THE SHAMAN'S SHARE, OR INUIT SEXUAL COMMUNISM IN THE CANADIAN CENTRAL ARCTIC

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Translated by Jane Philibert

Abstract: Contemporary anthropology has had difficulties in classifying or interpreting Mauss and Beuchat's *Essay on Seasonal Variations in Eskimo Societies*, and has mostly remembered the seasonal dualism of the social morphology. It is tempting to discover in this *Essay* the underlying influence of Mauss's own political commitment and his leanings toward a humanistic socialism. Fascinated as he was by the intensity of the winter social life of the Inuit, in all economic, jural, religious and sexual domains, Mauss does not hesitate to call it sexual and economic communism, as opposed to the summer individualism of conjugal families. In the light of recent ethnographic data, concerning the central Arctic Inuit exchange of spouses, in both the restricted form between couples and the generalized one during the winter solstice festival (which Mauss viewed as the crux of social communion), the author proposes to transcend the somewhat reductionist dualism of the *Essay*, employing a ternary and hierarchical approach, inspired in part by Louis Dumont. The figure of the shaman, a "third gender" and mediator, then appears as the main operator of spouse-exchanges, in a context of sexual markings imposed upon women and communal violence inflicted on young people, particularly young couples. These have to undergo the sharing of their production, of their offspring and of their sexuality, for the benefit of older people, mature men and especially shamans. Individualism and communism are then in a conjunctive relationship not only in the dualistic play of seasons, but mostly in an unequal dynamic of sexes and generations, through the mediation and power of male shamans.

Résumé: En arrière-plan de l'Essai de Mauss et Beuchat sur les variations saisonnières des sociétés eskimos (inuit) que l'anthropologie contemporaine ne sait pas très bien comment classer ou interpréter, et dont le dualisme saisonnier de la morphologie a surtout retenu, ne pourrait-on déceler l'influence de l'engagement politique de Mauss et sa prédilection pour un socialisme à visage humain? Fasciné par l'intensité de la vie sociale des Inuit, que ce soit dans les domaines économique, juridique, re-

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Fig. 1(a). Drawing of Aatuat's tattooed face made from a photograph taken in 1974 when she made a brief visit to Igloolik. The drawing accentuates the facial tattoos, which were sometimes hard to distinguish on her worn and wrinkled skin (she was born about 1894). Radiating from the nose and mouth, the tattoos on the forehead (*Qaujjaq*), on the cheeks (*Uluagutiik*), the chin (*Tadlurutiit*), and at the corners of the mouth (*Iqiruti*), are considered by some to be a homage to the sun (*Siqiniq*). As well as on her face, Aatuat had tattoos on her shoulders (*Tuirutiit*), arms (*Aksaqqurutiit*), hands (*Aggautirutiit*) and thighs (*Qukturarutiit*) down to the knees.

Fig. 1(b). The twisted face, half laughing, half serious, is made while looking towards the sun when it hides behind the clouds, in order to vex it, make it emerge from its retreat, make it angry so that it will cast its rays on humans. Photograph of Iqallijuq taken at Igloolik (1983).

ligieux ou sexuel, Mauss n'hésite pas à parler à leur sujet de communisme économique et sexuel qu'il oppose à l'individualisme estival des familles conjugales. À la lumière de données ethnographiques récentes provenant de l'arctique canadien et concernant notamment l'échange inuit des conjoints, qu'il s'agisse d'échange restreint entre couples ou d'échange généralisé lors des fêtes du solstice d'hiver, que Mauss considérait comme le summum de la communion sociale, on propose de dépasser le dualisme un peu réducteur de l'*Essai*, à l'aide d'une approche ternaire et hiérarchique inspirée en partie de L. Dumont. La figure du chamane «troisième sexe» et médiateur apparait alors comme l'opérateur principal des échanges de conjoints, sur un fond de marquage sexuel imposé aux femmes, et de violence communiste faite aux jeunes, aux jeunes couples en particulier, qui se voient imposer le partage de leur production, de leur progéniture et de leur sexualité, au profit des gens plus âges, des hommes mûrs et surtout des chamanes. Individualisme et communisme se conjuguent alors, non seulement dans le jeu dualiste des saisons mais surtout dans une dynamique inégale des sexes et des générations, à travers la médiation et le pouvoir des hommes chamanes.

I shall take the concept of "communism"[1] as applied to the Inuit from Marcel Mauss and Henri Beuchat's *Essai sur les variations saisonnières des sociétés eskimos* of 1906.[2] Strangely, this most daring and brilliant theoretical interpretation ever attempted on the subject of the Inuit[3] is not mentioned in the recent volume of the *Handbook of North American Indians* which is devoted to the Inuit,[4] even in the bibliography. Mauss and Beuchat see in this "communism" the main distinguishing mark of the Inuit's winter social life, and they place it in opposition to summer's "individualism" in their presentation of Inuit social dualism, which has, since the publication of the *Essai*, become a classic example in anthropology. Where summer's prevailing individualism is concerned, our two authors note, among various customs, the generalized practice of adoption:

> The Eskimos are one of the peoples among whom the practice of adoption is taken the furthest; yet it would be neither possible nor useful if winter's close community persisted all year. . . . If the nuclear family did not periodically take the place of the wider family, there would be no reason for married people without children to bother themselves about their future fate. . . . They would therefore feel no need to adopt either a young relative, or an outsider, in order to ensure they will be taken care of in their old age. (Mauss and Beuchat 1973:468-469)*

According to them, the logic of adoption stems from summer's social organization, which takes the form of small social units consisting of the nuclear family; however, it is not bounded by the summer season, but extends into

winter's social organization, which is expressed in the large units making up the communal houses and extended families.

In a previous publication (Saladin d'Anglure 1988b) I have made a detailed analysis of the structure and functions of Inuit adoption practices, based on the Iglulik example.[5] This analysis enabled me to show that, from the point of view of the donors, usually young couples at the beginning of their reproductive life, adoption should be considered not as a mark of individualism but as a social tribute exacted by the group from fertile young couples for the benefit of the infertile (for reasons of sterility or age) or the bereaved. I shall return to this divergence of interpretation.

The authors of the *Essai* also note the "sexual communism" implicit in "spouse exchange"[6] as one of the characteristic elements of Inuit winter communism. The concept of sexual communism must be seen in the context in which the *Essai* was written, and interpreted not only in relation to the anthropological ideas of the turn of the century, but also in relation to Mauss's political and intellectual commitment to a kind of socialism which was closer to that of Jaurès than to that of Marx (cf. Karady 1968 and Birnbaum 1972). The evolutionist theories of Morgan (1877), which, as we know, inspired Engels and Marx, postulated an original state of "sexual promiscuity," followed by the development of the "conjugal family" and then by a state in which what he calls "group marriage," combining polygyny and polyandry, prevailed. Those social practices which Rivers believed he recognized among the Todas (1906, 1914) led him to put forward the term "sexual communism" as a way to describe them. Mauss seems to have adopted the usage, as, later, did Lowie, who devoted 12 pages of his *Primitive Society* to sexual communism. Spouse exchange occurred among the Inuit in a private, domestic form, and in a public, collective form, particularly on the occasion of the winter solstice festivals held in the big ceremonial igloo called the *Kashim* or *Qaggiq*:[7]

> The *Kashim* [Qaggiq] is exclusively a winter structure. This perfectly demonstrates the distinctive nature of winter life [Mauss and Beuchat 1973:429]. . . . [It] is always and essentially a public place which expresses the unity of the group. This unity is so strong, in fact, that inside the *Kashim* [Qaggiq] the individuality of families and private households disappears; they lose themselves by blending indistinguishably into one another, into the mass of society [ibid.:446]. . . . The winter establishment lives, so to speak, in a state of continual religious exaltation. . . . The least little event requires the more or less solemn intervention of magicians, *angekoks* [angakkuq] [ibid.:444]. The winter solstice festivals [celebrated in the *qaggiq*] are always and everywhere accompanied by very important phenomena of sexual licence. . . . Now sexual communism is a form of communion, and perhaps the most intimate possible form [ibid.:447]. . . . What best establishes . . . that true kinship exists between the members of the same station is the practice of wife exchange. We hear of it in almost every Eskimo society. These exchanges take place in winter between all

> the men and all the women of the station [ibid.:459]. . . . Outside these general exchanges between all the members of a group, which are more properly sexual rites, there are other more or less permanent ones between private individuals for private reasons. Some take place in the winter house, others are contracted before people break up in June with a view to the summer season. . . . Men who have entered into such exchanges become adoptive brothers, the exchanged women are considered to be each other's sisters; and the same applies to any offspring of such unions [ibid.:461].**

