
In the North, the changing moons were named after the changes happening in the surroundings. The names of the moons characterized what was generally happening at that particular time of year, be it the sun returning, the animals being born, etc. Although there are variations according to where in the North you are, the names of the changing moons are much alike. The following traditional terms for the different moons or months, as they were used in Iglulik and Mittimatalik, were told to us by Hervé Paniaq from Iglulik:

July: ikṣuut; [Mittimatalik]. Because the rivers are melting, and people hear rivers melting.[Iglulik] saggaruut.
August: *saggaruut*; [Mittimatalik]. When the land is not so moist any more, summer has come, and the thick hair of the caribou has been shed and is thin. [Iglulik] *akulliruut*.

September: *akulliruut*; [Mittimatalik]; when the caribou hair is not too thin and not too thick, when it is in between. [Iglulik] *amirajaut*.

October: *amialliruut* [Mittimatalik]. The caribou antlers are losing their covers. [Iglulik] *ukialliruut*.

November: *tusaqtuut*; [Mittimatalik/Iglulik]. After the ice forms Inuit can travel to see other people and get news. Usually it was important to hear if they still had dogs or not because they were our means of survival.

December: *taucigiaq; tajuqluk* [Mittimatalik/Iglulik]: very dark; when it is very dark.

January: *qaummagiaq*; [Mittimatalik]. When the sun is starting to return. [Iglulik] *sijinnaarut*.

February: *qangattaaksaq/qangattaarjuk*; [Mittimatalik/Iglulik]. It refers to the sun going higher and higher in the air.

March: *iqaappavvik*; [Mittimatalik]. The sun is higher in the sky but still not too high. [Iglulik] *acunniit*; Premature baby seals are born. Some make it, some freeze to death.

April: *natsijjat*; [Mittimatalik]. When the seal pups are born. (Early April in Iglulik.)

Mid-May: *tirigluit*; [Mittimatalik]. When the bearded seal pups are born. (Late April, early May in Iglulik.)

Late May: *tupiqtuut*; [Mittimatalik]. Snow conditions make it difficult to stay in iglus, so people move into tents. (Mid-May for Iglulik.)

June: *mannit*. Birds are laying eggs. Or *nurrut*: caribou are calving.
In Pangniqtuuq, these were the terms remembered for February and March:

February: *kullutanittuq*; referring to a thumb, because when you hold your thumb up to the horizon, light is visible below the thumb and the sun is visible above it.

March: *natsialiaqut*; the time of early seal pups.

**Seasons**

Some of the terms for the seasons are still used, although today we have adopted the Southern way of telling what time of year it is. The Northern terms were more detailed in describing whether it was early spring, late spring, or real spring, etc. There were more terms for the seasons used in Pangniqtuuq compared with Iglulik and Mittimalik, although I’m sure they used the same terms when describing the season in detail.

These terms are used in Iglulik:

- **Upirngaksaaq**: Early spring, corresponds to March / April.
- **Upirngaaq**: Spring, corresponds to May / June.
- **Aujaq**: Summer, corresponds to end of July / August / early September.
- **Ukiaksaaq**: Early fall, corresponds to September / October.
- **Ukiiaq**: Fall, corresponds to November / December.
- **Ukiuq**: Winter, corresponds to January / February.

These terms for the seasons in Pangniqtuuq were told by Pauloosie Angmarlik:

- **Ukiuq**: Winter in the months of January and February. At this time of year, ice will have formed on top of the water.
- **Upirngassaaq**: Early spring in the months of March and April. At this time of the year, it is getting warmer even though it still gets cold at night.
Upirngaallarik: Real spring in the months of May and June. Ducks are laying their eggs, and caribou are shedding their hair in June.

Aujakasak: Early summer in the month of July. Some birds, like the imiqqutaillaq, lay their eggs.

Aujallarik: Real summer in the month of August, when we used to start going inland to hunt caribou for food and clothing.

Ukiaqpasik: Early fall in the month of September, when we head back to the coast from inland.

Ukiallarik: Real fall in the months of October, November, and December. Caribou are mating in October after they have descended from inland, and ice is starting to form on top of the water.

Stars
During the dark months of winter it became necessary for the hunters to use the stars in order to be able to find their way home after hunting on the land or the floe edge. Other things were also used as markers, like the banks and slopes of snow formations. I got more information about stars from Pauloosie later in the interview.

These are some of the stars that were used for time and direction in Pangniqtuuq:

Qutuqtuuk were used by Pauloosie when traveling to a different community or out on the land. Qutuqtuuk are located just behind tutturjuk. Tutturjuk end up facing directly toward where the dawn will be breaking. Qutuqtuuk descend as the day is breaking.

Ullaktut are three stars in a line and ujjjuujuk (with a float, avataq, just behind it called avataatsiaq) are also stars used to tell time and direction.

“One star which I [Pauloosie] used to keep from being lost is visible even after day break. I would use it when heading back to Pangniqtuuq after a hunt. I don’t know the name of this star.”

Introduction to the Oral Traditions
Stars used in Mittimatalik:

_Akuttujuuk_ are two stars used in telling the return of the sun.

_Aagjuuk_ are two stars, one bigger than the other, used by hunters to tell them when it was time to go hunting in the morning. Children would be asked to go out and see if they could spot them in the sky. When they became visible it was time for the hunter to get ready to go hunting.

There is one particular star that was used by hunters when starting to head home after having been at the floe edge. Starting out, they would face it, and as they approached town, the star would be passing to the side.

In Iglulik and Mittimatalik, other forms of telling direction are also used. We can use the snow formations on the ground. Usually when the snow is forming, it is blowing from one direction, and as we go, we try to follow the direction of the snow formations when the stars are not visible. _Uqalurat_ are long tongue shaped formations in an open area such as on the sea ice, _naannguat_ are rounded drifts on one side of a rock because the wind blew from that direction. _Uluannat_ are on the other side, formed into a small bank, which some call _talujaaq_. These could be used for direction. At home we call them _uluannat._

**Seasonal celebrations**

I asked about celebrations that were held during the course of the year. The only description I got was about celebrating the sun, from Elisapee of Mittimatalik.

After a few months of total darkness a bit of light became visible on the horizon, and everybody got so excited that all the _qullit_ had to be blown out. Only some light was kept hidden so that they could light the _qullit_ again. They did this to celebrate the return of the sun.

**Seal pups and caribou**

Since many of the moons referred to the birth and shedding of fur of seals and caribou, I thought it was interesting to get the different names for seal pups and caribou calves. These are the seal pup and caribou calf names as given by Pauloosie Angmarlik, from Pangniqtuuq:
Seal pups:

Illauq: A foetus still inside the mother.

Natsiaq: This is the name for a baby seal during its first month of life in April.

Qavauq: Baby seal with lots of fat on its body.

Tanniq: Fur is changing and there is hardly any fur around the eyes.

Nasaiqtuq / Natsiarajaq: The baby fur is shedding and the fur on its head has changed to adult fur.

Sanirarulliq: The fur has changed to adult fur except for the sides of the body, which are still covered with baby fur.

Sunamirniq: All signs of baby fur are gone.

Caribou calves:

Illauq: Foetus.

Nurralaaq: At birth, the fur is blackish and called qirnirujuk.

Auppallattuq: When it turns kind of brown.

Qakuallaliqtuq or Qujjurujuk: When the fur is getting ready for winter.

Nurraq: A first year calf.

Nukatugaq: About 1 year old.

Angusallukuluk: A male, about two years old.

Arnarlukuluk: A female, about two years old.

Nurraliq: A female with a calf.

Nurraqanngittuq: A female without a calf.

Panniq: An adult male.
Conclusion
I learned a lot from these interviews. I learned how little I know about life as it was only one generation ago. I will be more aware of stories being told by the elders on the radio, television, and in the community. I also learned how we need to incorporate the elders into our education process. They were the ones who passed on knowledge and stories and they should be put back into their rightful place as our educators.

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.

Mathiassen, T.

Rasmussen, K.
I have chosen women’s rules as a theme because I have always been interested in the traditional way of life of women. We interviewed four elders: Elisapee Ootoova from Mittimatalik; Saullu Nakasuk and Paulosie Angmarlik from Pangniqtuuq; and Hervé Paniaq from Iglulik. The interviews mainly focused on the two women, but there were some questions that were directed to the men. I wanted to know why women had to observe so many more rules than men did.

In two books (Rasmussen 1929: 168-180; 1931: 504-505) Rasmussen wrote a list of taboos for women. During the interviews, I asked several questions related to these taboos. The elders said that these rules were not observed anymore.

Saullu never followed any of the women’s taboos that were listed in the books by Rasmussen. Her mother never talked to her about the taboos for women, so she could not tell us about them.

Elisapee said women seemed to have more rules than men because of their periods. Husbands did follow some of the rules of the wife as she was menstruating, and this was called *kiniqsiiniq*. Elisapee said that women, while having their periods, were told not to sit where men often sat. Elisapee and Saullu said women used sanitary napkins of rabbit skin and other material. Elisapee said that a woman would have to make sure that the material used was not from a man’s clothing or garment. Saullu said that if this rule was not observed by a woman, she might never find a man to marry. As for the rabbit skin, women would first have to put the skin onto the bed and let it be lain upon and matted down so that it could soak up all the blood. The ladies would have to tell [camp members] at once that they had their period and also when they had a miscarriage.

Saullu said that she had three miscarriages and she was never scared at all. She said it was just like giving birth, but she said she bled a lot more than she would while giving birth. Paniaq told us a story of a woman who had a miscarriage and meant to tell her husband, but never did because she got scared and decided to keep it a secret. She miscarried and hid the foetus underneath the stone bed frame and never said a word about it. Game couldn’t be caught anymore, and people could not figure out why, so they sent for a shaman. He realized that the woman was keeping a secret and she had something underneath the bed. He made her confess that she had kept the whole incident from everybody. That was why they could no longer catch any game. After that night, when the shaman left they could hear the walruses on the ice once again. They could not wait for daylight to go hunting in the morning. [Saullu said] that this is why you must always observe all taboos. If you don’t, you are hurting yourself and the ones around you.
Pregnant women were told not to drink right from a soup bowl; if they did, the baby would come out dark skinned. Pregnant women were also told to untie everything that was tied up so that they would be more dilated when the baby was ready to come out. Women were told not to wear tight pants while pregnant so that they would have an easier delivery. Pregnant women were told not to chew candle wax during their pregnancy so the baby would not be covered with a white coating when it was born. They were not allowed to scratch their tummies so that stretch marks wouldn’t be as noticeable.

Elisapee mentioned they were told that they should never eat raw meat, only cooked. Pregnant women were told to get up as soon as they woke up and go out to look at the sun so that they would have a fast delivery. When called outside or asked to go to someone, they should do so right away so that they would have a speedy delivery. There was a taboo about looking out the window or partly completing an exit, turning back and forth, going out while you were pregnant. Elisapee’s sister-in-law always seemed to test the theory about this and so she would partly exit a dwelling and she looked out of a window while she was pregnant. When her sister-in-law went into labor she had a very hard time. The baby seemed to be just looking out at them. The lady was in labor overnight. She then realized that you have to always observe taboos. People also believed the weather would go bad if taboos weren’t followed.

When the whalers came, a lot of Inuit woman got pregnant, even though they were married. Pauloosie said that some of the men would send their wives off to the ship to trade sex for tobacco.

There was also a rule that a mother should not go out visiting too much or too long if she had a child. Elisapee also said that she was told not to soften a skin with her feet while pregnant. The only thing you could do was stretch the skin. Saullu says she never had to observe those rules. Sewing had been a big part of her life, so nothing but Sunday has stopped her from sewing.

Both Elisapee and Saullu got married early at the age of fifteen. Neither one wanted to marry the man that was chosen for them. Still, they got married. The only difference was that Elisapee and her husband, over the summer that they met, got to be close friends.

Elisapee’s mother had no patience when teaching her to sew; but Elisapee never gave up and it did not bother her that her mother was not being understanding. She was determined to learn how to sew. When she was teaching her children to sew, she did not realize that she was also being impatient. She did not do this on purpose. Saullu’s mother acted the same way, but Saullu was also persistent in learning how to sew.

Saullu talked about old-fashioned midwifery. She and her husband did a lot of it together. Saullu would explain what she would have to do when the placenta would get stuck. She would put her forearm in and feel for a hard spot and pull it out. She had to
be careful not to touch the placenta with her nails. The woman in labour would have to move her hips very hard and try to get the child out.

Elisapee and Saullu said that if you adopted a child the only way to feed the baby would be to put stew in your mouth and feed it to the baby. Breast-feeding was the only method they used as a sort of birth control. Saullu says she was told by her mother-in-law that she shouldn’t expect to have her periods for at least two years after the birth of a child. When Saullu got her period sooner, she thought something must be wrong with her, but she was fine.

I have learned quite a bit about the rules for women. I understand why women had more rules to observe now, and what kind of a life they had in the traditional days.

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.

Rasmussen, K.
My theme is children’s songs. I have chosen this theme because I wanted to find out if the elders knew how to sing any children’s songs or other songs. It is important to me that we don’t forget traditional songs. It is important to other people too, because until now people remembered traditional songs. Today they don’t really have time to ask elders about the old times because they have something else to do. In the old days they did not have any schools for their children. Children learned from their parents by just listening to them when their parents sang.

I interviewed two elders about the children’s songs, Elisapee Ootoova from Mittimatalik and Saullu Nakasuk from Pangniqtuuq. I interviewed Elisapee first, from November 12 to November 15, 1996, and then Saullu from November 18 to November 21, 1996. I asked the elders if they knew how to sing children’s songs (aqausit) or any other songs. They both answered yes. I also asked them if their parents taught them how to sing. Elisapee said that her mother used to teach her how to sing the songs. Saullu said that she learned how to sing a song just by listening to it when someone was singing. Elisapee said nowadays they don’t sing to their newborn babies anymore. Elisapee said she used to sing to her children when they were a year old. Every time I asked both of them questions regarding the songs, they both answered me very well.

Elisapee’s songs
During the first week of interviews, I asked Elisapee to sing some songs. Here are some songs she sang. Elisapee said this song is a hymn from the Bible. It was so interesting to hear it.

aggangit (His hands)
putusimalauqtut (had holes in them)
sanaluqtuq (He created)
tamaitarjuanik (everything)
tammarutta (when we do wrong)
nalligijara (I love Him)
aqurninnik (of my limits)
iqqatinnngu (remind me)
Elisapee said they used to sing this song when they were juggling. It is difficult to translate as there are many nonsense syllables that are included to keep the beat of the song.

quluppaajuusi quluppaajuusi aijajajunjuni ajiijaajuunni kammauksua
kammunua kammiuta uungnit kaungmik taqtalittivuq anjajumauna sivualuna
anaruitukagigiaq atavua talaittug kikkulli angagigaluaqikkit takkkukua
angagigaluaqpakka suquatikkut maquatikkut qa&aviuliiqkit
tiigarutikkut nuvukkut ajiija.