Sexual communism, which corresponds so remarkably with the economic communism also practised in winter, is seen by Mauss and Beuchat as the high point of Inuit social life, whether as collective rite or as private exchange between couples. Where, then, does this interpretation stand now, eighty years after it was formulated? Has it been confirmed or refuted by the considerable ethnographic research carried out since then? When we look at the results of such research, we have to admit that in spite of an abundant literature on Inuit social organization, and particularly on kinship, no author has truly succeeded in reviving the debate on the basis of new ethnographic data.[8]

In an attempt to reopen this important question and explore new interpretive paths, I shall draw on some of the classic authors. Lévi-Strauss (1958, 1962) has dealt with the formal question of dualism and its limits, Dumont (1983) with dualism in relation to the opposition of individualism and communalism and Bastide (1973) with dualism in the context of the relationship between sexuality and religion. Hutchinson (1977) and Balandier (1988) have discussed the way it is expressed in the logic of inversion apparent in the rituals dealing with order and disorder in traditional societies. I shall also turn to the work of younger researchers such as Tcherkézoff (1983). The latter attempts to go beyond the logic of binary distinctions leading to the concept of inversion, by substituting for it a logic of hierarchical distinctions, borrowed from Dumont; this enables him to make use of totalizing third terms as part of the system. My earlier work on the three-part system of social genders, of shamanism and Inuit adoption (Saladin d'Anglure 1985, 1986, 1988a, 1988b) arises from similar preoccupations.

In order to enter into the subject of Inuit sexual communism, which is all the more difficult to tackle in that it is marked, in the West, not only by a long tradition of abusive colonial practice but also by sexual repression induced by Victorian Judeo-Christian morality (as Guemple [1986] so aptly points out), I shall give some recent ethnographic data on a type of collective festival, known to the Iglulik Inuit by the name of *Tivajuut*, involving grotesque masquerades, transvestism and ritual spouse exchange. I shall point out the predominant role played by the shamans (clearly perceived by Boas 1888, 1901 and 1907, Kleivan 1960 and Kjellstrom 1973). I shall compare that role with the shamanic cure for infertility in couples and shamanic prerogatives in matters of sexual services or collective spouse exchanges when serious disorder

threatens the group's survival. Finally, I shall bring out the considerable part played by the shaman in private spouse exchanges. I have gathered accounts of all these aspects of traditional social and religious life from former shamans or direct descendants of shamans in the Iglulik area, descendants, in fact, of the very ones who, at the start of the century, supplied Captain Comer with data for Boas—thus the data used by Mauss and Beuchat—or, in the 1920s, Rasmussen and his team.

The Shaman and Ritual Spouse Exchange[9]

I shall attempt to throw light on the shaman's part in ritual spouse exchange, one of the elements of the *Tivajuut* festival, by situating this festival in its ideological, social and economic context; in order to do this, I shall begin by discussing the sexual marking which forms the background to, and one of the premises of the exchange.

Sexual Marking as a Premise of the Exchange

In 1971, when carrying out research at Iglulik, I collected my first data on the *Tivajuut* festival (involving spouse exchange) from the lips of an old informant, Ujaraq, son of the shamans Aava and Urulu. In 1922-23 he had known Rasmussen well, and Rasmussen had, in his list of names, given his age at that time as about 16. Although for this old *inuk* the Tivajuut festivals were no more than childhood memories, and he had never taken part in ritual exchanges as such, he clearly remembered accompanying his mother to a *Qaggiq* at Pingiqqalik (in the Iglulik region) (cf. map, Fig. 2), to attend a festival with masked and disguised dancers (Tivajuut). Ujaraq himself had been disguised, dressed and coiffed like a girl, when he was young, but this was because of his "anthroponymic" identity, in other words, because of the names of female ancestors he had received at birth. As he belonged to a great shaman family (both his parents, two of his uncles and two of his sisters were shamans), he would no doubt have become one himself had his parents not become Christian converts in the same year as Rasmussen's visit. When closely questioned by me, he advised me to talk to his older sister Aatuat, who lived in a neighbouring village in northern Baffin Island. I therefore invited her, in 1974, to come to Igloolik, her birthplace, which she very much wanted to see again.

The Inscription of Ritual Exchange in Myth and Territorial Landmarks

Aatuat was a former shaman, and also one of the last women in the area with tattoos in the old style over her whole body. When I questioned her, she gave me an account of a Tivajuut festival on the island of Igloolik in which, as an adolescent, she had taken part.[10] Her account begins as follows:

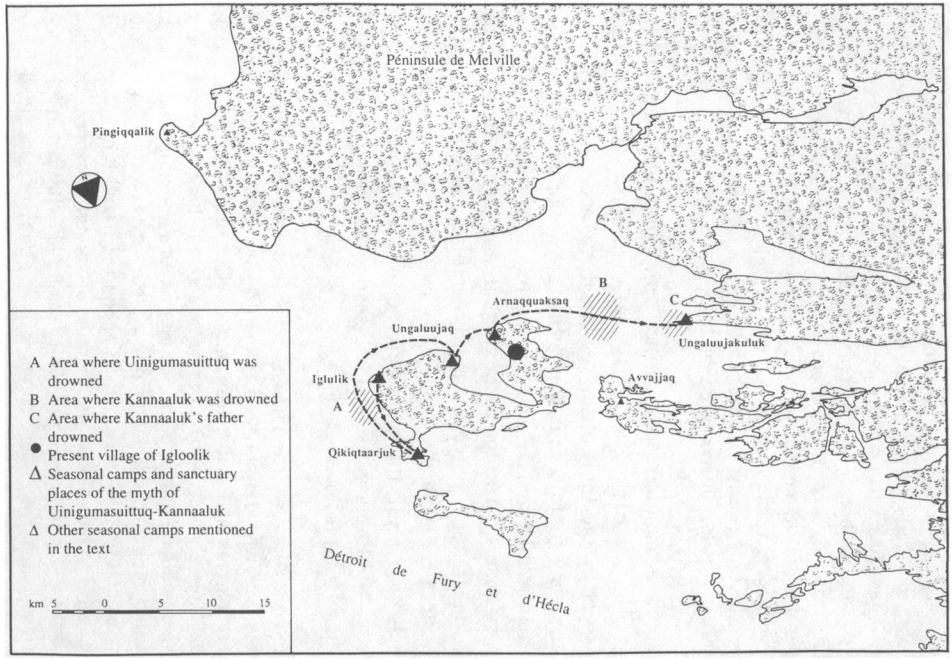


Fig. 2. The island of Igloolik with the Melville Peninsula opposite. It shows the sanctuary places mentioned in the myth of origin of the human races and the marine mammals, including Arnaqquaksaq, site of the *Tivajuut* festival. Another site, Avvajjaq, is the winter camp abandoned after the death of the great Iktuksarjuat.

takanani Arnaqquaksaani qaggijualuuvalaurmata; qaggilijuraaluu&utik tavvani taakua angutiik marruuk akirariik idluriik kunikpa&&utik angallu Ivalu Qaumaullu angutiqativinikuluga taakkuangu&utik sivulliqpaangulaurmatik . . . tavvali taikkungaqtualuugatta qaggialummut ungir&araalummik nivingajuqaq&uni. Tavva ikumaaluk qudliq qudlikuluk ikummaksaulluni ikumadluanga tavva imanna angijualummik kataqaq&uni . . . tavalli aputiruluit sanajau&utik tavvauna kataup qanigijagut. . . .

There, at Arnaqquaksaq, it was our custom to hold celebrations in a *qaggiq*. When the celebrations had really begun in the *qaggiq*, two men, two adversaries, two *idlurriik* [adversaries in singing and fighting duels, or cross cousins of the same sex] would embrace. My maternal uncle,[11] Ivalu, and my paternal parallel cousin Qaumauk, were the first adversaries to confront one another.[12] A large number of us made our way to the *qaggiq* where a big laced skin filled with "high" walrus meat had been hung up. The light came from a small oil lamp—this was the only source of light. There was a very large entrance, and near the entrance two pillars of snow were built.

This took place at Arnaqquaksaq, a former camp, now unoccupied, on the island (see map, Fig. 2). Arnaqquaksaq is part of a network of sanctuaries held in great respect by the Inuit of the region; there, according to tradition, lived the great mythical figure Kannaaluk ("the great woman from below"), the mistress of marine mammals.[13] The place name itself refers to this mythical being, as it designates her in the metaphorical language of the shaman, in rituals, charms, incantations, prayers, magic formulae, sacred chants and in certain myths. Literally, it means "she who will play the role of an old woman."[14] She is, above all, the main heroine of a myth found throughout the central Arctic, a summary of which, based on a version collected at Igloolik (cf. Kupaq 1973) follows:

The story is about a young woman known, in the first episode of the myth, as Uinigumasuittuq (she who did not wish to marry). She lived on the island of Iglulik with her parents and refused all suitors. One day the family's dog transformed itself into a young man and came on a visit to her home; they spent the night together and he returned often, without anyone knowing who he was. When she became pregnant, her father discovered the visitor's identity and banished the unnatural couple to a small neighbouring island [Qikiqtaarjuk[15]] where she gave birth to half-human, half-canine offspring. However, after her father had caused the dog to drown, she had to scatter her children in all directions. The various human races and some of the spirits are descended from them. . . . In a second episode [which took place in the summer camp of Ungaluujaq[16]], at her mother's instigation she married a petrel in human form who took her to another part of the island of Iglulik [to Arnaqquaksaq]. Unhappy with the bird-man, she ran away with the help of her father. The petrel, in a rage, caused a great storm to blow up, and the father, to escape it, threw his daughter into the sea, put out one of her eyes, and cut through the joints of her fingers when she tried to grasp the side of the skin boat. She sank to the bottom of the sea and her finger joints became the sea mammals. In de-

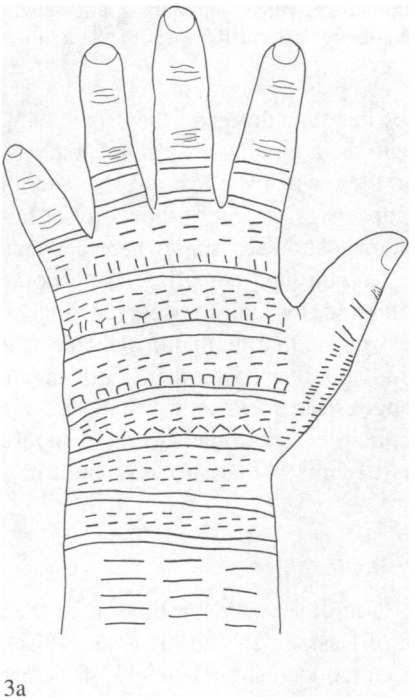
> spair, her father [who had reached the mainland at Ungaluujakuluk[17]] allowed the tide to cover him and went to join his daughter and the dog [cf. Saladin d'Anglure 1988a:31-32].

For having wanted to retain control of her sexuality, and then for having given herself up to unnatural alliances with the animal world, Kannaaluk was deprived of her monstrous offspring, and then, when she lost one eye and all her fingers, of her woman's productive capacity. Cast out of the world of humans, living as she now does at the bottom of the sea somewhere between Arnaqquaksaq and Ungaluujakuluk, she has, through her offspring, become the ancestor of all the races of humankind and, through her severed fingers, transformed into sea animals, the mistress of the marine mammals. Her near presence and her power, only operative in the darkness, in other words in late fall and early winter, when the sun no longer rises, form, as we shall see, one of the most significant, though partly implicit,[18] backgrounds to ritual spouse exchange and to the *Tivajuut* festivities at Iglulik,[19] that shrine of Inuit mythology.

The Inscription of Exchange on Women's Bodies

Aatuat's memories go back to about 1910, in other words, a little more than 10 years before the arrival in the region of Rasmussen and his team (1921). The narrator, then aged about 16, had been tattooed shortly before, if we are to go by the account she gave me of this important female rite of passage, which she was obliged to undergo at puberty, when she had had her first menses. She had been told that one had to submit to it if one wanted to become a "beautiful woman."[20] According to other informants, one had to be tattooed so that after menopause it would still be possible to tell the women from the men. One had to have fine facial tattoos (cf. Fig. 1a) in order to please Siqiniq ("sister sun"), who, in the next world, punished those without them by blackening their faces by burning or with tar.[21] One had to have beautiful tattooed hands (cf. Figs. 3a and 3b) to please Kannaaluk[22] when, after death, one passed through her dwelling place on the way to *Qimiujaq*, the underworld of the dead.

The painful tattooing operation (Kakiniq), performed by inserting needles and introducing a mixture of oil and soot under the skin, took two years to complete. Under the supervision of her paternal grandmother (Atajuarjugusiq), six kinswomen, namely, her mother Urulu, Angugaattiaq, Ujaattaq, Kadluk and Aligiuq, had carried out the operation on the less accessible parts of her body and produced the first motifs on the sides of her limbs. She herself then produced the mirror image of these motifs (after Autut had traced the outline on her skin for her), thus completing the inscription on her own body of the indelible mark of femininity, the sexual marking of women. While for women tattooing was a generic marking which established them as



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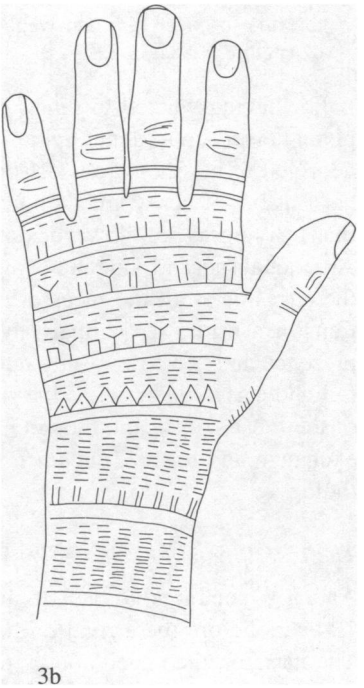


3b

Fig. 3(a). Representation of Aatuat's left hand drawn by the author.

Fig. 3(b). Pakaq's left hand after K. Rasmussen (1929). Whereas in the 1940s there were still about 40 heavily tattooed women in the area close to Igloolik, I met only 2 in the 1970s.

women, as wives and potential procreators, for men it represented an exceptional marking, the marking of an exploit such as killing an enemy or a large whale; in the former case the tattoo was a transverse line at the base of the nose, or a tiny human figure on the hand or shoulder; in the second case, a mark on the shoulder has been mentioned.[23]

The Inscription of Exchange in Aatuat's Drawing

Realizing the interest of these data, the author filed them with other documents from this exceptional informant—exceptional by reason of her status, her memory and her life-history—and waited for an opportunity to analyze them (Aatuat died in 1976, two years after the data were recorded). Then in 1986 there appeared the catalogue of an exhibition of Inuit drawings collected in 1964 from a number of villages in north Baffin Land.[24] To my great surprise I found in it a drawing made by Aatuat (in 1964 she was living in Arctic

Bay, Tununirusiq, more than a 100 kilometres from her place of birth in Iglulik) with the following title: "gathering in the igloo" (cf. Figs. 4 and 5). The editor, J. Blodgett, noted that the original had been lost and a photograph had been used to reproduce it. In the introduction to the book she made the following remarks (p. 23):

> Atoat [Aatuat] of Arctic Bay, one of the oldest artists represented in the collection, was herself tattooed, and she shows a tattooed figure in one of her drawings that was illustrated in Ryan's *Canadian Art* article. . . . In the drawing, the figure, the only one with tattoos [*sic*],[25] stands facing us near the entrance of the crowded igloo. The dress of this figure is not entirely consistent with that of the other women and the tattooed face seems almost masklike. Could this possibly be a representation of *Qailertetang*—a masked figure that traditionally appeared during the Baffin Island Sedna Festival?[26] As described by Franz Boas in *The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay*, *Qailertetang* is "represented by a man dressed in woman's costume and wearing a mask made of sealskin" (p. 140). In *The Central Eskimo* (fig. 146) Boas's illustration of the *Qailertetang* figure, made from his own sketch, clearly shows the tattoo marks on the sealskin mask which match those on the face of the figure in the Atoat [Aatuat] drawing. (Blodgett 1986:23)

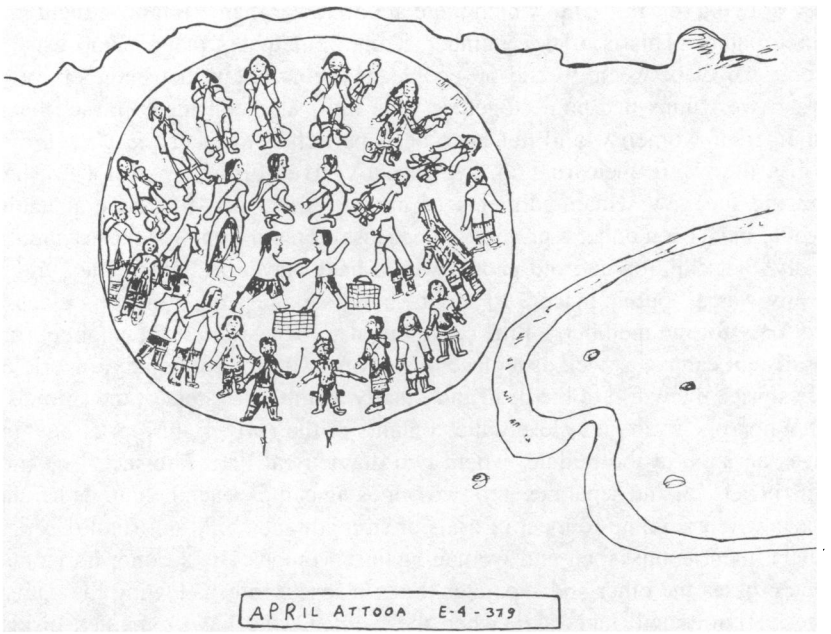


Fig. 4. Reproduction of Aatuat's drawing: *Gathering in the Igloo*. (Original: graphite, 50.6 x 65.5 cm). (Cf. Blodgett 1986:fig. 5). At bottom is shown the month the drawing was made, April (1964), the name of the artist, Attooa (Aatuat), and her identification number E-4-379.