Translation: Quluppaajuusi, quluppaajuusi, little children, little children, blood swells well in the veins. My older sister her bangs don’t smell good but who do you have as maternal uncles. The ones I have as maternal uncles are Ajijaaluut, Suqquti, Miqquti, Qa&aviuliiq, Tiigaruti, Nuvuk, ajiija.

Elisapee said they used to sing this song to a child. It is called an aqausiq.

panigauna panigauna (my daughter, my daughter)
pinniqturnguna pinniqtuq (is so pretty, is so pretty
angutininguna pijuminaaqtunguna (men will want her)
tagutininguna takusarumininaaqtunguna (men will like to look at her)
gummiutaa nallimiuta (will want her, will love her)
alivaminut ungavaminut (missing somebody)
sikusikaminuna tiguniaqtussaq (should hold in the hand)
imanaittumik takulaaqsimajajangitunga (I have never seen the likes)
niqaatqumi pinniqitumi (so cute, so pretty)

They used to sing this song when they were playing hide and seek. It is also difficult to translate because of the nonsense syllables included as it is children’s language.

Quutaa aijaa uqqurtuq annuurait qaquluit tivi tivi uuttuq kanna qilujarialik
illuanik kanna
aggaligarjuk illuanik kanna umiligaarjuk qimmimauna alurutaa tulimaag ataasig
kujapigaq ataasig immuqjaajajaja immuq.
Saullu’s songs
Saullu’s songs were interesting to hear. Every time I asked Saullu questions about songs, she answered me well and understandably. Here are some songs she sang. Saullu said they used to sing this song just for fun while playing a string game.

atigima sinaani niqitaqattanimmat niqitaku sikkati ainniput tikinniput uggaput.
(At the bottom of my parka, there was some meat. Sikati went to get some meat and came back disappointed.)

This song is for counting and uses plays on words for numbers.

atauviatittitau atauvalitau juttasi akuttasi aviipjallja una.

Every time someone caught a bowhead they used to sing this song.

akininansunguqatta atai (when we catch something)
Hauli Hauli Hauli (Holy, Holy Holy)
jisusi takugukku tavvaulippat (We will see Jesus)
Hauliqpugut (We say Holy)
Hauli Hauli Hauli Haulila. (Holy, Holy Holy)

This song is a hymn. Saullu said she learned it from a bishop.

qilallu nunalu nungujumaapuq jisusiup uqasingit nungujumaamgilat jisusi appassaq allumilu isaqangitumullu tanassainnaq.
(There will be an end to heaven on earth but the words of Jesus will not perish. Jesus today, Jesus yesterday, Jesus will be the same forever)

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.
My theme is the teaching of children before schools were introduced to the North. I selected this theme because I wanted to know how Inuit taught their children in the old days. I also wanted to know how they felt about schools and education today. I didn’t think it was so important until I interviewed some elders. I think it’s important for other students and also for non-students to know how it was back then.

First of all, I tried to find out how children were taught. Then I tried to ask more specific questions. I tried my best although I wasn’t really organized. I prepared for the next day’s interviews when Jarich asked us to do so. At first it was really confusing, because I had not understood what he really meant. When I started to think about what I was trying to do, it didn’t really make sense. I asked our instructor to clarify it. When he told me, I got the idea, and I started to really think about it.

We were told to be prepared for each interview and we were grouped in pairs. My partner was Susan Enuaraq. We did the life story of Hervé Paniaq of Iglulik. We prepared questions we wanted to ask the elders. When we asked them, they answered all the ones they knew, and if they couldn’t answer they didn’t. We would try to find out more about their answers to understand what they meant. For example, we asked about the meaning of traditional words such as:

- *kimmutattuq* “coming from the north”
- *kangivaqtuq* “coming from the south”

These two words were used for people coming back to camp or visiting by dogteam.

When I asked the elders questions, they reacted normally like an elder would. If they didn’t know the answers to our questions they wouldn’t really say anything because they were taught not to repeat things that they had not experienced. It seems to me they understood my questions. I understood their answers and they were good. Sometimes I asked the same question to each of the elders, and they answered differently, maybe because they were from different places. For example, I asked the first two elders, Elisapee and Hervé, about how they dealt with parents who took their child’s side if s/he had a fight with a friend. They said they were told not to take the child seriously and were told not to say anything about it when the child was around, because the child might start to do things to get himself in trouble and then say that it wasn’t his or her fault. The other two elders, Saullu and Paulosie, said there are always different types of parents who have different types of reactions to what happens to their
children. They didn’t really say what was expected. I asked other questions, too, about hardships and adoption.

I learned from the interviews and it gave me ideas and changed my thoughts on the theme. It also gave me a better understanding about how we learn from our parents by watching and listening to them. The elders let me see their point of view.

I asked them how they felt about schools today. They said they liked that children today are taught a different language, because they don’t understand English very well. One elder said that she regretted letting teachers take too much control back then. They said they had a choice, and could have objected if they wanted to. They could have taught the traditional ways if they had objected to the schools. She said teenagers now drop out because they feel they are not good at anything; for example, when teachers tell them they can’t write. They end up dropping out and turning to drugs and alcohol. She thought it would be a good idea if they had something to fall back on when they quit school, such as learning how to sew, or boys going out hunting to learn how to hunt and to survive on the land. I thought there should be a school for Inuit or non-Inuit where they could learn traditional knowledge and how to survive on the land. She said that learning English is not an Inuit custom in their tradition. Another elder also said he liked education today, but he was worried about the men and boys because they are not being taught how to hunt out on the land. They just sit around now.

When I asked about hardships, at first they couldn’t really answer me, but later they said there weren’t that many people who went through mental turmoil because everybody had something to do in those days. If anyone had something hard to deal with, the elders or the people of the camp would pitch in and try to help. One elderly woman said that keeping yourself busy keeps worries and bad thoughts away, so they always kept themselves busy: sewing is a really good example. Also, men kept themselves busy by going out on the land or making something. I always wanted to know about this.

I also asked what they were told to do if a polar bear came to a camp. One of the men said they always killed the polar bear. Today they don’t do that because there are quotas and such things to protect animals. Today, Inuit try to keep wild animals away by scaring them and not killing them. Men learned by watching their parents or relatives. Men learned how to cut bearded sealskin to make ropes. They had to work together and even the women pitched in if they were not busy. They always helped each other. Men were also told before they had wives to get up right away in the early morning so that their wives would not have difficult times during labor. Men also learned how to sew by watching their parents so they could mend their clothing while out hunting if anything happened.

When I asked how they used to adopt children they said they would adopt them only if it was necessary and only when they were toddlers or grown a little, or if they
had become orphaned. They couldn’t adopt a child if it was still feeding from the natural mother because they didn’t have bottles then. They sometimes fed the children the broth of cooked meat. I remember my mom saying that my grandmother had problems with her breasts so she was fed egg yolk and breast milk by my grandmother’s friend. Some waited to adopt until the babies could eat and were not breast feeding anymore. Nowadays, with bottles around, they can adopt newborns right after birth.

Young girls were taught how to sew by making doll clothing. They also helped their mothers to chew on the sealskins for the soles of kamiik. They were married off when they were still learning how to make clothing. But one of the elders said the women couldn’t be married off if they hadn’t learned how to make proper clothing yet. So the men chose women who could sew or make the best clothing.

Another thing Saulu pointed out was that she used to help out women who were in labor. She used to be behind them, and her husband also helped sometimes. It was best not to have too many people around because the woman might take longer trying to give birth. She also demonstrated the position during labor but I wasn’t in class at the time.

The men were taught to make a rope from bearded sealskin. They would chew on the skin too. The men also had a way of treating their dogs differently. They say that puppies born in winter become the strongest dogs. They each had their own ways of telling their dogs which direction to go: for example, Pauloosie would say “ai, ai” - to the right, “qua, qua” - to the left, and “hau” to stop; and when he wanted to start his dogs after harnessing them, he would say “atii,” and they would go. The men/boys would train their dogs by walking them around when they were puppies. He also said that dogs listen better when you try to stop their fighting with a whip.

I read an article by Jean Briggs (1979: 21), about the seriousness of play. People would teach their children by asking the child who his aunt or cousin was. I think in that way they taught them how to address relatives. I didn’t have a chance to ask our elders because I didn’t have enough time to read all the literature.

There are lots of things that we need to learn more about, such as using the stars to go in the right direction. They used them before they had clocks. There are so many more things that I should have gone into, more specific things. If I had to do it all over again, I’d try harder and explore things more deeply. I would want to have more time to think. I would like more time to think instead of only at the last minute. I would also like it if our instructors would explain more clearly before we start next time. I also learned that the things I asked the elders are very different from today. I think this was important for me and for others.

I’ve had a great time interviewing the elders and learning what they think about teaching children today. I hope that what I’ve written is understandable.
References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.
Briggs, J.
My theme is pregnancy. I selected this theme because I wanted to learn what the rules were back then. I think it is important to know more about pregnancy, because today we are forgetting the rules a pregnant woman was supposed to follow. Also, I think it is important for others because it is our culture and tradition. I have heard about some of the traditional practices from elders. My partner was Eena Alivaktuq. I interviewed two elders from Mittimatalik and Iglulik, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq, and two elders from Pangniqtuuq, Saullu Nakasuk and Pauloosie Angmarlik. I asked them about pregnancies and taboos.

Elisapee and Saullu told me people had to observe rules when a woman was pregnant. They did it for the sake of the woman, the baby, and the people of the camp.

In the traditional days, they used rabbit skin as sanitary napkins. First it had to be put on the bed and slept on so that it would not be too soft and would soak up all the blood. Ladies were told not to use any part of a man’s clothing as a sanitary napkin. Women used to check their bellies to find out if they were pregnant or not. When women got pregnant, they were told not to be lazy. When they were told to do something, they would have to do it right away, so that when they went into labor they would have an easy and fast birth. Once pregnant, a lady was forbidden to eat raw meat. Husbands also had to follow this rule while they were around their wives, but they could eat raw meat while hunting. Then a hunter was not with his wife. All boot laces were not to be too long so the umbilical cord would not get wrapped around the baby’s neck. Pregnant women were to wear warm pants that were not too tight so she would have an easy delivery. The warm pants were also to keep their buttocks warm. While travelling with a dogteam, a pregnant woman’s seat had to be soft as they said the pelvic bone starts to separate as the baby grows.

A pregnant woman was told not to look outside or to go back and forth when she went out. If she did such things her baby would take peeks before it was really ready to come out. When a woman was pregnant, she was not to stay lying around in bed after waking up. Once awake, she would have to go outside. She could do anything after going outside first. If she was tired, she was told to take short naps so that she would not be tired during labor. Men were told that they were not to be lazy during their wife’s pregnancy. A pregnant woman was told that if she didn’t want a baby with dark skin she should not drink broth straight from a pot. A pregnant woman was not to chew candle wax or else her child would be covered in a waxy film.

One could tell if a child was a girl or boy. Little boys were said to be pointed whereas the girls were more rounded. When in the third trimester, the woman was told not to sit on something too soft in order to prevent the placenta from sticking to the
uterus. A woman was also told not to sit on something too soft in late pregnancy or else the lining of the amniotic sac would become too thick, which would make it harder to break. When you were pregnant you were not supposed to sleep in one position only, in order to prevent the placenta from settling on the wall of the uterus which would cause it to be stuck. When women were pregnant they were not allowed to scratch their bellies. Some people got stretch marks and were scarred forever. Women should not alter their pants to make them slimmer. If they did, they would prevent an easier passage for the baby. A couple were not to argue too much during the pregnancy in order for their child to have a good life. When a woman was pregnant, she was not allowed to soften sealskin with her feet. When pregnant women were losing blood, they had to drink warm water. When they lost blood during pregnancy, the pregnancy took longer in order to compensate for the lost blood.

They believed that if they followed the taboos the child would have a good life. A long time ago, women in labour had to be alone in an iglu or tent to deliver their child. They were coached through the door or an opening in the wall. Baby girls were harder and more painful to deliver. During labor, the midwife and the woman in labor had to loosen everything that was tied such as kamik laces and hair ties.

Traditional midwifery is being lost, as people now use the qallunaat ways and have their babies in a hospital. In the past, a woman in labor was looked after very well by making sure that her legs were level, or else she might hurt her back. People were more worried about the mother’s well being and less about the child. Nowadays, the doctors seem to worry more about the baby than the mother. They worry more about the child that is being delivered than the mother, even when she is scared.

After birth, the umbilical cord was tied with a braided sinew and cut with scissors. At least three people could help out during labor; one person supporting the back, one at the feet, and one to help push the baby out by applying pressure on the stomach. If a woman lost too much blood after the delivery, you were to give her small sips of warm water. Before the umbilical cord healed, they would put cotton from Arctic willow on the belly button; they put just enough to cover it.

During breast feeding, women weren’t allowed to eat caribou fat to prevent the baby from getting constipated. Once, a baby died because the mom had eaten this fat. Most of these rules are now forgotten. Elisapee and Saullu were experienced about pregnancy, and they gave many answers. Also, Saullu used to be a midwife.

I want to thank the elders because I learned a lot from them and they were very kind to us, and patient.

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.
My theme is “Introduction to sewing.” I chose this theme because I am interested in how girls were taught to sew in the old days, sewing sealskin and caribou skin. Right now, our generation doesn’t really know how to sew seal and caribou skin. There may be a minority who know how to sew, but there aren’t that many who do. We are focusing more on education and working than on sewing. In those days, women sewed all day. I always wanted to learn how to sew seal or caribou skin, but I have been working or in school. I knew a little bit about sewing, but not about sewing seal or caribou skins. I used to enjoy sewing, but education and work are more important to me. Whenever I get a chance I would love to do more sewing.

I interviewed the elders about my theme. The first question I had was about when girls first learned how to sew. Elisapee’s answer was that it happened whenever the girls thought that they could do it. All the girls would start to sew inuujait, dolls. I asked Saullu who made the inuujait. She told me that her dad would make them for the girls. They were made out of caribou antler. The most difficult of the inuujait clothing to sew would be the parka. Saullu said that her mother would measure the materials that she was going to sew. Elisapee compared starting to sew with school. It is challenging, but you have to keep on trying because that’s the only way you can learn. All the girls learned how to sew from their mothers. When they started to get used to making inuujait clothing they would move on to bigger things such as kamiik and clothing.