The more I looked at this drawing, the more details I recognized from the account Aatuat gave me in 1974 of the *Tivajuut* festival at Arnaqquaksaq (10 years after making the drawing). What is more, beside the ceremonial igloo, one can easily make out in the drawing the contours of a map which anyone familiar with the Igloolik area will recognize as part of the island of Igloolik, showing the Arnaqquaksaq camp and the mainland coastline opposite (the Melville peninsula) (cf. Fig. 2). There could no longer be any shadow of doubt; the account she had given me was a faithful description of the content of the drawing, and the drawing was a graphic representation of her adolescent memories. This spurred me strongly to go back to the account and compare its elements not only with the drawing, but with all the other available data including the description of the *Tivajuut* festival at Pingiqqalik given by her younger brother, Ujaraq; another, published by Rasmussen in his monograph on the *Iglulik* (1929), given by the shaman Aava, father of Aatuat and Ujaraq; a short account by their shaman uncle Ivaluarjuk (cf. Mathiassen 1928:227-228); and finally the descriptions edited by Boas—and used by Mauss and Beuchat—quoted above by Blodgett.

At the very start of her narrative, Aatuat recalls a great gathering in the *Qaggiq* or ceremonial igloo for festivals and games, and this is confirmed by her drawing (cf. Fig. 5) in which there are no fewer than 20 figures, including three babies. This is a large number, if one remembers that a camp usually consisted of between 30 and 60 people. It seems likely that members of at least two camps had come together. One must also consider the fact that a number of women would not have been permitted to enter the *Qaggiq* because they were menstruating, had recently given birth or had not finished sewing the new winter garments of caribou skin; also that several adults would have been under a prohibition because of mourning or sickness and, finally, that children and old people would have stayed at home. The *Qaggiq* really was a "public place," to adopt Mauss's expression, a meeting place,[27] not only for the members of the camp but also for visitors from neighbouring or distant camps, as well as a place of meeting with the supernatural world of the spirits, the world of the dead and, finally, with the masters of the animals.

When one examines closely the contents of the *Qaggiq*, in Fig. 5, one notices an axis, in the middle, where two diametrical lines intersect. The first line is vertical and separates into two opposing camps, each behind its herald, those who are going to meet in trials of strength and skill (as I shall describe later), men against men and women against women. The second, horizontal line crosses the other and separates the two sexes, foreshadowing the course the festivities will take later, when the women, who have remained inside, will be paired off with the men, who will have gone outside. The pairing-off will, however, be according to the men's wishes—truly a redistribution of the women by the men. At the entrance, the masked dancers remain outside these

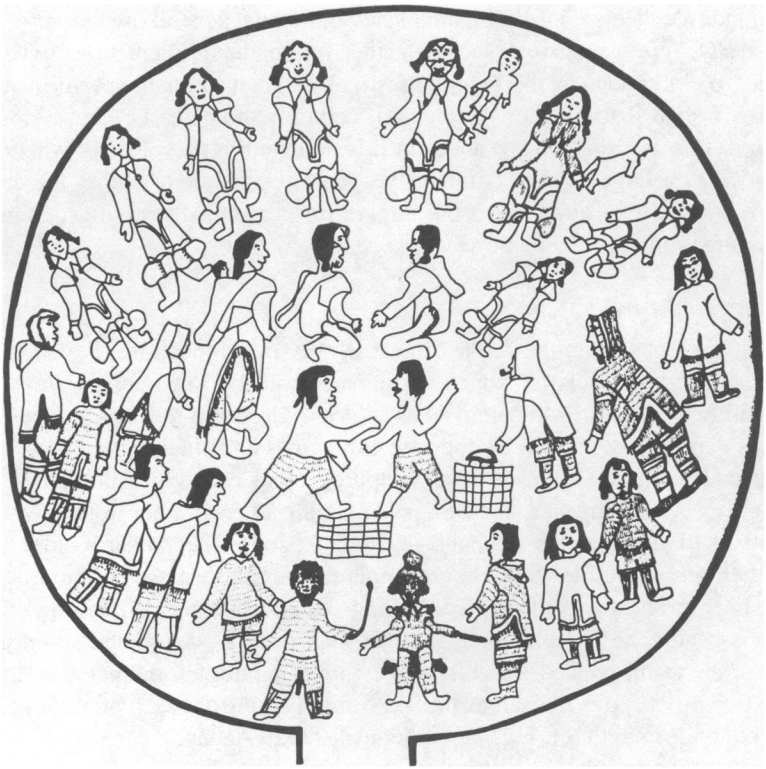


Fig. 5. Games and trials of strength at the *Tivajuut* festival. In the middle of the *Qaggiq* two men are boxing. Behind, two women face each other in games of skill and endurance. In the foreground two male shamans, in masks. These are the *Tivajuut* who will pair off the couples. These festivals were organized in late fall, usually at the winter solstice. After Aatuat's drawing.

divisions, and stand to announce the matches they have made in a characteristically ambiguous middle position. The fact of their being men, shamans and controllers of the festival places this position at the top of the hierarchy.[28]

Another kind of sharing, of raw frozen meat (in this case high walrus meat) was obligatory on these occasions,[29] and took the form of a feast. People therefore waited until a particularly successful walrus or caribou hunt enabled them to dip unstintingly into their food stores before they organized such feasts. The laced skin (*ungirlaaq*) in fact comes from a cache built of stones where walrus meat wrapped and laced up in its own skin has been kept for several months waiting for some occasion, a festival, or necessity, to provide a reason for its

long-delayed consumption. This gamy meat was delicious to the Inuit, who often made a collective meal of it after sending round a general invitation.[30]

The *Qaggiq* was also a place to gather for shamanic mediations, whether collective rites such as the *Tivajuut* festival, or great shamanic performances, which I shall discuss later. One could, certainly, hold feasts, duels, singing with drums and shaman's séances in private dwellings, especially when two igloos had a large enough common vestibule for people to gather there, but there was nothing quite like a big *qaggiq* for communal festivities, community games and big shamanic séances.

Exchanging Adversaries

In Aatuat's narrative, the feast of meat is only mentioned after the strength- and skill-testing duels for which participants split into two camps, lining up behind two adversaries recognized as *Idluriik*. This term means cross-cousins of the same sex,[31] as well as opponents in games and singing, who also have a special relation with each other for purposes of economic and spouse exchange.[32] As it happened, the first pair to confront each other in this way are relatives of Aatuat, both shamans—Qaumauk, son of her father's older half-brother, and Ivalu, her father's cousin, and it is they we see in the drawing (cf. Figs. 5 and 6), bare-chested, boxing with each other. When one of the pair is beaten, he is replaced by another man from his team, and so on until one of the teams concedes victory. The women are not left out but also divide into two groups, one in each team, and similarly confront each other in games of skill and strength (cf. Fig. 7); but let us listen to Aatuat:

> Qaumaup tapinivaangi&&utik Ivaluup nasapingit avanii&&utik imanna iglugiiliq&utik angutillu arnallu . . . nipama&&utik tivajuuraalunnik . . . . taakkua angutiit tigluutilaukata&&utik . . . tavva piqata saalaummat taitsumatauq saalagijaujut tapingilli tapili tavva . . . nungummata tiglulauq&utik amma taakkua arnat taakkua nuliangit amma tavva tavvuunatuit taliqpit nuitijjunillutik. . . .
>
> Qaumauk's friends were lined up on one side and Ivalu's on the other, forming two opposing teams, each including men and women. . . . The two *tivajuut* had not yet arrived. . . . The men now had to box, hitting each other on the temples. . . . When one of them lost, another man from his team took his place and the fight began again . . . until one of them was left with no one to fight him, and then the women, their wives, followed on and fought by hitting one another on the shoulder.

Aatuat remembered that she and her older sister Nujaqtut (also a shaman) were on the same team as their father Aava; the latter having beaten all his opponents, and the women of the opposing team having all been beaten in their turn, she changed sides and fought against her sister, their father's favourite. Aatuat did not like her father very much because she had been given for adoption (*sic*). And now, against all expectations, she not only beat

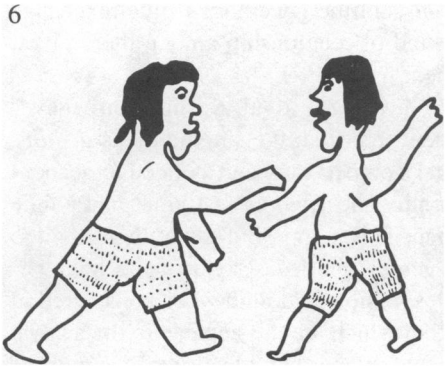


Fig. 6. Two men adversaries meet in an Inuit boxing match (*tigluutijut*); one gives the other a blow on the temple with the palm of his hand; the other must receive it without flinching and return a similar blow. They thus continue hitting each other in turn until one of them gives up or falls down (detail of Aatuat's drawing).

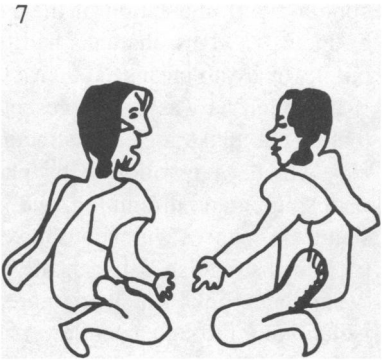


Fig. 7. Two women adversaries face each other in an Inuit game of endurance (*pilliqtaqtut*). They must raise and lower their bodies by alternately bending and straightening their legs, while singing, for as long as possible. Women could also box like the men, except that they hit each other on the shoulder (detail from Aatuat's drawing).

her sister but also the other women, her former team-mates. She was the namesake of her mother's brother, killed long ago by a rifle shot; he had at that time just entered into an *Idluriik* relationship with the shaman Ivaluarjuk, the narrator's paternal uncle. At this point in her story, she made the following remark: "The function of the confrontations was to purify the camps of sickness and strengthen people's health and energy!" Knud Rasmussen (1929:231-232) writes on the subject of the *Idluriik* (whom he calls "singing cousins"):

> When they meet, they must exchange costly gifts, here also endeavouring each to surpass the other in extravagant generosity. Song cousins regard themselves as so intimately associated that whenever they meet, they change wives for the duration of their stay. On first meeting after a prolonged absence, they must embrace and kiss each other by rubbing noses.[33] . . . [They criticize each other in their songs] but behind all such castigation there must be a touch of humour, for mere abuse in itself is barren. . . . Sometimes the songs are accompanied by a kind of boxing, the parties striking each other with their fists, first on the shoulders, then in the face.

Are we not, with the *Idluriik*, these exchanging adversaries who regularly exchange not only their spouses but also "words" (their derisive songs) and goods, at the point where limited (common or private) exchange and ritual exchange intersect, since here they are opening a collective séance which will

continue with the action of the *Tivajuut* and the generalized ritual exchange of spouses? Many shamans had this kind of relationship among themselves, but it was by no means exclusive to them.

Although he was never present at a *Tivajuut* festival, Rasmussen believes that he can make a clear distinction between, first, the singing duels of *Idluriik*, which were followed by physical competitions and collective séances with singing and drumming, and, secondly, the *Tivajuut* festivities and public shamanic séances with spouse exchange. This author thinks that by trying too hard to distinguish between the two genres one loses sight of the links between them, links which are more or less visible and fluid when considered in isolation, or through a single version, but which are inescapable to the analyst as soon as several versions are compared, when they blend into one another in most cases. If we take all the accounts of the *Tivajuut*s and spouse exchanges as a whole, we see that according to the place, the period and the circumstances various combinations come into play which nevertheless form a system. It is in fact after a boxing tournament, a contest of skills and a feast that Aatuat situates the arrival of the *Tivajuut* at Arnaqquaksaq. Her younger brother Ujaraq, in his account of the collective festival at Pingiqqalik (a large camp 30 kilometres south of Iglulik, on the mainland) situates the time of their arrival after a session of singing and drumming. Their father Aava and their paternal uncle Ivaluarjuk, when questioned by Rasmussen and Mathiassen, gave only a general description situated neither in time nor in space,[34] although they did say it applied to the Iglulik region. Boas (1888), on the other hand, describes a sequence of rituals and festivities (intended to secure the favour of Sedna) lasting no less than three days; now, we find at Iglulik most of the same rituals and feasts but with different functions, which could certainly be combined, but which are autonomous in time and space.

The Operators of the Ritual Exchange

One of the main characteristics of the *Tivajuut* festivals is sexual grotesquerie;[35] it appears in all the descriptions I have studied from the Iglulik territory and the rest of the Canadian Central Arctic. It took the form of a masquerade with at least two male shamans in masks. One of them, disguised as a woman, took the woman's part, and the other, rigged out with enormous sexual attributes, that of the man. Both tried to make the audience laugh by acting out a grotesque sexual encounter. This is how Aatuat described the *Tivajuut*:

> tavva tivajuup angutauniqsaq aqpakaq&uni tanna qiggilauk&uniuk amma taanna arnannguaruluk tunninnguaqaq&uni qirniqtaaluulluni taanna qualluqtarulunnik marruinnaalunnik tunninnguaqaq&uni matumingungaaq nagjumik anautaqaq&uni [paniqtumik] tavva kagatsaqsuarami taanna piksigarjunikut taqanna mumiq&utik ningiuqtaalutik taimanna uqajjaq: "Tivaju katuma, tivaju

katuma, kunigii-aa-lugit, kunigiittia-ttumarikkaa alugii-ttia-ttumarikkaa kisumittu-kanna aittuqtaulil mamirmiittu-kanna aittuqtaulil.''

Then the masked *Tivajuut* who is dressed up as a man runs in after jumping [over the little snow pillar], followed by the other, the one disguised as a woman, with tattoos on his cheeks [*tunnit*[36]] he has a black [mask] with two very white imitation facial tattoos [see Fig. 8], she holds in her hand a snow stick in caribou antler, while the man holds a short whip in his hand made of dried walrus skin [see Figs. 9 and 10]. The man jumps over the pillar, making threatening gestures, and they dance. Then everyone starts to sing: ''Let this *Tivajuut* embrace them, let him embrace them well, lick them well, let us give him something, give him some wicks [for oil lamps].''

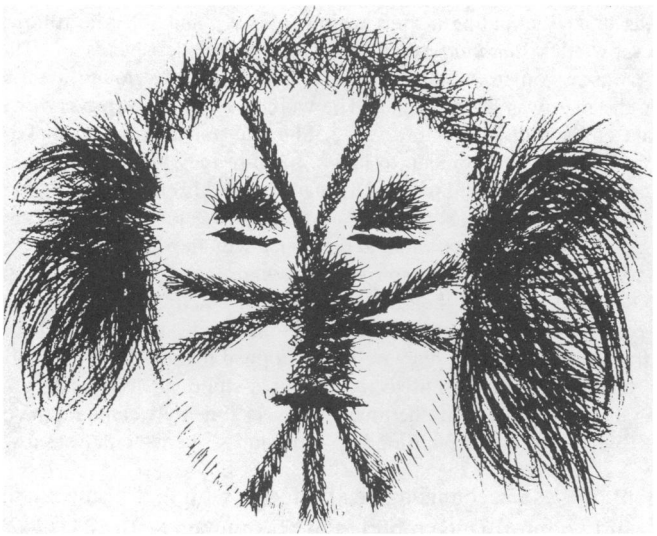


Fig. 8. *Tivajuut* mask (*kiinappaq*) representing a woman's face, usually worn by a shaman in female disguise. The background is white hair, taken from the belly of a female caribou killed in summer, and the contrasting dark parts (taken from the back of the same skin) represent the hair, eyebrows, nose and tattoos. There is an opening for the mouth, nose and eyes. Drawing after a replica made at Igloolik in 1971 of the masks used at the beginning of the century. Height 27 cm.