Paulosie said that he would bring sewing equipment with him when he went out hunting just in case he needed it for an emergency. I asked him if he ever used it and he said he did, when his mitten seams started to fall apart. During the summer time, when he went out caribou hunting if the sole of his kamiik would start to get thin, before there was a hole, he would start sewing another sole on top. I asked him if he also sewed at home and he said he didn’t because his wife was around.

I asked Elisapee and Saullu where they got their sewing equipment. They said they used their mother’s equipment. Elisapee said that when she was living with her husband, she still didn’t own sewing equipment. The great challenge was to make kamiik. Elisapee said that when she first started to sew kamiik it was really hard, and it would take a while to make them. If she was doing a bad job her mother would have her start all over again, until she was doing it right. The most difficult part would be the upper part of the kamiik that is called the qingajjinig. They would have to sew it twice so it would be waterproof. If they didn’t sew it the right way, the kamiik wouldn’t be waterproof, and that meant they would have wet feet. She also mentioned that her mother would tell her that she wouldn’t be around for ever, so her mother was making sure that she did learn how to sew. Saullu said the difficult part was the heel part. If she
didn’t sew it right the heel wouldn’t be in the right area, so they had to be really careful. I asked Elisapee if she would do all the skin preparation before making kamiik. She told me that her mother would do all that, but once they got used to it she would do the skin preparation. I asked Elisapee how long it took her to make kamiik. She said that her mother would want the sole to be done the next day when the sole was still wet, so it wouldn’t have to be re-worked. The best way to do it was when the edge was still wet. I also asked Saullu how long it took her to make kamiik. It took her a day to finish a pair. I asked Elisapee who she would make kamiik for when she first started. She said for her younger sister or for herself. I also asked Elisapee how long the kamiik would be worn. They would be worn for a while. If the sole was starting to get thinner, they would put another sole on top of the old one.

I asked Saullu if the kamiik were different in each of the settlements. She said they were, and it showed in the measuring of the material, the style of the kamiik and how they were sewn. She also mentioned that in the old days they would scrape just the edge of the flap, but today they scrape all the edges. In Material Culture of the Iglulik Eskimos (Mathiassen 1928: 179, figures 134 and 135) as well as in a book about traditions of Inuit clothing (Issenman and Rankin 1988: 80, figure 25), there are several pictures of women’s boots with a pocket used by women, in which to put small objects such as an ulu and needles. When one of the students asked about this kind of kamiik, the elders didn’t know about it.

In conclusion, I learned a lot about sewing. I really enjoyed interviewing the elders and I have obtained a lot of information. In those days, their first priority was sewing and I wish I could experience that, but right now education and working are more important.

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.

Issenman B. and Rankin C.

Mathiassen, T.
Qaumauq
Susan Enuaraq

The Inuit Studies students were instructed to choose a theme they were interested in. We had elders who were scheduled to be in our classes to answer our questions. The elders for the first week were Elisapee Ootoova, from Mittimatalik, and Hervé Paniaq, from Iglulik. The elders for the second week were Pauloosie Angmarlik, and Saullu Nakasuk, both from Pangnirtung. I chose to make Qaumauq (my grandfather) my theme. I had a hunch that the elder from Iglulik might know about him, as Qaumauq had been in that area. I knew that there were going to be elders from Pangnirtung. I know, from my mother, that Qaumauq had been in the Pangnirtung area for a while, so I thought that I would also be able to gather some information from those elders. I was able to find out some information from both Elisapee and Paniaq. I was also able to get some information from Pauloosie. Saullu, however, did not have much to contribute as she had never lived in the same place as Qaumauq. I also got some information from my brother, Appitaq Enuaraq. I got this information by telephone, as he lives in Mittimatalik.

Qaumauq’s father was Uttuttiaq and his mother was Ittuutaaluk. Elisapee Ootoova told me that Uttuttiaq was known to be a very good fisherman. He would live in areas where fish were abundant, such as by a river near Mittimatalik. I am not able to say anything about his mother as she was not discussed. Uttuttiaq’s mother was Ataguarjugusiq. I was not able to find out the name of his father and I did not find out the names of Ittuutaaluk’s parents.

Qaumauq had two siblings. Javagiaq was his brother and Niviattiat was his sister. Paniaq and Elisapee said that Javagiaq was slightly disabled. He had problems with his hip joints. Nonetheless, he was able to survive with the help of other people. My brother thought that Javagiaq had had an adopted child who he thought was called Qatigagjuaq. Paniaq said that Niviattiat was his “in-laws” mother. Paniaq said the word saki (in-law), and that Inuktitut word does not clarify whether a person is male or female. I hope that I will be able to clarify that later. Paniaq also suspected that the family’s ancestral roots were in the Kivalliq Region. According to Appitaq, the family was originally from the Naujaat area.

Qaumauq and his wife, Sivuga, as far as I could tell, had two children. Their son’s name was Nunuji and they also had a daughter. Unfortunately, I was unable to find out the daughter’s name, but I am told that she was Pittiulaq’s wife. When Paniaq was talking about Qaumauq’s son, he usually referred to him as Nunuiji. When Pauloosie was talking about the same man he would refer to him as Palluq. I asked Pauloosie if the Piunngituk family from the Kangitugaapik area were Palluq’s descendants and he guessed they might be. My brother clarified that Palluq was indeed the father of
Piunngittuq. Piunngittuq up to his death was a very respected elder from Kangitugaapik. Besides Piunngittuq, Palluq had a number of children and most of his descendants live in Kangitugaapik. I have really no information about Qaumauq’s daughter except that Pauloosie thinks that her name was Amarualik or something close to that.

Qaumauq and Sivuga also adopted my mother, Nubija, from the family of Qulittalik and Pakak. We were told that Inuit did not adopt children from just anyone; it had to be from their family, either direct or extended. Qaumauq was related to the Qulittalik family. The Qulittalik family is a well-known family in the Iglulik area with many descendants. One of the court cases that the well-known Judge Sissons dealt with involved a man charged with assisting Qulittalik’s suicide. Qulittalik apparently ordered some men to help him to commit suicide and thus charges were laid. I do not know what happened in the end.

Paniaq thought that Qaumauq left the Iglulik area in the 1940s, although he was not completely sure. Nunuji had been working with the Hudson’s Bay Company and when he was no longer working there, he took his father and my mother to the Mittimatalik/Kangitugaapik area. Qaumauq and his son never returned to the Iglulik area. Nubija had, however, returned several times to that area to visit her siblings from the Qulittalik family. Nubija had also visited Javagiaq on at least one occasion. I do not know if Sivuga was alive at the time that they left the Iglulik area. I am guessing that she might still have been alive, as Elisapee said that when the family was living close to the Mittimatalik area, Qaumauq was an Anglican and his wife was a Catholic. When Qaumauq was baptized, he was baptized as Juanasi.

I have been able to figure out that Qaumauq first went to the Mittimatalik/Kangitugaapik area from the Iglulik area. He then went to the Cumberland Sound area. He returned to the Mittimatalik/Kangitugaapik area again and then returned to Pangniqtuq with my mother for her to go to the hospital. Apparently my mother was sick so she had to go to the hospital. According to Appitaq, she might have fractured her ribs. After that the ribs were visible as there was no skin in that area. According to Pauloosie, the first time Qaumauq went to the Cumberland Sound area his wife was with him, as were his son and daughter. The next time he went to Pangniqtuq was with my mother. I found out from Appitaq that Qaumauq’s wife is buried between Kangitugaapik and Mittimatalik in a place called Kangiqtualuk (Sam Ford Fiord).

Paniaq told us that Qaumauq was known to be a very fast runner. He said that it has been said that Qaumauq was once chased by wolves but the wolves could not catch up with him. The way that Paniaq said that, it sounded as if he was amazed.

Pauloosie elaborated further on this. Qaumauq had told the story of being chased by wolves to Pauloosie. He was being chased by wolves and to get away from the wolves he jumped onto the ice of a lake. When the ice is melting on the lakes, it usually
melts around the edge first; therefore the lake usually has ice in the center with water surrounding the ice. It may be comparable to that of a moat around a castle. I asked Pauloosie if wolves are bad swimmers and he suggested that they were. He said that someone once had a wolf pup as a pet. When submerged in water, that pup would get very cold, although dog puppies at the same age are able to swim. I was able to get further information from my brother as described in the next paragraph.

Qaumauq was disliked by shamans as they could not beat him physically. One day, he was caribou hunting at a time when there were hardly any caribou. He saw caribou through his telescope and started to approach them. Once he approached them, they turned into wolves and started chasing him. He was running for a long time. When he would get too hot, he would swim in the lakes he passed. The wolves would gather around the lake to wait for him so he started running towards the camp where there were people. He knew that if he did not do that, the wolves would attack and kill him. Qaumauq ran towards the sea ice and then leapt onto the sea ice. The tide was high so there was a lot of water on the shore. It has been said that Qaumauq leapt so high that he jumped over someone’s hanging clothes. It is not known what happened to the wolves. This is how the shamans tried to get rid of him.

Elisapee told us that Qaumauq had tried to take the infamous Robert Janes (Sakimiaq)\(^2\) to Igluligaarjuk so that he might catch a boat to Southern Canada. They were in the Ikpiarjuk area to stock up when Nuqallaq, also known as Qiugaarjuk, killed Janes upon the instructions of others. It had been said that Janes had been killing dogs and was threatening to kill the people once he killed the dogs, and so he was killed. When I asked Appitaq about this point, he said that it had not been Qaumauq but another man that had tried to bring him to Igluligaarjuk. The man, Ululijarnaat, was working for Janes. While they were in the Ikpiarjuk area, Ululijarnaat, Aattitaaq, and Nuqallaq, after much discussion, killed Janes.

Elisapee also told us that Qaumauq was the original founder of Mittimatalik. In 1922, Mittimatalik established a permanent Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) detachment. It was before 1922 that Qaumauq had said that Mittimatalik should be a place where people should settle. Appitaq said that Qaumauq met the ship with the qallunaat. Qaumauq wanted to protect them from the Inuit as the qallunaat were scared of the Inuit after three men had murdered Janes. The qallunaat wanted to settle at Mount Herodier or Janes Creek. However, Qaumauq recommended that they settle in Mittimatalik as it was more sheltered and perhaps he thought that it would have more room for expansion if it became more populated. It became the site where the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) settled. Apparently the qallunaat wanted to slaughter the Inuit after the Janes murder but Captain Bernier, known to Inuit as Kapitaikallak, prevented that from happening. This information might not be in any logs or records but that is what the Inuit say. It was shortly after the Janes murder that Mittimatalik became the
site of the HBC. The RCMP lived in the HBC quarters while their house was being constructed and completed in 1922.

I have heard from Jacopoosie Peter that Qaumauq once beat RCMP members in a fight. I wanted further information from Pauloose from this and he told me that he knew about that and that he knew it to be true. Qaumauq was challenged to a wrestling match by the RCMP members in Pangniqtuuq. Pauloose suggested that they wanted to challenge him because they heard that he was strong. He thought that there was more than one challenger. Qaumauq was unbeaten and got things such as uniforms, so Pauloose had seen him wearing an RCMP uniform. Pauloose especially seems to remember Qaumauq wearing the hat.

When I asked Appitaq about the wrestling match, he offered the following story. There were three policemen in Pangniqtuuq when Qaumauq and my mother were there. The policemen knew that Qaumauq had been unbeaten by his fellow Inuit in competitions amongst each other, even though he was getting old and was very short. Two of the men kept on wanting to have a match with Qaumauq but he kept on refusing them. It was Appitaq's opinion that the two men kept on challenging him in the hope that they would show the Inuit their dominance, and that Inuit could not beat qallunaat.

One day the men tricked him into the RCMP house. Then the third policeman, who was higher ranking than the two challengers, told Qaumauq that he was witnessing the insistence of the two men and if Qaumauq should kill them, Qaumauq would not be held responsible. Qaumauq finally agreed to the match. The first man who fought with Qaumauq was a martial arts expert and got Qaumauq down right away as he was caught off guard. After Qaumauq had been felled, he thought that he would treat the men as if they were the animals that he hunted. The martial arts expert never got Qaumauq down again. The second man was very muscular and was a weight lifter and as soon as the first man stopped for a while, he took over. He, too, could not beat him. The two men took turns and never gave Qaumauq a chance to rest. The policemen could not beat him and the weight lifter even had to go out of the house where the match was and cool down. Appitaq said that he almost had a heart attack as he was so exhausted. Qaumauq was unbeaten and was told to take anything that he wanted from the police storeroom. At that time of the year (spring) the Inuit of Pangniqtuuq were low on supplies such as sugar and tobacco, as there had been no supply boats yet. By winning the match, Qaumauq was able to give his fellow Inuit some of these supplies.

According to Pauloose, Qaumauq never returned north again and is buried in Pangniqtuuq. I have no information about how he died as I did not think of asking Pauloose if he knew about it.

I found out quite a lot about Qaumauq in the sessions. I was interested in finding out more information about Qaumauq as I had heard that he was a very able man. I thought that it would be very good if I were able to tell stories to my children, and, if I
am blessed with grandchildren, I want to be able to tell them about Qaumauq. I believe that legends start out with actual people like Qaumauq. I want to develop a story about Qaumauq so that perhaps it may become a legend. Although I did not expect Elisapee to give me much information about Qaumauq, she gave me quite a bit. What I heard from Pauloosie makes the story about Qaumauq more credible, especially since he said that he really believes that these things happened. However, I did not ask him about his thoughts on the aspect of shamanism so I do not know if he would back it up. I did have some problems getting information about the spectacular things, as both Paniaq and Pauloosie seemed reluctant to talk about them. It was only when I talked to Appitaq that the aspect of shamanism came to light. I really enjoyed this project as it gave me more information about what I had only heard in bits and pieces from my mother.

Footnotes
1 Qulittalik and Pakak’s names are mentioned in Mathiassen, 1928, p. 17. It is written that they were living at Point Elisabeth and Cape Wilson in the winter of 1921-1922.

2 We find information about Sakimiaq in We Don’t Live In Snow Houses Anymore, Susan Cowan and Rhoda Inukshuk, p. 31. Ujukuluk gives us his memory of the killing which his father “Aatitaq” was involved with. The dates of the events are given in the footnote as happening in 1920.

References
Interviews with elders: Pauloosie Angmarlik, Saullu Nakasuk, Elisapee Ootoova and Hervé Paniaq.

Interview with Appitaq Enuaraq.

Cowan, Susan, and Rhoda Inukshuk. 1976 We Don’t Live In Snow Houses Any More. Canadian Arctic Producers Ltd.

Introduction

This chapter contains several stories that have been passed down by Inuit from one generation to another. Besides the stories which I collected, the chapter also contains the story of the Earth eggs told to Marie Lucie Uvilluq by her father George Agiaq Kappianaq, the story of Taliillajuut told to Maaki Kakkik by her grandmother, Miali Tuttu, and Lumaaju told to Tapia Keenainak by an elder. The students’ stories were collected in the first year of our collaboration with Jarich Oosten from the University of Leiden, the Netherlands.

The following are some of the many stories that I heard numerous times from my father as a child before I went off to the hospital in Montreal at the age of six. My mother would also tell us stories when my father was gone for an extended period of time and though they were the same ones that my father told they never had the same flavour.

My father Michel Kupaaq Puggattuk E5-456 (1925-1996) was raised by his grandparents Augustine Ittuksaarjuat and Monica Ataguttaaluk. He learned the stories that he told to his own children as a child from his grandfather.

Even though I received these stories from my father the retelling is coloured by many influences. My father’s stories were recorded by Bernard Saladin D’Anglure and transcribed by my late sister Elise Qunngaatalluriktuq and her husband Joe Attagutaluk. Those unaltered forms might be available through the department of anthropology at Laval University.

I first wrote these stories out to satisfy a course requirement while working on my Bachelor of Education degree; that was the deciding factor in the selection of these particular stories and was hence the first influence. The second influence is that I am an Inuktut language teacher; that influences any retelling that I do. The third influence that shows up in my retellings is that although I am an Inuktut language teacher and know the mechanics of the language almost impeccably I am not what in Inuktut is considered to be an “uqammiq” someone who is linguistically nimble; therefore except for the “direct speech” the language is mine.

When I was putting together “Aningagik” I finally realized that all those snippets of stories of Aningagik that I had heard were sagas of the same brother and sister pair and therefore put it together as I did. My father told me when I was compiling these stories that he had heard that the whale hunting took place from the shores of Niaqunnguu (Apex in Iqaluit) and that when the story finally came to Iglulik some of the singing of “lumaaju” was lost.

I wrote “Iglu” in the manner that I did because that was how the telling of that particular legend came about. In the earlier days the telling of stories occurred more
spontaneously. As it turned out that was to be my last ever winter dogteam trip. I dedicate this story to my nukaq Rosalie Arnarjuaq. “May you never fall again.” I would also like to make mention of my sister Michelline who along with inheriting my bone dogs ended up with our sister’s qulittaq complete with the shoulders. She now owns her own shoulders.

“Irngutarjuapiga Nauk?” is a story that is easily prompted whenever anyone says to somebody who is known to be a story teller “unikkaaqtualaurit,” “tell us a story.” This is one story that stopped me from asking my oldest brother Serapio to tell me stories because with “ah tu tu tu tu tu tu” someone ended up being tickled (usually it was me). I think because of the shortness of the story and because of the frequent retellings the language of the story has not changed much.

“Uinigumasuittuq” is I think the most well known of all Inuit stories. It is also known as Sedna, also as the story of the Sea Goddess. She is also known as Nuliajuk or Takannaaluk. I have always heard this myth told in the complete form as I have written it. Even though it is a story that is widely known throughout the Inuit world the Iglulingmiut lay claim to the island that she was sent to with her dog. We say it was Puqtuniq. Originally, at the time of the story, Puqtuniq was a small island. The water receded, and Puqtuniq became a hill on the island of Qikiqtarjuk. Today, after the water has further receded, even the island of Qikiqtarjuk has become part of the main island of Iglulik. Even though I state that the origin of this myth is in the Iglulik area which is known to be rich in the walrus hunting traditions I do not include the walrus among the sea mammals created from her fingers. The creation of the walrus occurs in another story (not told here), that of the myth of “Aakulugjuusi and Uummaarniittuq” the first people.

I express my gratitude to my father in this publication. I hope that I let him be aware of my gratitude in some way, however minute, while he was alive.

Alexina Kublu
uinigumtasuittuq
She who never wants to get married
Alexina Kablu

There was once a woman of marriageable age who was frequently wooed.

She rejected all the suitors.

Then there arrived a man with his hair in a forehead topknot, a qajaqer, wearing caribou clothing.

As it turned out, he was a bull caribou, and once again this one too was rejected.

So, because she was wooed for a long time but never wanted to get married,

they started calling her “She who never wants to get married.”

Her father became angry with her because of her unwillingness to get married

and told her to take her dog as a husband, taking them off to an island.

The woman and the dog were on the island for a long time.
Whenever they were out of food, she put a pack on her dog and sent it to get food from her father.

A long time went past; then the woman became pregnant, and gave birth to little pups.

Because the dog was now coming so often to get meat, her father came by qajaq to see why they ran out of meat so often.

He was greeted by all the fawning little pups.

When he discovered he had pups for grandchildren he became very angry.

When the dog, with a pack on its back, was fetching food again

he filled its pack with rocks.

As the dog, was slowly returning to the island,

he only got as far as the middle before he gradually lost strength because of the heaviness he felt.
And so

he sank.

Because his daughter and her children no longer had a provider,

the old man himself then started to bring food to them.

His daughter told her many children, “When your grandfather comes ashore,

pretend to fawn all over him and chew his qajaq to pieces

because he made you fatherless.”

Well, then when their grandfather arrived, his many grandchildren

once again fawned over him, because it was their habit to fawn over him whenever they greeted him.

They fawned over him, licking at his qajaq and then chewing away at it

until they had made it unfit for use.

Stories — She who never wants to get married
ittunga qaajaqarunniarami
Because their grandfather no longer had a qaajaq,

qikiqtamisiuqataujariaqaliq&uni
angunusugiarutiksaqarunniiq&unilu.
he had to spend time with them on the island. He also had no hunting equipment.

qimmirlakuluit angiglivalliallutik
The little pups were gradually getting bigger

kaaqaqtutkuuluungmata anaanangatta aullaqtinnasivait.
and because the poor things often got hungry their mother prepared to send them off.

pingasuingullutik pingasuuttaq&utik aullarviginiaqtanginnut
uqautivait
Dividing them into three groups of three, she told them about their destinations,

qanuiliuqattarniarajariaksailu uqaujujuq&unigit.
and she impressed on them what they would have to do.

aullaqtirngautajani taununga nigiuq miksaanut aullaquvait
She told the first group she sent away to head down towards the south.

pisiksilijatuinnaq&utik. taakkua iqqilinnguq&utik.
They had only bows and arrows, and these became Indians.

aullaqtimmijani atungavinirmik umialiqtippait uqautillunigit
She made a boat out of an old boot-sole for the next ones she sent away, telling them,

“umiarjuakkurlusi utirumaarivusi.” taakkua
qallunaannguq&utik.
“You will come back by ship.” These ones became qallunaat.

taakkua kingulliqpat aullanngikkaluarlutik
The last ones were not told to go away; however,

inungnut takuksauvannqituinnaqvait. taakkua ijirannguq&utik.
she told them simply that they should be unseen by people. These became ijirait
(the unseen people who show up as caribou).
ataatagiik piqatituariliirillutik.
Once again the father and daughter were alone

ammailaak arnaq nulianiktuqtavakkanniirilluni.
and once again the woman was often courted,

suli narruvak&uni nuliaqtaarumajuugaluanik.
but she still rejected those who wanted her as a wife.

tikittuqa&qapqq angijuttiavaaluuuqquujilluni
Then there arrived someone who appeared to be nicely big;

arnaulu angutittivaaluuuqquujigigilluniuk.
the woman also thought that he seemed to be handsome.

qisingnik annuraaqsimalluni
He was dressed in sealskin,

iggaanginnaq&unilu qajarminillu niulaurani.
he never took off his goggles and he never got out of his qajaq.

angutittivaaluuuqquujinjanganuqguuq unigumasuituuup
narruginngirutainnaqpaa.
Because he seemed to be handsome, so they say, the one-who-never-wanted-to-marry
finally did not reject him.

asuilaak nuliaqtaarjaujumatillugu angirulutannarmat
aullaurrijauvuuq.
And so, when she at last agreed to be taken as a wife, she was taken away.

aulaqsiqaqsaliiltuggik qikiqtalinnaa uitaarijaa
quijaqturumalitqpuuq.
After they had been gone for a while and they got to an island, her new husband wanted
to urinate.

niupalaagaaajungmat niurlaalungik naittullaaluuk;
When he finally got around to getting out, his ugly tiny legs were disgustingly short;
amma iggaipalaagaajjungmat ijingik amikinnikumut auppetut!
and when at last he bothered to take off his goggles, his lidless eyes ... how red!

sunauvvauna uitaarulaqaqulluruluk.
So there he was, her awful new husband, a wretched fulmar.

arnaq kamairrisimmalluni uitaaruluni uqautivaa “usiummalu
angijuttiavauqqujujuviniq”.
The woman, in shock, said to her new husband, “But I thought you were a fine big fellow.”

qaqulluruluguuq inngiqsilluni, “ikurrattiakka ahhahahaha,
So then, they say, the ugly fulmar started to sing, “My beautiful pin tail feathers, ahhahahaha,

ijaujaarjuakaa ahhahahaha.”
my grand goggles, ahhahahaha.”

sunauvvauna papimginik ikurraqsimannirami
angijuttiauqqujujuviniq.
And so, because he had been propped up by his tail feathers, he had looked to her eyes
as if he was a fine big fellow.

uinigumasuittuunikqaqullungmiquitoqqujujaliq&luni
Because of her unwillingness to get married, she now had a fulmar husband, for a long
time,

kipinngullakpak&unilu, ugguaqtualugalualiq&unilu
and she was extremely lonely, and very regretful

narrutuluaqpalaurnirminkuqialuqmiyalueli&luni
of her pickiness in refusing all those who had come courting.

qanganngukallaktillugu ataatanganiurrulluni panimginik
takujuqtuq&uni.
After a fairly long time, her father came all the way to visit his daughter.

pimmqtutqtuttiannigittuqi&uni
Because he found her to be neglected, he tried to arrange for her to leave.

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ungavaqparaluq&utik qaqluruluq angirrami,
When they had gone some distance, the fulmar arrived home,

nuliani aullarujuujuqsiarigamiuq maliksaq&luni.
and realizing his wife had been taken, he followed.

angutivalliajunniirmi anuuaraaliqtitaaluqsuulluniq taakkuak
ataaqutik maliksiuqtaaluululq&utik.
Because he couldn’t catch up, he made a great wind, and the father and daughter were
cought by huge waves.

kinnguniatunaliarimik ituup panini singi&uniq imanu.
Because they were inevitably going to capsize, the old man threw his daughter into the water.

pania suqaimma qajanganik pakinikilluni.
Naturally his daughter grabbed hold of his qajaq.

iputiminut anaulituunaluraluaq&uniq savingminut aggangit
ulamaaliqpati
He hit her with his paddle, and (when that didn’t work) he chopped off her fingers.

nakapalliajut imanuaraangamik imarmiutannguqallallutik.
As the parts that were chopped off fell into the water, they became the sea-mammals.

nattiqtaqaliq&unilu ugujutaqaliliq&unilu,
qilagaqtaqaliq&unilu.
There now were seals, and square-flippers, and beluga.

arnaq kivigami imauq iqqanganirmiutaqliq&uni.
When the woman sank, she became a dweller of the sea floor.

ataataa angirraqsimaluraluaq&uni atuqpaaksimajaminik
Even though when her father got home

ugguarutiqapalliatunaliarimi nanuraautiminut immusiq&uni
he was so regretful of the things he had done that, wrapping himself in his bearskin,

ulinnirmuarami ulujjauttiliq&uni.
he went to the tide-edge and waited to be engulfed.
taakkua pingasut imaup iqqanganiittuniqasutut
These three are now on the sea floor,

uinigumasuituvinnirlu ataataamalut qimmingalu
the woman who was Uinigumasuituq, her father and her dog.

taimanngat ukpirniqtaalaunnginninginnit
Since then, until they acquired Christianity,

tuqijut inuttiaaunngittingitaraangata takannaaluup ataataaluuta
whenever people who had not lived well died, they found themselves

nanuraautialuata iluanunii&&utik
inside the horrible bearskin belonging to the nasty father of that ghastly person down
there, where he made them go through agonies

kisiani ullurmiunuarunnaqsitainnaqpatutuviniit
until finally they were able to go to the land of the Ullurmiut, the people of the day.

qanuiliurlualuttaqattarningit angijualuujaraangata
Whenever they had done many evil things, they stayed (there) longer.

akuniuniqsauvaku&utik
But because the woman whom they called Takannaaluk (the horrible one down there)
had no fingers

illairunnangimmat nujangit ilaqqajualuuliqupak&utik.
she wasn’t able to (use a) comb, and so her hair became tangled.

ilaqqalualiraangat imarmiuttat nujanginigiqaviqqaliqupak&utik.
whenever her hair got tangled, sea-mammals became entangled in it.

nigaviqqalualulirirangamik puijunaillivak&utik
puijunaillijaraangata
Whenever they became entangled, they could no longer surface, and whenever they
could no longer surface
Inuit angutaqarunnaijaaraangamik kaaktualuliiqpak&utik. People became hungry, no longer able to catch (the sea-mammals).

Mauliqpakkalaq&utik kisuttuqarunnaiIlissuqsimaliraangata. Whenever they couldn’t catch anything for a long time at the seal breathing-holes,

Angakkurmik nakkaajuqariaqaliqpak&uni. A shaman would have to go down to the bottom of the sea.

Angakkukq takannaaluliaq&uni imaup iqqanganunngaujaraangat nakkaaniraqtauvalurmat. Whenever a shaman went to Takannaaluk by going to the sea-floor, he was said to “nakkaa-”.

Taqanaqtaulununganut angakkuit nakkaajumattiaqpaangninnittut. Because it was so tiring, the shamans were often reluctant to “nakkaa-”.

Nakkaaniraangamik inuluktaat kati&ltutik iglumut atausirmut. Whenever they were about to “nakkaa-” all the people would gather in one iglu.

Angakkukq mattaatqaq&uni qilaksuqtaulluni amiup taluliarisimajuup. The bare-chested shaman was tied up, and put behind

Ungataanuqtaulluni qulliuqtaullutik. A blind made of skin, while the seal-oil lamps were extinguished.

Angakkukq inngiq&uni imaanut aqqaqpaallianunganut nipinga ungasiksivallialiuni. The singing shaman would slowly descend to the bottom of the sea as his voice gradually would become distant.

Angakkukq imaup iqqanganiiIliraangamik illaqsivak&uni. When the shaman would get to the sea-bed, he would comb Takannaaluk’s hair.

Kisiani illaqsitaujaraangat puijunaqsikkantainqpak&utik imarmiuttat. Only when her hair was combed would the sea-mammals be able to surface once again.