Ujaraq (1971), her younger brother, adds the following details about the *tivajuut*'s outfits:

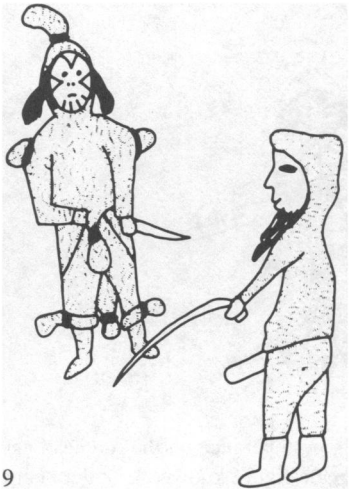
annuraaqtiaqsimanngialu&uni angutiruluugaluaq arnaruluugaluarlu taanna annuraaqtiaqsimanngialu&uni . . . taanna sivulliuniqsaq tiigarutiqaq&uni taanna kingulliuniqsaq anautaqaq&uni saumingaarminullu tigumiaq&unikku . . . arnaunasugilauqtaraliuna Qumangat sunauvva angutikuluk tainna angutiujaqtuq

> Kasarnaq . . . arnaullu annuraarulugaluangit ippalualirmata aturunnainikutuinnavinirnik . . . illaqtittinarasu&utik makuninga illaqtailimanasukkaluarlutilli . . . illaqqujimut qungaqujimuttauq . . . angiliaqtuvinaaluummataukua qilaksimallugit . . . taanna akunnguaqaq&unilu kininnguaqaq&unilu taimanna qilaksimallutik imanna kinaummangaatik ilisarnatailimallutik tuurngaujaanguarasu&utik kiinappasimaalu&utik . . . nasarsimattiasutillu . . . usunngualiqsimalluniluuna suuqaima qungannarasuktualuugamik . . . taanalu qilaksimajumik pikuuna annuraangata ilanganik . . . taannali nuliannguanga arnganguarasutuinnaq&unili . . . mumiruluujaliq&utillu qungatitsinasumut . . . mumikata&uni una usua aulatuinnaq&unili . . . ikkuaguuq aninialiraangamik nuliannguangataguuq anautalijarami uimiguuq tavva usunnguangagut.
>
> He really looked like a nasty man with clothes in very poor condition. . . . The other really looked like a horrible woman with very nasty clothes. . . . The one who was first was holding a short whip [*tiigaruti*], and she who followed him held a snow stick [*anautaq*], they held them in their left hands. . . . The one I thought was a woman was Qumangat, although it was a young man; the one playing the man was Kasarnaq. . . . The woman's clothes were very dirty, they were old clothes, no longer in use. . . . She had put them on to make people laugh, even if it was forbidden to laugh, because they wanted to make people laugh or smile. . . . The full parts of the garment had been tied and tightened . . . so the front and back flaps had been all tied up [see Figs. 9 and 10] in such a way that it was no longer possible to recognize who they were; they were trying to pass themselves off as "spirits" [*tuurngaq*] with their masks [*kiinappaq*]. . . . They had put on their hoods. . . . The one acting the man had an enormous penis which really made you want to laugh, it was attached to his clothes . . . the one playing his wife never stopped making little panting sounds as she danced with him, so as to make people smile. . . . While the other was dancing, his penis moved all the time. . . . Every time they came in, the one acting the "wife" would keep hitting her "husband's" penis with her snow stick.

The content of these accounts agrees perfectly with that of the shaman Aava, father of our two informants, reported by Rasmussen (1929:241-242):

> The woman's dress would be drawn in tight wherever it should ordinarily be loose and full, as for instance the large baggy kamiks, the big hood and the broad shoulder pieces; the dress in itself should also be too small. The same principle was observed in the case of the man's costume which was barely large enough for him to get it on at all. . . . The "man" should have fastened in the crotch a huge penis, grotesque in its effect, fashioned either of wood or of stuffed intestines. . . . The two maskers stand . . . making all manner of lascivious and grotesque gestures; now and again the man strikes his great penis with his te'garut [whip], and the woman strikes it with her anautaq [snow stick], and they pretend to effect a coition standing up.

Unlike the spectators who were wearing new clothes sewn in the course of the fall, that is to say, ample well-cut coats for the men, and for the women coats with big hoods and big pockets in the shoulders as well as halfway down their leggings, the masked shaman dancers were wearing old worn clothes of



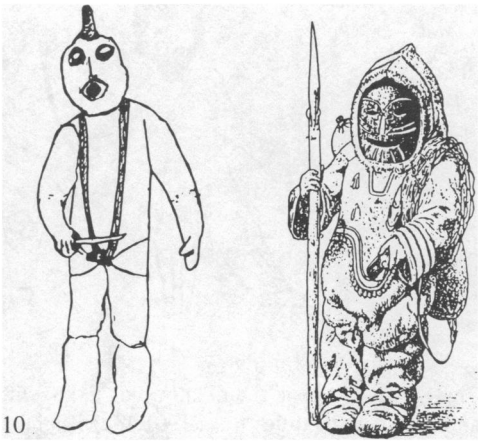


Fig. 9. Masked figure, *Tivajuut*, after a drawing by Pakaq (Rasmussen 1929:113). At left, the man dressed as a woman holds a snow stick in his left hand; at right, the male figure with beard and artificial penis holds a short dog whip in his left hand.

Fig. 10. Left, a male figure with artificial penis and short dog whip in his left hand; right, a female figure with a snow stick in the left hand. Notice the knotting of the hood, the shoulder pockets, the boots and the coat flaps, bulges which characterize the clothing of pubescent women. Detail from Aatuat's drawing (cf. Fig. 5).

which we are told, in the man's case, that they were skimpy and too small, and in the case of the woman, that they were too old to be used anymore and very dirty; the pockets, hoods and flaps of the woman's coat were, in addition, tied with string and thus could no longer be used, although they were the distinctive features of these garments (see drawings in Figs. 9 and 10).

On the Inuit of Southwest Baffin Island, F. Boas (1907:490-492) gives data comparable to those from Iglulik:

> *Fall Festival*: In the winter ceremonial at Akuliaq, on the North Shore of the Hudson Strait, the Ekko appears. He is a spirit made by *angakok* [*angakkuq*: shaman]. He foretells success in hunting, and good luck. . . . The Ekkos are one male and one female. The man has his clothing turned inside out. He wears his hood over his head. It is tied up by thongs wrapped around it to form a horn. . . . Straps pass from the shoulders down his sides and between his legs, and his long penis is tied up.[37] The female Ekko also has her clothing turned inside out. . . . It is supposed that the performers, while in this dress, are possessed by the spirit of the Ekko.

The representation of a male Ekko can be seen in Fig. 11 (from a drawing by F. Boas). The same author, who in an earlier work (1888:604-606) described

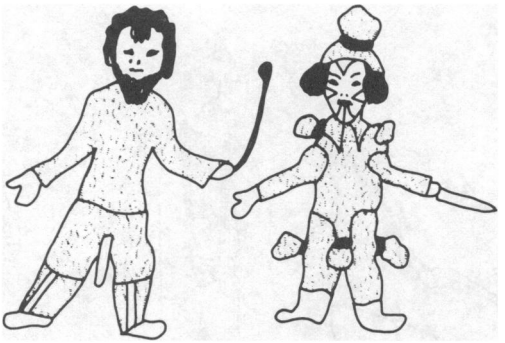


Fig. 11. Left, a male figure known as Ekko, with a protuberance on the forehead and an artifical penis (after Boas 1901:142). Right, female figure known as Qailertetang, holding a harpoon in the right hand, and a scraper in the left (after Boas 1888:606).

how the Inuit of Cumberland Sound (southeast Baffin) held a series of rituals lasting three days, specifies that on the second day, the men of the camp had to walk around the dwellings, in the direction of the sun (clockwise); some of them, those who had presented abnormally at birth, had to wear women's clothes. Then a little later there appeared two enormous characters (Qailertetang), sent by Sedna (Kannaaluk), with heavy boots on their feet; their legs were disproportionately enlarged by several pairs of trousers put on one over the other;[38] they wore a woman's coat and their faces were covered with a sealskin mask representing a tattooed woman's face. In their right hands they each held a seal harpoon and on their backs they carried a sealskin float filled with air. In their left hands, they had a scraper for skins; see the reproduction of one of these characters, from a drawing by Boas, in Fig. 11. They represented a huntress who combined masculine and feminine attributes. Elsewhere in Boas (1901:140) we find further details about her:

> *Qailertetang* . . . is represented by a man dressed in a woman's costume. . . . She is believed to be a large woman of very heavy limbs, who comes to make good weather and "to make the soul of men calm like the sea. . . ." She is a seal-hunter.

Thus the theme of inversion seems present in all these accounts of winter masquerades, but to understand the significance of this we must consider the figures expressing it as belonging to another hierarchical level from the men and women taking part in the festival: a higher level, that of the supernatural world and of spirits, which the masked dancers are supposed to represent. This would accord with the suggestions of Dumont (1983) and Tcherkézoff

(1983) concerning other cultures and other rituals. It is then that the oppositions skimpy/ample, dirty/clean, knotted/unknotted, right side/wrong side, heavy/light, left/right, etc. take on meaning. We know, too, that in the world of the dead and of the spirits the seasons are reversed. Heavy limbs (as opposed to lightness, greatly prized in this hunting society) are a characteristic of some great spirits, such as the Ijiqqat, the children of Uinigumasuittuq and her dog, whose steps cause the earth to shake. It will also be noted that at Iglulik the male *Tivajuut* holds a whip in his left hand, while the female holds a snow stick. This use of the left hand is also a privilege of shamans when officiating, or of those carrying out important private rituals, or, again, of the spirits. In shamanic practice the left predominates,[39] while in ordinary symbolism the right is masculine and the left feminine.

Another theme which emerges from the various data is that male shamans (who are the masked dancers) bestride the frontier between the sexes, whether we are dealing with a male-female couple in which the female role is played by a man in female dress, or with a couple of disguised men each dressed as a man/woman (combining masculine and feminine attributes). This is a theme I have come across in previous work and which I have studied under the title of the "third gender," attributing to them a mediating function related to shamanism and the great spirits (cf. Saladin d'Anglure 1985, 1986, 1988a).[40]

Might we not, with these two *Tivajuut* figures, be dealing with a synthesis of the two great mythical couples who preside over Inuit sexuality and marriage alliances? The story of the celestial incestuous couple consisting of the sister Siqiniq (Sun) and the brother Taqqiq (Moon) who has sexually abused her, reminds the Inuit of the limits on matrimonial choice, the prohibition of incest or too close a choice, the violation of which is the origin, in the celestial world, of the phases of the moon and the alternation of the seasons. The story of the other unnatural, underwater pair consisting of the mutilated daughter Kannaaluk, "the great one from below," and her father, guilty of violence against her, recalls the other limits set on matrimonial alliance (prohibition of unions with animals or a too distant choice) and the necessary subordination of daughters to their parents. This second couple has since watched over the application of the social rules separating the masculine from the feminine world, the produce of the sea from the produce of the land, the winter from the summer.

Two dominant figures, the masculine one of Taqqiq (Moon) and the feminine one of Kannaaluk, emerge out of these two couples. The first, as a "man woman" has become a symbol both of procreation and fertility, and of the protection and training of young boys, orphans and the oppressed, whom he hardens by whipping them; the second, a "woman man,"[41] dirty and dishevelled, refusing to release the marine mammals when humans fail to respect the social rules. In her underwater dwelling she lies in wait for men who have

committed unnatural sexual abuses and punishes them after death by beating them on the penis with a snow knife (while her father scratches the vulvas of guilty women with his nails). It is very likely that the masked *Tivajuut* figures are an evocation of these two great beings[42] and their respective worlds.

The Modalities of Ritual Exchange

The *Tivajuut* ritual festival, and comparable festivities involving masquerades known by other names in neighbouring areas, all included at some point a trial by choice (of partner), a trial by laughter and a trial by fire. As we have seen, the male *Tivajuut* shamans played the part of operators, mediators between men and women, but also between humans and the great mythical spirits. I shall first turn to the account by the shaman Aava, published by Rasmussen and illustrated by Pakaq, because it is he who supplies the most detail; I shall then complete his account with those of Aatuat, Ujaraq, Ivaluarjuk and by Boas's writings:

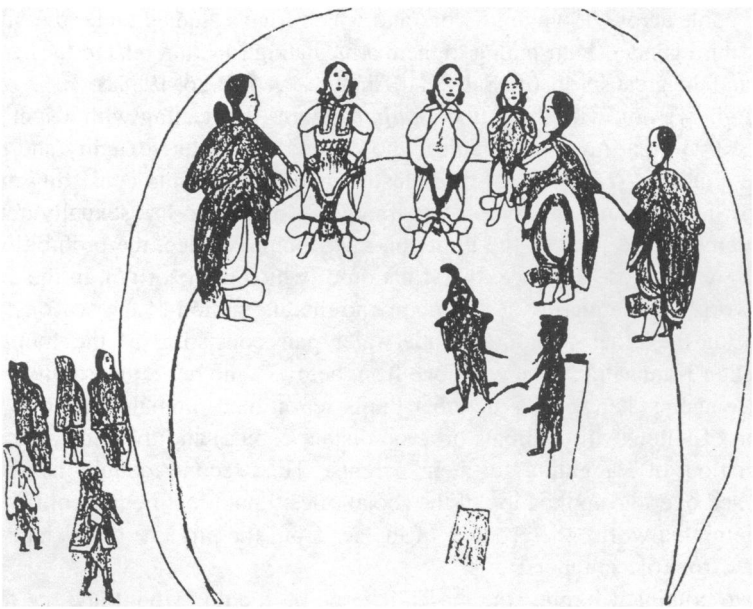


Fig. 12. The game of the exchange of women, *tivajuut*, at Iglulik. The women wait in the snow house, the men stand outside, ready to make their choice, while the masked dancers stand near the pillar bearing the oil lamp and sing. The shorter snow pillar opposite the entrance is the one over which the *tivajuut* (see Fig. 9) must jump.

> As soon as the necessary preparations have been made, all the men and women assemble in the *qag'e* [*qaggiq*], and now the two masked dancers . . . come bounding in. They are dumb performers, and may only endeavour to make themselves understood by signs, and only puff out breath between the lips and ejaculate "pust, pust" exactly as if they were trying to blow something out. . . . The first thing the *tivaju't* [*tivajuut*] now do is to chase out all the men with blows . . . the women of the audience being suffered to remain behind. . . . As soon as the *tivaju't* are sure all the men have gone, they themselves must dash out of the *qag'e*, to where the men are assembled in a group outside. One of these men then steps up to the *tivaju't*, and with his face close to the mask, whispers with a smile the name of the woman inside the *qag'e*, with whom he wishes to lie the coming night. The two *tivaju't* then at once rush back, gaily into the *qag'e*, go up to the woman whose name has been whispered to them outside, and touch the soles of her feet with *anautaq* and *te'garut* respectively. This is called *Ikujijut*[43] ("the ones who hack out something for themselves with an axe or a big, sharp knife"). Great rejoicing is now apparent among all the women, and the one woman chosen, *ikut'aujok* [*ikuktaujuk*], goes out and comes in again with the man who has asked for her. Both are expected to look very serious: all the women in the *qag'e*, however, must be quite the reverse, laughing and joking and making fun, and trying all they can to make the couple laugh; should they succeed, however, it means a short life for the pair. The women in the *qag'e* make faces, and murmur, in all kinds of surprising tones *unununununun*. . . . The two who are to lie together must then solemnly and slowly and without moving a muscle of their faces, walk round the lamp block twice, while the following song is sung: "Masquerader, teasing, capering Dancer-in-a-mask. Twist yourself round and kiss yourself behind, you will find it very sweet, Give him gifts, dried moss for lamp wicks. . . ." The game is carried on throughout the evening, until all the men and women have been paired off, the party then dispersing, each man leading home to his own house the woman he has chosen. (Rasmussen 1929:241-243)

The Trial by Choice

In Aava's account, the choice of a partner is made through the *Tivajuut* who listen to the preferences expressed by the men gathered outside the ceremonial igloo. The widest choice obviously went to those who presented themselves first. We may assume that relative strength had something to do with the order in which requests were made. It would have been a matter of physical strength or skill, when the ritual spouse exchange was preceded by trials of strength and skill, or of shamanic powers, which always inspired great respect when they were acknowledged, or of moral authority based on hunting prowess or genealogical status. The choice was therefore a trial, first for the women who had little to say in the matter, except to acquiesce, and also for the men who were the last to make their choice. It is very probable that the better placed, mature men chose the most sexually desirable women, and that the other women were left for the young men. But the game had its rules and, in the long run, perhaps everybody got something out of it. In any case we

have no precise data about these practices. We do know, however, that everybody's sexual "qualities" were known to all and sundry, and that some women were more prized than others. We know of cases of "femmes fatales" who indirectly left a trail of kidnapping, intimidation and murder in their wake.

Aatuat's account on the whole corroborates Aava's. We shall see later that Ujaraq and Ivaluarjuk differ on the modes of choice; I shall deal with these later when I discuss the "trial by laughter."

Other ways of choosing are evoked by the myths, as in the game of putting out the lamps which is the origin of the sun and moon: a game during which the lamps were put out so that each man could choose himself a partner in the darkness. Such a ritual used to take place after a shamanic séance among certain Greenland Inuit groups in the historic period.[44] In Boas's writings we find ritual spouse exchanges at what he calls "autumn festivals" mentioned a number of times. During the first stage, three shamans would invite Sedna (Kannaaluk) to come and visit human beings. Then, when she drew near, one of the shamans harpooned her, which caused her to dive down to her dwelling where, they thought, she would set free the many marine mammals she was holding there. To speed her descent, Boas tells us (1901:139), participants had to exchange wives.