Stories — She who never wants to get married
Brother and Sister Legends:

**aninganga qaqsaurmut**
**tautuliqtitaq**

Brother receives sight from a loon

Alexina Kublu

It was in the spring the time for people to travel to their summer camps.

As their father had died during the winter, the brother, the sister and their stepmother no longer had anyone to care for them, so [they] were left behind.

Although Taqqiq had reached the age to hunt, he was left behind because he was blind.

As they were about to be left behind, a little bit of meat, a dog, and a bow with arrows were left to them.

Even though their ability was doubted, they were also left with a harpoon.

The boy was called Taqqiq and his sister called Siqiniq.
najangagiik & utik tuq & uraqattaullutik. siqiniup aningani called each other “aininga” and “najanga.” Siqiniq tried to take good care of pimmatugasuttiapak & uni uk arnaksangata pittaqattanngimmagu. her “aininga” because their stepmother mistreated him.

tupiqarnaqsgaluaqtillugu tupiksaqanngimut
Even though it was the season for tents, they did not have a tent.

qarmarmiinginnaq & utik. qakugunnguqsimaliqtillugu nannumit
They stayed in the qarmaq. After some time had passed, a polar bear came tikiraqtaullutik. kaaktualuugami qarmangannut
to their camp. As it was very hungry, it tried to enter their qarmaq

isirasuksimaliq & uni igalaakkut. taqqiq arnaksangata through the window. Taqqiq was armed with the bow by his stepmother, pisiksiliqti & ugu turaaqtitippaa. qarjuni sivulliq sujjutiginaniuk.
who helped him to aim. The first arrow missed.

kingullirmulli nannugasugaluaq & uni arnaksangata uqautilluniuk,
Even though he thought he got the bear with the next one, his stepmother said, “iqqut pitikpat” igalaap avaluanik saunirmik pisiksiniraq & uniuk.
“You have hit the iqqut,” suggesting that he had hit the trim around the window.

najangangali tautungmat arnaksangata minnitautaqitinni & ugu
Because his “najanga” could see, their stepmother did not refuse to give

nanurmik. taqqirli nannulaunnginniramiuk qimmitik
her some of the bear. After telling Taqqiq that he had not gotten the bear,
she killed their dog and fed it to him.

Siqiniq felt compassion for her brother. Whenever they cooked bear meat,

she hid some in her sleeve for him to eat. When their stepmother noticed this,

she said, “Why do you finish your food so quickly?”

Siqiniq replied, “I finish my food so quickly because I am very hungry.”

When the weather became nice, Taqqiq would ask his sister,

“Are there any lakes yet?” When she told him there were not, he didn’t say anything more.

But when she stated that there were lakes, he started asking, “Are there any loons yet?”

When they arrived at the lake, he asked his sister to leave him,

telling her to make inuksut for him to find his way home.
After his sister had been gone for a while, there was the sound of a qajaq uqaujjaulluni, “aqunnut uvunga ikilaurit.” sunauvvainna qaqsauq and he was told, “Get on my back.” It happened to be a loon tunumiunut ikiquijuq. ikingmat sammuutilauq&uniuk aqqautivaa that asked him to get onto its back. After he got on, it took him to where it was deeper and dove under water with him.

Even before he felt breathless, it came to the surface with him kisumik takujariaksaanik apiringmat qaumarujuktumik takuniraq&uni. and when it asked him what he saw, he said he saw a bit of light.

The loon dove under water with him again, and this time, when he was completely out of breath, puijjutilluniuk, apirigilluniuk kisumik takujariaksanganik. it emerged with him, and once more asked him what he saw.

He said he saw the rises and the dips of the land nunait puqtuningillu pukkinningillu takugaluarniraq&unigit but they weren’t very clear.

It submerged again for the third time. He became so breathless that he

Stories — Brother receives sight from a loon
puijujujauniariatsaq qulaliqtillugu piuujutitainnamiuk
was giving up hope that it would ever come to the surface again. But it did, and

apirilirilluniuk kisumik takujariaksanganik. taqqiq kiulluni,
asked him what he saw. Taqqiq replied,

“tauvani natirnaillu nunaillu takujunnaqsivakka.”
“I’m now able to see the valleys and hills over there.”

takuttiarunnaqsigami nunaliarujjauniarasugigaluq&uni
Now that he was able to see clearly, he assumed he would to be taken ashore,

tisamangannik aqqautigilluniuk. ammailaak
but the loon submerged with him for a fourth time.

ijjannguliqtummarialuugilluni. puijjutigamiuk apirilirilluniuk,
Again he became completely breathless. When the loon resurfaced with him, it

ungasingnikumut tungujurujuksisimajuniittut iviksukkat
asked him if he was now able to see the grasses on the land, that were

takujunnaqsijariaksanginnik.
pale blue because they were so far away.

ungasingnikumut tungujurujuksisimajuniittut iviksukkat
asked him if he was now able to see the grasses on the land, that were

takujunnaqsiniqarmagiti nunaliarutilitainnaq&uniuk.
nunaliijujaugami
When he said he was able to see them, it finally brought him ashore. After he

kamingmi qulaanit nakattilluni illuuliurami najangami
was brought ashore, he cut off the top of his kamik, and made it into a

inuksukkiariaqjaqangit illuiraqtaatuq&uniig
slingshot. Aiming at the inuksuit that his najanga had made,

angirramut atulipait.
he followed them home.
When he got home, he saw a polar bear skin and a dog skin drying.

When he saw the polar bear skin pegged to dry, he asked his stepmother,

“Whence have you acquired this?”

His stepmother replied, “I received it as a parting gift from people in boats that passed by.”
Brother and Sister Legends:

Their stepmother becomes a narwhal

Alexina Kablu

When the summertime came, there were a lot of whales about. The brother started to practice spearing them from the shore until he felt that he was able to hit one.

His sister acted as a weight, the harpoon-line tied around her waist. When a calf was passing he tried to harpoon it. They used this for food for quite some time until there were a lot of whales about. Once more, again using his sister as a weight, he tried to catch a whale. This time he caught a young female, which they used as food. Their stepmother said, “The next time there are a lot of whales, use me as a weight instead,
iktaringniqsauvunga aktuararniqsaunjunaqsilaaravit.”
as I am heavier and therefore you will be able to catch an even larger one.”

qilalugaaluulirmingmata arnaksangata aliq qitirmigut qilak&ugu
When there were a lot of whales again, his stepmother tied the harpoon-line around her
waist,

kangirijaungariarnami. irniksangata sukattiakkanniq&uniuk
as she was going to be used as the weight. Her stepson tied it even tighter,

igumijjaiq&ugu.
making sure it wouldn’t come loose.

qilalukkat qaninaaqtaqtuugaluat suqutigikatanngi&&unigit.
He ignored the whales coming close.

angutialuungmik aktualungmik saniqquttugalirmat
naulik&uniuk.
When a big male passed by, he harpooned it.

arnaksanga kittikallakkaluaq&uniimaup qaangagut
ullakpasaaq&uni.
Although his stepmother dragged her feet, she ran for a while on top of the water,

aqqauijauulluni. puijjujjuagami inngiqsilluni, “irnirma irnirma
sumut
but she was taken down under. When she was brought to the surface, she started to sing,
“My son, my son, why

pivajuvanga, annallu itiqqullu ijjurinagit salummaqsavajuvakka.
has he done this to me? Without any disgust I used to clean (his) excrement and urine.

tavvatuq qanuqtuq pikungatuq pingurajuup qaanganut pilanga.”
How I wish, though I don’t know how, to get up to the top of that hill.”

puijjujjuarangami taimanna inngimalluni. puijjujaungmigami
This is how she would sing when she was brought to the surface. When the whale came
to the surface with her again,
nujani igumitavinirigamigit sivunirminut qipiujaliqtangit.
she had unbraided her hair and was twisting it in front of her.

arnaksangak qilalugannguq&uni tuugaaliulluni. taimangat
Their stepmother became a whale with a tusk. Ever since,

qilalugaqtqaliq&uni qipinngajumik tuugaalingnik.
there have been narwhals with twisting tusks.
Brother and Sister Legends:

kukilingiattiaraaluit

The ones with long nails

Alexina Kublu

ukiarmat igluqarnaqsitillugu aningagiik pisuk&utik aullaqpuuk.

When the fall came and it became the season to build iglus, the brother and sister departed on foot.

unnuliqtillugu qarmarijaujumut tikiutigamik aninganga

One evening they arrived at an occupied qarmaq and the brother

started making preparations to stay the night.

imiruktualuugami najangani taakkununga imisuquvaa.

Because the brother was very thirsty, he asked his sister to get some water from those inside.

najanganga paamuarami ilummut tuq&ulalluni,

When his sister came to the entrance, she shouted,

“qammaat, qammaat aningama imisuqtimmanga.”

“You in there, you in there, my aninga has sent me to fetch some water.”

taqqamanngat kiujaulluni, “katakput, katakput kutuktualuungmat

From within she was answered, “Our entrance, our entrance, it is dripping.

kinguppirlutit isirit, akkutit makpirlugit.”

Come in backwards, after putting up the tails of your parka.”

kinguppiaqturluni isiqjaugami kinguppiaqtuq&uni isisivuq akuni

Because she was requested to enter backwards, she did as she was told, with
makpiqsimmallunigit. sunauvvaukua aningagiik kukilingiattianut
her parka-tails up. It turned out that they had arrived among the *kukilingiattiit*.

tukittuuk. tunua saqqituarmat kukiliangiaattiuruluit
As soon as her back appeared, the *kukilingiattiit* started to scratch her with

tunuanik qittukaalaauq&utik pataquksimaliqtut kukingmingnik
their nails, and then they would lick her blood and flesh

taimanna nirivangniramik. kukingit sanngininginnut
because this was their way of eating. The strength of their nails was such,

pilakkutiqariaqanngittulluunniit. tunuanik qittukaarlutik
they did not require any cutting instrument. Since they really

nirijumanikumut kinguppaqturluni isiqqujijut.
wanted to eat her by scratching at her back, they had asked her to enter backwards.

najanganga iranakpalattilirmat aninganga igluligaluarami
When his sister started screaming, her brother rushed in with the knife he had been

suuqaimma savilijaq&uni isiqsaaqpuq. najanganganik
When he found them scratching his sister,

qittukaaqtuqsiarigamigit qarmangatta qanaruluaniik tigusigami
he took the support beam of their *qarmaq* and

kapuuraliqpait. ilangattauruna itturuluk ippaktullaalungnik
started to jab at them. One of them, an old man who was smacking away at

kukiliruluk kukingminik pataquksinnaq&uni uqaujakallak&uni,
his very dirty nails, stated,

“asuguuq namnamnam uqautiqqaugaluapassi namnamnam
“Again I state namnamnam. I did tell you namnamnam.

iniqtiqqaugaluapassi namnamnanamnamnamnam
I did forbid you namnamnam.”

Introduction to the Oral Traditions
The brother knew that he was lying, and jabbed him

As he was dying, he said, "mugguggugu."

After killing all those that lived there, he picked up his sister and took her to the iglu he had built.

As she was in much pain she could not walk. Therefore, they spent the winter there.

Stories — The kukilingiattiat
Brother and Sister Legends:

**itiqanngittut**

The ones without anuses

*Alexina Kublu*

When spring came again, the brother and sister walked for a long time,

when they approached a settlement with tents on the shore. No one was outside.

When they got close to the tents, the sister ran forward because there were numerous “candies” made from chewed caribou fat along the side of the tents. She was happy, and cried out, “Wonderful candies, wonderful candies.”

But from inside, someone yelled out “Those are excrement, those are excrement.”

It turned out they had arrived among the ones who had no anuses.

They did not have any anuses, but had heard about people having bowel movements,

so they would take chewed caribou fat and keep it under their arms until it stank.
tupimikta silatitianganut anariaqtuqpak&utik.
and then deposit it outside their tents to imitate defecating.

ainingagiik taakkunaniiliq&utik. taakkunangat siqiuniq
uitaaq&uni
The brother and sister settled with them. Siqiniq found a husband

taqqirlu nuliaqtaaraluarilluni. taakkuali
itiqangituinannanginnamik
among them and Taqqiq got a wife. These people not only had no anuses,

kisuqajaanngittut.
they didn’t have genitals either.

qakugunnguqtillugu siqiuniq singailiq&uni. singailirmat sakia
After some time, Siqiniq became pregnant. When she became pregnant, her

pirraivalliaq&uni. sunauvva angmaniqangnimut
irnijunnangimmata
mother-in-law started braiding sinew. Since these people did not have any orifices,

irniviksanga naammaksikpat pilaktaulaarnikumut
she was going to cut Siqiniq when it was time for her to give birth.

pirraijjajjuvaliqqviniq tualiriiktunik. ningiuq taqqiup
uqaultiuniuk
Therefore they started making braids of differing thicknesses. Taqqiq told the old woman

najanganga irnigianngua&&alaurluni irnijunnanggippat
that his sister should attempt to give birth her own way. Only if she were unable to do so,

pilaktauniatunnalnaffuq.
she would have to be cut.

irniviksanga naammaksaingmat irnittiaq&uni angutikulungmik.
When the time for the birth came, she gave birth to a little boy without complications.
taakkua sakikkurasangit kamajualuuliiq&utik.
inngiqsiujuqq&uni,
Her various in-laws were in awe. Someone started a chant,

“ukuaqput ukuaqput, irnivuq irnivuq, angmanilingmik
itilingmik usulingmik.”
“Our female in-law has given birth to one with an orifice, one with an anus, one with a penis.”

sakialua angutauniqsaq tuq&ulalluni, “ittiqsu&&aliritti
usuliqsurusilu
Her father-in-law yelled out, “Start giving yourselves anus, give yourselves penises,

uttuliqsurusilu.”
give yourselves vaginas.”

itiqalaunngittukkut angmaniqtaaqtuqttiqattautisillutik
Those that had been without anus started giving each other orifices.

naliqquutijaraangamik uumavak&utik. saniqquutijaraangamik
If they stabbed the proper spot they lived, and if they missed (on either side)

tuquvak&utik. angutaunngit taqqutivinirulungnik
they would die. The men were trying to get penises using the qulliqliq

usuktaqturasuliq&utik. taannattauq siqiniup sakia uingata
wick trimmers. The husband of Siqiniq’s mother-in-law

kapilluniuk saniqquitjarlaalingmagu tuquvallialiq&uni
uqaqpq,
stabbed his wife, but he missed. As she was dying, she said,

“uima tuu&&aqpaanga, savuujaminut tuu&&aqpaanga
“My husband stabbed me, with his iglu building knife he stabbed me.

qakugu maminniq qularnaapa?” tuqullunilu.
Is healing hopeless?” and she died.
sakialua angutauniqsaq silamiimmat silammut tuq&ulajaulluni
While her father-in-law was outside, someone yelled to him,

“kinauniaqturguna”
“Who is he going to be?”

illumut kiulluni, “Pualuulii”
He yelled, “Let him be Pualu (mitt).”

taqqamanngagat tuq&ulajau&&arivuq, “pualugaluaqpuq tavva”
From within, someone called out to him once more, “Here we are; he has indeed had
mitts put on.”

kiullunigit, “pualuuliilaak pualuuli.”
He replied, “Let him be Pualu, I said. Let him be Pualu.”

sunauvvauna irngutaqtaani pualumik atiqajuaq
It turned out that he wanted his grandson to be named Pualu,

pualuqujaunasugijaulluni pualujaujuugaluaq.
but they thought he was requesting that they put mitts on him.
ainingagiik:
Brother and Sister Legends:

ainingagiik taqqirlu
siqininnguqtuuk

Brother and sister become the
sun and the moon

Alexina Kublu

siqiniq irnisaqsamamut kinittirmi
As Siqiniq had just given birth, she was waiting for the bleeding to stop,

ilaakkut iglulituujariaqarami inutuuvak&uni.
in an iglu by herself, since she had to be in isolation.

qaggiqattaqtualuuliralmata
Even though there was drum dancing in a qaggiq,

tavvaninnariaqarami ilauvagani.
she didn’t participate because she had to remain in isolation.

qaggiualuilirmitullugit isiqtulluni qullia supijaugami
When they were dancing again, someone came in and blew out the qulliq

unataarijaugami piqatigijaulluni.
and she was assaulted and raped.

unnurasangnik taimailiuqtaualirami
Since she was treated like this for many nights

qajijumalimut kinaumut unaatanguvungnirminik
she wanted to find out who her unknown assailant was,

immiurutiminit sagvasinnaujaqit um qingangagut
so she decided to take soot from the watermaking pot which hung

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paumitirumaliqpa. taimailijaujut naatauniraqtauvalaurmata. constantly over the flame and put soot on his nose. People who were marked thus were said to be “naat”-ed and could be identified later.

asuilaak qaggilirmingimata tikini pauqtiqsimavagiq&ugu. So they started drum dancing again, she had already daubed her finger with soot.

ammailaangaasit isiqtaugami qullia supijaulauq&uni Once again someone entered her iglu, and her qulliq was first blown out

unataariajaulirami naa&&ugu. and when she was being assaulted, she marked him with soot.

aningmat maliksakuqturiaq&uniuk. When he went out, she quickly followed him.

qaggijunuaqtuq. taqqaanngat silataanit siqiniq He went to where they were drum dancing. From outside, Siqiniq

iglaqpalattijualungnik tusaq&uni; taima naatausimajumik heard the sound of laughter as they ridiculed the person

ijurijaqalimut. uqaqpalattijumiglu tusaq&uni, who had been marked. She heard someone say,

“Taqqiq aasit inutuaqsiurasualumut naataaluuvuq.” “Taqqiq, off as usual to look for someone alone, is a marked man.”

aningaminut unataarijauqtarnikuujariaksaminik sujuk&uni She was shocked and very angry at having repeatedly been the victim of her own brother

ninngaktullaalugami qaggijunut isirami iviangirmi igluq so when she entered the qaggiq she cut off one of her

nakannamiuk aningaminut tunillugu uqautivaa, “aningaak breasts. Giving it to her brother she said to him, “Brother!”

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tamarma mamaqgalunga una niriggu!
Since you think all of me is so tasty, eat this!

nirijumangimmat iviangirmi iglua nakakkillugu qullirmi
Because he wouldn’t eat it, she cut off her other breast and placed

ikumajumit iviangisingni ipaqqiq&ugik aningani silammut
a wick in both of them. Then she followed her brother outside.

maliskaqpaa. Taanna qaggiviujuq kaiva&unijjuk ullaliq&utik
They started running around and around the qagqig.

Taqqiup tigumiaqtaa palirami aumautuinnaliq&uni.
The breast which Taqqiq was holding ran dry and became only an ember.

maliqattautillutik qangangattaq&utik.
Still following each other, they went up into the sky.

taimanngalli tavva aningagiik maliqattautivuuk.
Ever since that time, the brother and sister have followed each other.

qaumanginniqaulluni Taqqiullu qaumanga
nunamiisungaq&utik tigumiaqtaiq najangangata iviangia
Taqqiq’s light is less bright because while they were still on earth, his sister’s breast that he was holding.

paliq&uni aumautuinnalilaaqsimangmat.
dried out and became only an ember.

siqinirli aningaminik malingaaraluamut ukiukkut
And since Siqiniq still follows her brother, when in the winter,

taliumassuujalauq&uni saqqikkannilitainnaraangami
after being hidden for so long, she comes out again
aningaminut ingiaqtausimanikuuguni
and finds that her brother has slipped past her,

ninngaktualuuqattarmat aujauliraangat
gets very angry, and when summer comes

silattivaqatakpanngilaq.
the weather tends to be bad.
qanuimmatt uglut
ingirravgunnairnirmangaata
Why iglus no longer move
Alexina Kublu

Kublu qimuksinnguangujaq&uni qarmangatta natiani
Kublu, although contentedly playing dogteams on the floor of their qarmaq.

irmgunnilu ningaurununilu qaukpamut parnaktuuk
ijidiujliqiik.
is casually looking at her “grandchild” and her “awful son-in-law” who are preparing for tomorrow.

itturini atiqarami Kubluulluni.
Having an old man for a name she is Kublu.

quilitsa qimmingata irniurvigisaalaurmagu atuqtiavsaujuniirmat
Her caribou skin outer parka, because her dogs used it as a birthing place, is no longer wearable.

angajuata qulittanganik akukulilingmik irngutangata
aqqiksiikkaniirutiujaqtaa.
Her “grandchild” is altering her older sister’s tailed parka.

ittuugami suuqaimma akukulilingmik
aturumanngiuttallaluungmat
Because she is a grandfather, no wonder she does not want to wear one with a little tail.

quilittaangikkuni qirnirnarmat angajuata qulittangata
Because she will be cold if she doesn’t wear a caribou parka, her older sister’s parka’s

akukulualu kiniarjukualu nakataligallutik.
little tail and her little front piece are about to be cut off.

stitugik piqtauqasiijauqugalularmagik pajirulturaligaangmat
Though she asked that its shoulder pieces also be removed, it’s going to be too tedious.
Her “awful son-in-law” is telling her that before they arrive in the settlement, she will be able to remove her caribou parka.

Because her younger sisters were long since sleeping and though she is now sleepy, Kublu numaasuujaq&uni uqaqpuq,

Kublu, quietly sad, said, “Grandchild, I wish that we could take off without having to make such preparations and without going by dogteam and … marvellously … without having to wear caribou parkas.”

Her “awful son-in-law” was sewing the dog harnesses on the workbench; looking at his child

whom he called “awful father-in-law,” he said to her, “If you go to bed well, I can indeed tell you the story about how they stopped having to travel like that (which is something we didn’t know).”

Because she was (habitually) told a story to fall asleep when her “awful son-in-law” was not going on a sleep-over, she went to bed right away,
nattiup aksaqungit qimmimnguani iksinnaqpasaaq&unigit.
Not even tidying up her “dogs” made from the humerus of seals.

inillaksmattialituarmat ningaurulua asianik anumik
As soon as she had put herself nicely to bed, her “awful son-in-law,” taking up another harness

miqsarniaqtaminik tigusilluni unikkaasivuq:
he was going to sew; began to tell the story:

“taissumaniujakallammarialuk inuit
aullaarumaliraangamik
“Quite a long, long time ago, whenever people were wanting to travel,

igluminiingnarlutijunnaqpalauqsimagaluarmata.
they could indeed remain in their own iglus.

tavvaguuq aullaarumaliraangamik sunaluktaat
naksarumajatik iglumi
So there it was: whenever they wanted to travel [with] all the various things in the iglu they wanted to take along,

iluanuaqtinqnarilaq&unijjuk, iglirmullu
qakiiurattiatuinnaulaq&utik
having put them all inside, [and] everyone having climbed up onto the sleeping bench,

ingirrasijumaliraangamik iglutik
uqautituinnaqpak&unijjuk aullaarumanirminik.
when they wanted to start moving, they just told their own house of their wish to travel.

taimanna aullaarunnaramik qimuksiriaqapannittut,
Because they could travel like that, they didn’t have to travel by dogteam;
uqquksakatagiaqapagagitgluunniit.
they didn’t even have to dress warmly (over and over again).

tavva natirmut aqqarajiaksaq quaqsaarnaqtutuaq.
There now, the only frightening thing would be anyone getting on the floor.

nangiarnutituarilauqtaa aqqariaksaq suuqaima
manirakkut ingirragamik
There was only one thing to cause fear of falling, getting down. No wonder, as while they moved over the ground:

sunatuinnat katagaujut qaaqqutautuinnaqpangmata
iglirmut.
any things that fell were simply run over by the sleeping-platform,

iglu ingirragaluaqtillugu natingali
qimaktauvaluinaniqutik.
the iglu proceeding, but its floor simply being gradually left behind.

taimanna aullaaqpagunnassuujaqtualuugamik
sungiunngattiaq&utik.
For a long time they had been able to travel like that; therefore, they were accustomed to it.

tavvali angakkuup irngutakulanik upirngaksaliqtilugu
inuunikulungmik
There was a certain shaman’s grandchild born in the spring,

aullaariuqatajuquarniq&uni.
who was travelling with them for the first time,

igluqarnasungaarjuktillugu inuunikukuuluugami
(because) he was born just at the end of iglu-using season,
and had (therefore) learned to crawl. They once again travelled in their usual manner of travelling.

But there, he was one who fell from the sleeping-platform;

being immediately crushed as soon as he reached the ground.

The shaman immediately stopped the iglu.

When the little one was returned, he/she had already died.

Because the shaman was angry with the iglu because it had brutally killed his grandchild, he made

absolutely all iglus become no longer capable of moving (without the rest of us being aware).

So always, so it is, that whenever they want to travel, they have to leave their iglus behind.”

Kublu, falling asleep, but thinking that she is saying,

“It’s a good thing we can no longer travel like that: my younger sister, because she is one
ijukkakulugluni tuqukulu&alaarmat."
who regularly falls, falling, she would happen to die."

irngutaatali qipittiakkanniriaq&uniuk
But her “grandchild,” covering her better with the blanket,

“minuminuminuminu”laatuinququjuq tusaqpaa.
heard her seem only to say, “minuminuminu.”
“Irngutarjuapiga nauk?”
Where is my dear grandchild?

Alexina Kublu

“anaanattiaq unikkaaqtualaurit”
“Grandmother, tell a once-upon-a-time story.”

“unikkaaqtuaksaqajjannginnama sinnaksaapilirit qappaksaapilirit”
“I don’t have a story to tell you; just go to sleep.”

“anaanattiaq unikkaaqtualaurit”
“Grandmother, tell a once-upon-a-time story.”

“asuguuq unikkaaqtuaksaqajjannginnama sinnaksaapilirit qappaqsaapilirit”
“As I told you, I don’t have a story to tell you, so just go to sleep.”

“anaanattiangilaak unikkaaqtualaurit”
“Grandmother, once again, tell a once-upon-a-time story.”

“haa-avinngalaaraaluit, haa-miqquqanngittualuit,”
“Haa, creepy hairless baby lemmings,

haa-qumiiktajuraaluit, haa-qariaraarjungmit
Haa, who want to burrow next to your skin,

haa-katagalaa&&aliraangata, haa-quinangna&&aqpaput“
Haa, which, when they fall from the guest bunk, cause a lot of ticklish squeamishness.”

aa tu tu tu tu tu tu

“tiuq” irngutarjuapinga tiuq&uni kangikkut pikiaqpuq.
With a ‘tweet’ the grandchild went out through the air hole.

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? irngutarjuapiga nauk?”
“Where is my grandchild? Where is my grandchild?”
The grandmother looked under the blankets.

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? irngutarjuapiga nauk?”
“Where is my grandchild? Where is my grandchild?”

The grandmother looked among all the things at the back of the iglu.

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? irngutarjuapiga nauk?”
“Where is my grandchild? Where is my grandchild?”

The grandmother searched her whole iglu for her grandchild.

Not finding her grandchild, she started to cry,

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang,”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang,”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”

Not finding her grandchild in her iglu, she put on her kamik to search outside for her grandchild,

“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang,”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”

When she went outside the iglu all she saw was a little bird going ‘tweet tweet’ so she got ready to leave in search of her grandchild.
taqqtini kamingmiuittuulluniuk, maniusivvinilu
ujammiuittuulluniuk, kakpinilu
She put her wick-trimmer in her boot, draped her moss bag around her neck,
kamingmi igluanuaq&uniuk irngutarjuapini qininiasivaa
put her needle case in her other boot, and she set off to find her grandchild.
pisuujaq&uni qupanuarjukulungmut qanivvisiuqtaulluni
tiulaaqtukulungmit
As she was walking a little bird going ‘tweet tweet’ stayed close by
qiavuq “irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang, iirngutarjuapiga
nauk, hang, hang, hang.”
and she cried, “Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”
qiagami ijjirngnaalliqtukkaluanmut siningit aupaqsillutik.
Because she had been crying, her eyes were all red from constantly wiping at them.
“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang, iirngutarjuapiga nauk?
hang, hang, hang.”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”
pisussuujaramilu ukungalluni pisuliqtuq suli qianginnuaq&uni,
Because she had been walking a long time, she became bent over, all the while crying,
“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang, iirngutarjuapiga nauk?
hang, hang, hang.”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”
irngutarjuapini qiniinnaqsulluniuk, akunialuglu qiagami
nipiliq&uni.
Because she had been crying so long while searching for her grandchild, her voice
became hoarse.
“irngutarjuapiga nauk? hang, hang, hang, iirngutarjuapiga nauk?
hang, hang, hang.”
“Where is my dear grandchild? sob - sob - sob.”
qinissuujaluamut qiassuujaluamullu ‘irngutarjuapiga nauk?’
lajunnailluni,
From all that endless searching and crying, she was no longer able to say, 
“Where is my dear grandchild?”

suli qiagaluaq&uni
And although she was still crying,

“qavaqpaqpaqpaqpaqpaq,
qavaqpaqpaqpaqpaqpaqlaangaaliqpuq.”
instead of sobbing, she was going, “qavaqpaqpaq qavaqpaqpaq,“

aqigginnguq&uni
She became a ptarmigan.
nunaup manningit

Earth eggs
As told to Marie-Lucie Uvilluq by her father George Agiaq Kappianaq

*nunami pirqutik ammalu siumitaujaqanngi putik.*
While I was interviewing my father, he said there are bird eggs and eggs that grow in the earth.

*nunaugguq niviuringmagut taimannganialuk nirjutiksuninganuq siqumikkaangat silalugjuakutaajattualuk.*
Since time began, the earth has always been protective of the eggs which will grow into an animal when the egg hatches. If an egg which was found partially buried in the earth was ever broken, there would be bad weather for a number of days.

*makuali manniit pukiuniraqtausuut tuktuullutik.*
The eggs which will eventually become caribou are known as *pukit*.

*kisiani imarmiutaksait taunani imaani tagiumi manniujunnarmijut.*
Eggs can even be found in the sea.

*kisiani taikkutiguunaq sivullittigut inuruqqavaluurnirmata nirjutilimaat, kisutuinnait qimmilluunniit, siksiilluunniit.*
In our forefathers’ time, they [animals] could transform into humans. Any animal, even dogs and ground squirrels, had the ability to transform.

*tingmiamit irniangunngikkutik tuktuksautuinnarninginnik tusaumallunga pukiullutik qualluqtumik miqquqaqutik tuktumit anginiqsaullutik.*
I have heard that if an egg is not a bird egg, then it will become a caribou. These eggs turn into albino caribou, and they tend to be bigger than the average caribou.

*tamakkua pukiit silaanguniraqtaungmata imarmiuttaqtitut imanna pituinnarlugu piqujaummata nuna niviuja uniguuq.*
*Pukit* are known to cause bad weather, as do the eggs in the sea. They are not allowed to be taken nor to be kept as souvenirs, for the earth will yearn for the lost eggs and cause foul weather.

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Eggs can be found in the sea and they become square-flippers [seals] and probably walrus.

If an egg was found in the water, the square-flipper would have a distinct black diamond-shape design on its back (similar to that of playing cards).

Polar bears can be silaat as well. Maybe they can come from eggs, and they are huge compared to the average bear.

I have heard mentioned that polar bears and square-flippers which came from eggs are known as silaat. They should not be hunted. (It is rare that the square-flippers have distinct diamond shapes, as they are albino.)

I have heard it thus. It also can shorten the life expectancy of the human who caught one.

For three consecutive days, I observed an albino caribou which was among a herd of caribou; this was on the south side near Sanirajak.

These are true facts. Those who do not believe are the ones we should not listen to; they are harvesters more than they are hunters (that is, qallunaat).
Taliillajuut
Sea People
As told to Maaki Kakik by her grandmother, Miali Tutu

uvangali takullarillunga takulauqsimangitunga Taliillajuumik. taima tusaumajara
Myself, I really haven’t seen a Taliilajuuq. I have heard

Aalasiup uivininga surusiulluni Juanasiminiq, tininnimiittuni mikijurulummiguuq
that Alasi’s late husband, Joanasie, when he was a child, was at the low tide Taliillajuuralaakulummik takugami tinijjauqqajumik nitsimmut pinnguarivattamina. and saw a small Taliilajuuq. When he saw one that was stuck at low tide, he played with it with a hook.

atsualuguuq aittangaqtuqtuviniq tavvunga. Taliillajuuralaakulummut nitsimmugguuq. The Taliilajuuq had its mouth wide open to him. He had the Taliilajuuq hooked.

nitsisimallugu taima tuqujiarigamiuk imaak mitautigillugu mitautigiinnatuniuk. It died, and he had made fun of the Taliilajuuq all that time.

taima qimminut tunijamininiq, qimminugguuq pijumajaunngittuq taimaittumininiq.
He then gave it to the dogs, but the dogs did not want it. That is what happened.

taima tusaumattaratta Taliillajuut mitautaugsiaqanngittut pirjuaaluummata imaulli. We had heard that we should never make fun of them. It is a major thing

inugimmagit kisianiguuq imamaqtuqaruni taika Taliillajuut mitautauppata, because they are a people of the sea, and if someone falls into the water, the Taliillajuut, whether someone has made fun of them or not,
kamagijautituaqpata allaaluuniigguuq tininnimiittumik taima surusikulugiujumik.
look after them nicely, even if the Taliilajuuq is at low tide like the Taliilajuuq child.

takuttarutta imanurialivugguq manna amirakulua piluaqtaililugu, If we see one at low tide, we are to take it to the water, and always be gentle and handle it gently,

uumajukuuummatali inugimmagilli imaup ammalu inunnik ikajurunniitittutik.
They are alive; they are the people of the sea and they really can help people too.

ataataattiat unikkaaqpalaummimmat unaniittuta saniamiittuta upirngakkuguuq.
My husband told a story when we were down at Saniami in the summer.

upirngaaraalukkut immatinnialuuliqitillugu nangiarnaqsijualuuliqitillugu angijugiik
When the ice was starting to melt, when it was dangerous on the ice, his older brother and himself

uuttuqsiuqtuuk tainnaguuq aippara katattualuunirngat taimiittumut nangiarnaqtumut.
were hunting on the ice. My husband went through thin ice.

taimaliguuq majuujjaarunniirammat ammalu aipparijanga avanialuuoqtuni,
Then he knew he would not be able to get up to the shore, and his partner was quite far from him.

inuujjaarunniiramti quajimalirami taimaguuq qukiutini
He knew he was not going to live. He tried not to drop his rifle

sakkuittailimagasulualuaqtunuk sakkutuinnaqtanga majuriarasuqattaraluuoqtuni.
but he dropped it. He tried to get up to the shore but he could not.
The ice would break while he was trying to get up on the ice, because it was thin.

Then he was lifted up from the bottom. When he tried to see what it was,

it was something bluish that was going down deeper, and he also saw its hair.

They can really help. They are not supposed to be made fun of at all, if we see one at any time.

I have even told our children so they can tell their children too,

that if they see a living being or if they see an adult that is stuck in the low tide, they are helpless.

Because they are fish, although they have arms too, they can only do their duties in water.

Whenever we see one, even our children and grandchildren, we always have to put them into the sea.

We should inform them (our children) not to make fun of them because they can help Inuit. They are the helpers.

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mitautaujuqarnirami inuguuq mitautiqaqtuminiutuaqqat
imaaguullarilluni kisiani,
If one is made fun of, the person doing this will fall into the water,

ikajuqtissaqannginnami kisiani. imaaqullarilli taima Aalasiup
uinga imaaquuqtuminiq
and will not have a helper. Alasi’s husband died in the water

down south even though it did not seem dangerous. They have lifeguards down south.

imaaguuqtuni aanniaviliaqsimalluni utinngiinnarniku.
He died in the water; he had gone south for medical reasons and never came back.

imaani puijjuraqtuni puinngiinnarniku, tainna taima
tuquttisimajuviniq taissuminga mitautiqaqtuni.
He was swimming in the water but did not come back to the surface. He was the one
that made fun of the Taliilajuuq and killed it.

taima tagga mitautaugiaqanngittuutigivait imaulli
ikajuqtitigimmagit.
That is why they should not be made fun of. They are the helpers and they can help.

taakkua surusiullutik qiturngakka takusimammijut Sailakkut
taimittumik.
When my children were young, one of them, Saila, had seen one.

uvangali takulauqsimanngittunga tusaumattiutuinnaqtunga.
As for myself I have not actually seen one, but I have heard about them.

taakkua surusiullutik pauttuattalimmiittuta tininnirmiittuq ilaak
imaak allaat vaivairqaqtauqtauqsimajuq.
When they were young children, we were at Pauttuattalik. They saw one in the low tide
and it waved goodbye to them.

Stories — Sea People
They really liked it. When they heard someone breathing, they turned their heads and saw one that was just going into the water. It had long hair and was going backwards and was waving at the same time to them. My husband was helped too. He even thought and imagined it with long hair that was bluish.

He saw it for a second when it was going down; it was at the surface of the water but not quite.

He only saw its hair. When he was lifted, he was pushed forward hard and he got to the shore very quickly.

He was grateful to the helper because he was saved. The only way you can put them into the water is by handling them carefully.
amirangatitut taimaïtutummat piijaruuluaq taulitlittiarlugu
attariługu ikajuutikululuummat;
and [you must] try not to peel it off accidentally. Be very careful because it is our helper;

nalligilugu taimaigaialik. mitautigivangillugu nalligittiarlugu.
care for it; that’s how it should be done. Do not make fun of them; love them.

ikajuqtikulugimmagu imaup.
They are the helpers from the sea.

uattiaru ataataga unikkaaqpalaummijuugaluaq tainnaguuq
taimaittuminiq qukiqsiulaqtuviniq.
A long time ago my father told me a story, that a person had shot one on purpose.

qajangata sivua tigutuinnaqtaq Taliilajuumut
imaqtaulauqtviniuqirmaq.
His qajaq was taken by the front by a Taliilajuuq and tipped over.

taimangikkua akiniarunnaqturjuaaraaluummata
They can also fight back if they are treated cruelly.

mitautigijariaqangillarimmata upinnarani inuuummata, imaup
inukulungit
They are not to be treated this way, because they are living beings, the people of the sea.

ikajuqtiquiltiaruluit. imaaguulitqumik ikajuqtimmata makua
inuniaqtuujuurinnaqututik,
They can help. If someone has fallen into the water they can help. Even if the person
might have died in the water,

imaqtuviniit inusuungummata taimaittunut kisiani.
ukiukulli imaaluq,
the Taliilajuuq saves them, saved only by the Taliilajuuq. In the winter, we do not

qaujijuqarmagaat tusalaqsiqsimanggittunga
tusaumajuqtaqtussaummijuugaluaq asinnit.
hear about them that often. I have never heard about them, but maybe someone else did.
Only when it is like this (summer). Well, in the winter they are not able to go through the ice.

They do not go on ice because they are fish. I do not know where they go and stay.

I think there were a lot more long ago but I do not know where they went.

Maybe they ran away. The only one I have heard about, is when Alasi’s husband killed one.

Well, [that is] the only one I heard about, the one he gave to the dogs.

He went to see it the next day, but it was gone when he went up. Maybe it was taken back by its friends.

The dogs did not want to eat it. The dogs probably see these Taliilajuut since they walk around the low tide area, because when or where dogs go, they see different animals.
Lumaaju
As told to Tapea Keenainak by an elder

taakkua qaujimattiallarinngitakka, ilaak tariup inungugaluaq arnaq.
I do not really know them, only that it is the person of the sea, a woman.

uvagut uqausiaqut imaaq uqaqataratta, aqqariaangamiguq “lumaaq” taimannailivammata.
In our dialect we call her Lumaaju; when she is going under she makes the sound “lumaaq.”

taakkua unikkaatunangugamik najagiik, anaanaaqqtutik, tainna aninga tautungittuulaqsimalluni
This is a story about a brother, a sister and their mother; the brother was born blind.

upirngaanguliraangat timmiat qaqqsaulu tusaqtuagajuppammata tappaani tasirmi.
Usually when spring arrives, you can hear the birds and the loons up there on the lake.

qaqqsaut tusaqsauqallimmata tappauungautijaugumammat tainna tautungittuq najaata tappikunngautiluniiq tasiuqtuniuk.
When the loons could be heard, the blind boy asked his sister to take him up to the lake, so the sister held his hand on the way up.

takanna qaqqsaut takunnarnirarlugit tavvunga qimaktaujumalluni tainna tautungittuq.
The sister told him, “There are the loons,” and he told her that he wanted to be left alone.

najani uqautilluniuk tamanna angirraup mikisngaa ujarammi nappaqsiqathtaruni tautungaa qaujimajumammat, inuksuliqtauqullugu, taimaak qimattuniuk.
Before she left, he asked her to put up rocks on her way home, a trail of inkusut so that he would know the way to go home, and that she would leave him alone.
He listened to the loons and he told them, “Don’t just make sounds. I want help to be able to see... my eyes... I want to be able to see.” Later, he said that there was total silence for a while and then he heard a qajaq coming to shore.

Then he heard something asking him to close his eyes; then it started licking his eyes. The pain was excruciating. (The tongue of the loon seems like it has teeth; it’s rough.)

When it finished licking his eyes, it told him not to open his eyes. He heard the sound of it walking away, and even though he was asked not to, he took a little peek and saw it did not have any hair on its back. Then he shut his eyes.

When another qajaq came to shore, again he was asked to close his eyes; and it was even more painful than before.

Then it asked him to open his eyes. He could see a bit but not too well. “Can you see now?” it asked. He answered, “Yes, but it is foggy, blurry.”

Again he was asked to close his eyes. Again he closed them, and the one who had just licked his eyes went to its qajaq, and another one came to shore. Again, it was just as painful when it licked his eyes.
Then it asked him if he could see. He answered, “Yes, I can see the distant mountains, the edges of the moss.” When he said that was it, he was asked to close his eyes again, and he did as he was told.

taima qajarminungaugami aullarmat, uiuqaulirmigamiguuq takakkuaguuq tasirmi qaqqasat asiarjuqangittut takullunigit. Then it left on its qajaq, and when he was told to open his eyes, all he saw were the loons on the lake.

taisuma angirrangata miksaa inuksuliqtauqattaquqqaugamiuk najamminut asuillaak tamakkua inuksuit takugamigit malittugit taununnangaliquni. His sister had a trail of inuksut along the path to his home, as he had asked, and he followed the trail that led him down.

asuilaaguuq tupiq takannaummat upakkamiuk, tamakkuaaguuq qimmiiup qisirulua nanurarlu pauktuaq paniqsuqtuuk, tautunngittuuulluni qimmiup niiqeganik nirititauvaluauqtuni najangata narnup niiqeganik niritippakkuvaluauqtunik. When he reached the tent, he saw a dog skin and a polar bear skin drying. When he had been blind, he had been fed dog meat, and the sister would sometimes give him some polar bear meat to eat.

tavvunga tikinnami apirilluni “nakiummat nanuraminiq?” taannaguuq anaananga uqaqtuni “apkuu qaangiat nunattap” taimannaililuni “atii niriittaqappunga isumanni, aqqiatturlutilli nirigit.” When he arrived, he asked, “Where did you get the bear?” The mother said, “We got it from the people who live further on the land,” and told him, “Go ahead. I have been eating all I want; eat as much as you want.”

nannuttamininganit tautunngittuuulluni nanuqtarilaauqtanganit sunauvva minittuni niqiqaqtitauvannirami qimmiminigaarmik Actually it was the bear he had caught when he had been blind and the mother had been greedy and had given him dog meat instead.
The son answered, “I will eat when I make my own kill.” The mother started crying right away.

When the whales started showing up, the son found a harpoon and headed down to the shore, followed by the sister and the mother, so they could try and catch a whale.

The whales were going by very close and the mother would say, “Here, here’s a nice grey one swimming by,” but he did not try.

The mother kept repeating this whenever one went by, but the son wanted a big white whale. He harpooned one and he tied the end of the rope attached to the harpoon around the waist of his mother.

He told his sister to let go of the rope and when she left, he pulled on the rope a bit.

The white whale is very strong and now when the whale goes up or down [in the sea], the mother goes up and down too.

When she goes up, “lumaaq” is the sound she makes. That is why they call her Lumaaju.
Aagjuuk
Two specific stars, one bigger than the other. (Two stars in the constellation Aquila, Altair and Tarazed.)

Aattaujaq
A form of playing ball, catching the ball and throwing it to team members (any number of teams, any number of players).

Aglu
A seal breathing hole in the ice.

Akitittuq
The stitch used for sewing a tent by having one person on the inside while the other is outside. The one on the inside pushes the needle out so that the other person can pull the thread through. The person on the outside then pushes the needle in for the other person to pull. Same stitch used for sewing in a window.

Aksunnguqtuq
When a child is walking and no longer crawling. A toddler. The term refers to when the child is old enough that there isn’t as much fear of the child dying as an infant.

Akulliruut
[Mittimatalik] The month “when the caribou hair is in between” (neither too thin nor too thick; just right for making it clothing). The month equivalent to September. [Iglulik] Amiruijaut.

Akuttujuuk
“The two far apart.” The appearance of these stars while there was still light signified the imminent return of the sun. (Betelgeuse and Bellatrix.)

Aliqa
Males older sister (archaic).

Allijjivik
A section of an iglu where one would store items that were not going to be put inside the iglu; a kind of storage porch.

Amaruujaq
A game of chasing called “being like wolves” (similar to British Bulldog) played by people of all ages. Young men liked it because it gave them an excuse to chase the girl they were interested in. Young women liked it because they got to see who was interested in them. Old women liked it because they got to see who they could outrun.

Amauti
A parka with a pouch and a large hood for carrying babies.

Amialliruut
[Mittimatalik] The month when caribou antlers are losing their covers. The month equivalent to October. [Iglulik] Ukialliruut.

Amiq
Skin with fur.
Amiraijaut

Anaanattiaq
Grandmother.

Anau-
Playing baseball; also Anauligaaq.-

Angak
Mother’s brother.

Angusalluq
A male caribou about two years old.

Angusiaq
A male delivered, or “made,” by a midwife; they then have a kind of godmother/godson relationship.

Aniattunik
Letting go of pain and wrongdoing.

Anijaaq-
Going out first thing in the morning after waking up.

Aninga
Brother (archaic form for how a sister referred to her brother).

Anngaq
Child of a female’s brother.

Anngiaqaqtuviniq
Keeping a wrongdoing undisclosed.

Aqausiit
Loving songs or words to children. Each child has their own. Different people may have a different aqusiq for the same child. Everyone may pick up a mother’s or grandmother’s aqusiq for a particular child. Some aqusiit form a person’s identity and get treated as though it were that person’s name, i.e. Arnalaaq (tiny girl), Laavie (“lovey” stretched out and given an Inuktitut pronunciation), Banik (panik, daughter), Arnaulluaq (just so rightfully happened to be a girl after three boys).

Aquti
The driver of a vehicle of any kind.

Arnaliaq
A girl delivered, or “made,” by a midwife; they then have a kind of godmother/goddaughter relationship.

Arnaluq
A female caribou about two years old.

Asimautta
A cutting board used to measure and cut up skins; also qiurvik.

Atii
“Let’s go.”

Atiq
Name, namesake.

Aujakasak
Early summer in the month of July in Pangniqtuuq.
Aujallarik
Real summer in the month of August in Pangniqtuuq.

Aujaq
Summer, corresponds to end of July-August – early September in Iglulik.

Aupallattuq
A caribou calf with fur turning brown.

Avataatsiaq
[Pangniqtuuq] A star located behind the Ujjujjuuk used to tell time and direction.

Avataq
A float formerly made of an inflated seal skin.

Avunniit

Avunniiq
Something that is born early (premature).

Avutijuq
Moving away from the person one has been living with, to live on one’s own.

Igunaujannguaq
A game in which the person in the centre tries to remain stiff. He is held in place by the feet of the people who are sitting in a circle. He is passed around hand over hand. Whoever drops him is the next “frozen walrus carcass.”

Iirqaaq
Throat-singing (a term used only in some communities); in others it is Piqquisiraarniq, [Iglulik], Qiarnoqqisaq [Arviat], Katajjaaq, [Nunavik and South Baffin]. Katajjaaq is becoming the most commonly used term.

Ijirait
(Legendary) invisible people; when Uinigumasuitituq sent her dog children off, these are the ones who remained in the land of the Inuit but are not visible to them except in the form of caribou; also Iijaat.

Ikiaqpavvik
[Mittimatalik] The sun is higher in the sky but still not too high. The month equivalent to March. [Iglulik] Avunniit.

Ikirarjuaq
A Catholic priest.

Iksutit
Heather; also qijuttaat.

Iksuut
[Mittimatalik] The month of “the sound of rushing of water as the rivers start to run.” The month equivalent to July. [Iglulik] Saggaruut.

Illauq
A foetus still inside the mother.

Illukitaat
Juggling.

Illukuluq
Cousin [Pangniqtuuq].

Glossary
**Illunguaq**
A ring of stone, used as a “house” when children were playing.

**Ingiiqsauti**
The area of the lower back.

**Ingirrattiji**
The driver of a dogteam.

**Inuksuk**
A stone marker built up almost in the shape of a person.

**Inurajat**
Non-human people-like entities.

**Inuujait**
Small homemade dolls formerly of antler, now of wood.

**Iqqullik**
To make a request for a child or a spouse.

**Iqqullirauti**
The object that was hidden and sought, in a form of the hide-and-seek game.

**Iqqut**
The bone trim around the window of a *qarmaq*.

**Itsimaajaujuq**
Someone who was not treated well.

**Kamik**
Sealskin boot, any footwear.

**Kangivaq**
To go towards the head of an inlet or sound.

**Kangivaqtuq**
The term used by the people of Pangniqtuuq to indicate that one is travelling to Pangniqtuuq from Iqaluit.

**Kilingajuq**
A man who had to follow rules when his wife was pregnant.

**Kilirmait**
Thin grasses.

**Killuusirngat**
A blade which is made from the sharp metal of a saw blade.

**Kimmuattuq**
The term used by the people of Pangniqtuuq to indicate that one is travelling from Pangniqtuuq to Iqaluit.

**Kiniqsiniq**
Husbands following some of the rules of the wife as she was menstruating.

**Kisuliaq**
Qualities bestowed on a child by a midwife.

**Kullutanittuq**
When you hold your thumb up to the horizon, light is visible below the thumb and the sun is visible above it. The month equivalent to February.

**Kussasuk-**
Be ill-at-ease.
Manniit
[Íglulik] The month of “eggs.” The month equivalent to June. (This month is also called Nurrait.)

Minguktuitit
Shacks for storing meat for dog food (used by the RCMP, HBC and RC church in Mittimatalik in the 1940s).

Miqsaqtuq
Sewing a dog harness or dog trace.

Naannguaq
A snowdrift on the protected side of a rock which is rounded.

Nagliktau-
If a person was being ostracized or neglected, sometimes a spirit, through love and pity, would take the person away and they would disappear.

Najanga
Sister (archaic form for how a brother referred to his sister).

Napa-
Being in an upright position.

Nasaiqtuq, natsiarajaq
Young seal with adult fur on its head, also kiinaqqijuq.

Natsialiaqt

Nattijat, natsiat
[Pangniqtuuq] The month of “seal pups.” The month equivalent to April.

Nikagilugu
To treat someone gently (as though they were fragile).

Nikaginnigilugu
To not treat someone as though they were fragile.

Nikpaq-
To wait for the seal to come to its breathing hole.

Nuaq
A niece or nephew of a woman from her sister or female cousin.

Nukatugaq
Caribou calf about one year old.

Nunu-
Holding back.

Nurrait
Caribou calves; the month of “caribou calves.” The month equivalent to June. In Kivalliq this is May. (This month is also called Manniit.)

Nurralaq
A newborn caribou calf with blackish fur.

Nurrilik
A female caribou with calf.
Nurraq
A first year caribou or muskox calf. Among the Nattilingmiut also the child of a sister of a female.

Nurraqanngittuq
[Pangniqtuuq] A female caribou without a calf. In Iglulik it is nurraittuq.

Paarguliaq
A seal which has strayed and can’t find its breathing hole.

Paggigq
The flesh being torn when a woman is delivering a baby.

Panniq
An adult male caribou; also pangniq.

Pujualuit
A certain mushroom, whose inside, when mature, is powdery (puffball mushroom).

Qaggiq
A large snow house used for gatherings.

Qajaq
A one-person boat.

Qakualaliqtuq, Qujjurujuk
Caribou calf whose fur is thickening for winter.

Qallunaaq
A white person.

Qammaq, qarmaq
A sod house; also a snowhouse with the top covered by a tent.

Qamutik
Dogsled.

Qangattaaksaq, qangattaarjuk
[Mittimatik and Iglulik] The month when “the sun is up in the air.” The month equivalent to February.

Qaummagiaq
[Mittimatik] The month when the sun returns. The month equivalent to January. [Iglulik] Siqinaarut.

Qavaq
Baby seal with lots of fat on its body in Pangniqtuuq. Uqsig in Iglulik.

Qijuttaat
Heather; also iksutit.

Qingajjiniq
Sewing the top of the foot part of a sealskin kamik to the sole.

Qirmirujuk
The blackish fur of a newborn caribou calf.

Qitik -
To play.

Qukturaut
Thigh warmers.

Qulangiqsi-
Waiting at an open seal breathing hole.
Qulittaq
All outer parkas. They could be made of caribou, seal, duck skin etc.

Qulliq
The traditional seal oil lamp.

Qunujuartaq
To be sexually assaulted.

Qutuqtuuk
[Pangniqtuuq] “the two collar bones;” also quturjuuk [Iglulik]. (A combination of four stars: the top ones Capella and Menkalinan., the bottom ones are Castor and Pollux.)

Quuta
Song for the hide-and-seek game equivalent to counting before seeking.

Saggaruut
[Mittimatalk] The month when “the (caribou) hair is thin.” The month equivalent to August. [Iglulik] Akuilliruat is used for August. (Saggaruut is used for July in Iglulik.)

Sailliqujujuq
Tending to sit around too much and do nothing else.

Saki
Mother or father-in-law, as well as your spouse’s aunts and uncles.

Sakiaq
Same gender as yourself, i.e., your husband’s sister, your wife’s brother, as well their equivalent cousins.

Sakiatiaq
The front part of the ribcage.

Sanirarulliq
Young seal with adult fur except on the sides of the body.

Savviaq
Taking a knife with which to scare someone.

Sikussaja
A type of moss from a dried puddle, also quajaut.

Sinaalisimajut
Those that have anchored off the floe edge (whalers).

Siqinnaarut
[Iglulik] The month when the sun returns. The month equivalent to January. [Mittimatalk] Qaummagiaq.

Siqqitiq
Changing one’s way of life; adopting a Christian lifestyle.

Siqqitiqtuq
Wetting with water; baptism (literally; getting into the water).

Sunamirmiq
Young seal with no baby fur.
Talujaaq
A snowdrift which forms a bank around the unprotected side of a rock. Also uluannaq.

Tanniq
A baby seal whose fur is starting to change also mamaaqtuq.

Taqiquaq
Acting like the moon (a children’s game).

Tanigsoqtuq
Communication with a spirit that is unable to ascend.

Tarriassut
Shadow people.

Tauviqjuaq, tauqualuk
[Mittimatalik and Iglulik] Very dark. The month equivalent to December.

Tiigarutinasuk
A kind of children’s game of whipping also ajuktaq.

TikiraatΙtuq
Any wildlife that comes to a camp.

Tikittut
People that arrive.

Tilliq
Expecting to hear news.

Tiluktuut
A wooden stick used for removing snow from boots or skins.

Tirigluit
[Mittimatalik/Iglulik] The month of the “baby bearded seals.” This is mid-May in Mittimatalik and late April, early May in Iglulik.

Tukirummiaq
A solid object, such as a wooden box, that was used to keep the feet of a woman in labour in place.

Tunilattukkuuq
The act of eating at a grave site.

Tunillaut
Something (an offering) that has been given to a grave.

Tunuq
Caribou fat.

Tunulakk
Slipping and falling on your back while walking.

Tunumiaq
A person who supported a pregnant woman’s back during labour.

Tupiqtuut
[Mittimatalik/Iglulik] The month of “setting up tents.” This is late May in Mittimatalik and mid-May in Iglulik.

Tusqutuut
[Mittimatalik and Iglulik] The month when they would “hear from one another.” The month equivalent to November.

Tutturjuk
“The caribou.” (The Big Dipper.)
Tuvaq
Sea ice in its solid form. The sea ice is also considered to be siku, but only when it is broken up.

Uggaqsuq-
Suffer in pain.

Ujjujuk
[Pangniqtuuq] Specific stars which have the appearance of “the bearded seal.”

Ukiaksaaq
Early fall; corresponds to September – October in Iglulik.

Ukiallarik
Real fall in the months of October, November, and December in Pangniqtuuq.

Ukialliruut, ukiuliruut
[Iglulik] The month when “fall is setting in.” The month when the “winter fur (of the caribou) is growing.” The month equivalent to October. [Mittimatilak] Amialiruut.

Ukiaq
Fall; corresponds to November - December in Iglulik.

Ukiaqpasik
Early fall in the month of September in Pangniqtuuq.

Ukiuq
Winter, corresponds to January - February in Iglulik and Pangniqtuuq.

Ullaktut
“Those running after a polar bear.” (The three stars in Orion’s belt.)

Unikkaaqtualurit
“Tell us a story.”

Unikkaaqtuat
Traditional stories.

Unikkaaqtualaurit
Modern stories.

Upirngaallarik
Real spring; May - June in Pangniqtuuq.

Upirngaaq
Spring; corresponds to May - June in Iglulik.

Upirngaksaaq
Early spring; corresponds to March - April in Iglulik and Pangniqtuuq.

Uqalurat
Snowdrift that has formed to be shaped like a tongue.

Uqamminiq
A person who is linguistically agile.

Uqsuq
Oil, blubber.

Uqsuutaaq
A children’s game of stamina otherwise known as “Qajaqatiik kinnguviit?”