During the second stage, Qailertetang (played by a masked man disguised as a woman; see Fig. 11), the messenger or servant of Sedna, appeared and separated the men from the women, then paired them off by joining their hands; each new couple would then go to the man's house. Thus in every case the shamans played a major part as decision-makers or intermediaries in the choice of temporary partners. Boas quotes the testimony of Kumlien (1879:43) according to whom the shaman kept one of the women for himself, and that of Bilby (1923:210) who says that the shamans chose first, and then complied with the requests of those men who had been best able to persuade them with words and gifts before the ceremony.

The Trial by Laughter

This trial, which occurs in all ritual spouse exchanges reported in the literature on the Central Arctic, took a variety of forms. It usually included one or several grotesque masked actors who tried every means possible to make the spectators, or individuals chosen from among the spectators, laugh. To succeed in remaining serious was the sign of a long life, while failure to do so indicated an early death. A moon myth which is very well known to the Central and Eastern Inuit mentions this kind of trial: when a human (often a shaman) is visiting "brother moon," a grotesque female figure, called *Ululijarnaat* at Iglulik, enters the latter's dwelling and tries by means of all sorts of pranks to make the visitor laugh. If she succeeds she guts him and turns him into a dead

soul. Her skimpy female garb, with its flaps and pockets knotted, her laughable tattoos and lascivious dancing are not unlike those of the *tivajuut* who take the female role. In the East Greenland tradition, this personage is called Nalikateq and is of an obviously androgynous character, with a man's knife and a drum in his hands, and with a G-string ending in a live dog's head yapping between his legs.[45]

According to Boas (1907:490), on the north shore of Hudson Strait, at Akuliaq, when the masked dancers, there called Ekko, appear "the people are not allowed to laugh . . . if someone laughs, he will soon die." In Ujaraq's account of a *Tivajuut* festival at Pingiqqalik, near Iglulik, the masked dancers first chased people who laughed and hit them with the whip and the snow knife. Then if they caught two men laughing side by side, they obliged them to exchange wives for the night. According to Aava and Aatuat, the newly formed couples, in other words a man and the partner he had chosen, had to enter the ceremonial igloo, as we have already seen, without faltering or giving even the slightest smile, and then go twice very slowly round the pillar holding up the lamp, keeping their eyes fixed on the lamp. They had to remain as straightfaced as possible, in spite of the most lascivious and grotesque demonstrations of the masked dancers, and the most hilarious tricks on the part of the whole gathering, from whom the cry of "Ununununununun . . ." went up in unison.[46]

Although the link between laughter and death, seriousness and life are clearly expressed in the accounts and comments presented, I should also emphasize the connection between laughter and sexuality, that is to say, between the oppositions of laughter/seriousness, open/closed, erection/flaccidity. In fact, Ivaluarjuk specifies in his account that the onlookers were supposed to laugh when the male masked dancer held up his penis and to relapse into seriousness when he made it hang down (cf. Mathiassen 1928:228). Might it not be appropriate to compare this fact with the Alaskan motifs noted by Nelson (1899) in which a sad face is a female symbol and a laughing face a male symbol (cf. Figs. 13a and 13b)?

Trial by Fire

This last trial, which is less clearly demarcated, is closely linked to the other two, and again it refers to the two great myths of origin being constantly referred to from the start of the *Tivajuut* feast. Putting out the lamps, in the origin myth of the incest of sun and moon, was one expression of it; we find it again at Iglulik in the form of a little ritual used at the time of the sun's return after the long winter darkness. Children would then go the rounds of the igloos blowing out the lamps, which were then relit to celebrate the new, reborn sun. One also had to put out the oil lamps for shamanic séances, particularly those in which the shaman was going to visit Kannaaluk who, after she be-

a b c

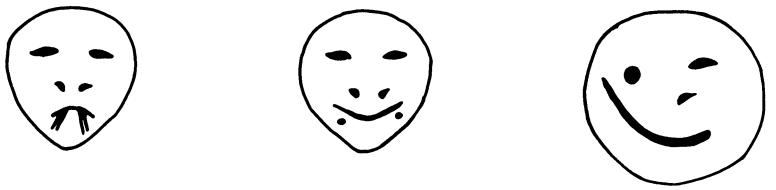


Fig. 13(a). Woman's face characterized by the tattoos on the chin and the sad expression;

Fig. 13(b). Man's face characterized by labrets and a happy expression. Motifs engraved on an ivory handle, Yuit Eskimos of the Bering Strait. This symbolism is omnipresent in the decorative art of the region;

Fig. 13(c). "Twisted face" representing a spirit, engraved on the wood of a finger mask from the Yuit of the Lower Kuskokwim. (After Fitzhugh and Kaplan 1982).

came one-eyed, detested the light. It was said that with the light she lost her power. Taqqiq (brother moon), for his part, was formerly blind and then endowed with supernaturally powerful vision, then blackened with soot by his sister, and has now become the dispenser of shamanic "light" (vision).

During the sun's absence, it is the oil lamp inside the igloo which evokes the light-giving star. Now, it was oil lamp wicks which participants in the *Tivajuut* festival had to offer as gifts to the masked dancers, although no one had the right to use such wicks in the camp for as long as the sun remained hidden below the horizon. In the meantime people had to use powdered ivory. Is not the oil lamp on its pillar one of the central places of the ceremonial igloo, the place where the dancers continually return, where the new couple has to go in order to circle the lamp while gazing fixedly at the flame? To illustrate the connection between laughter and flame or sun I shall quote the example of the twisted grimace people would make at *Siqiniq* (sister sun) when, after her return, she hid behind the clouds. This grimace would provoke her anger at the impertinence of these creatures, on whom she would then fire down her rays as a punishment, to the great joy of the human beings longing for her warmth (see Fig. 1b for *Iqallijuq* making a twisted face at the sun). Seriousness, on the other hand, was proper when the sun had disappeared and only the flame of the oil lamp evoked its light and warmth.

All these symbols form a system and we are still waiting for thorough research into their lexicon, grammar and sociology. The *Tivajuut* ritual will certainly occupy a privileged position in the system because it is a point at which essential social and religious threads intersect in the Inuit social fabric, since it concerns its reproduction. This may mean the material conditions of life with the seasonal cycle animated by sun and moon, or procreation, always

uncertain in a society whose demographic balance is fragile, or survival in the next world, in other words, continuity of the group beyond the frontiers of space (the celestial and the earthly spheres) and time (relations with the ancestors and with descendants).

Inuit Sexual Communism and Shamanism

After this review of the *Tivajuut* spouse exchange ritual, the full importance of which was understood by Mauss and Beuchat, and in spite of the many gaps in the ethnography, and the astonishing present disaffection for the subject—particularly where the Central Arctic is concerned [47]—we can now see the central and omnipresent figure of the shaman emerging in very clear relief, first through the Inuit accounts, as the best descriptions we have come from shamans (Aava, Ivaluarjuk, Aatuat) or witnesses brought up in (or for) shamanism (Ujaraq, Iqallijuq). Through the principal actors, next, for the *Tivajuut* or masked dancers seem always to have been shamans, and all the descriptions agree on this point. Finally, through the organization of the exchange, as appears clearly from the facts reported by Aava and Aatuat for Iglulik, or from the accounts from other parts of the Inuit region: those of Boas (1888, 1901, 1907), compiling the data of his predecessors and his collaborators, those of Kleivan (1960) and Kjellstrom (1973) which are, finally, the most recent update on the subject. Some authors (Kumlien 1879: 43; Nelson 1899:360; Bilby 1923:210), as we have already seen, let it be understood that the shamans organizing the distribution of women either came to an understanding beforehand with the men concerned or else were so familiar with everyone's tastes and desires that they had no difficulty satisfying them. A number of these authors also tell us that the shamans reserved the partner of their choice for themselves.

Here we come to another aspect of the shaman's share in Inuit sexual communism, namely the sexual share (or the sexual services) which the shaman, because of the authority conferred on him by his functions, could demand of his patients, his flock or his debtors.

The shaman was always rewarded when he offered his services privately and it was not unusual for him to ask for payment in the form of sexual services from one of the women of the family which had called him in, whether the wife or the daughter of the man of the house. Out of religious sentiment or fear, these requests (which in all known cases came from male shamans) were usually accepted, but refusals are also recorded in the ethnographic literature (cf. Kjellstrom 1973). In public, on the other hand, his services were free but most authors mention that in difficult circumstances—epidemics, prolonged bad weather, scarcity of game—the shaman could, at the time of a public shamanic séance, demand that all the members of the group exchange spouses, sometimes even continuing to reshuffle the couples until the evil had

disappeared (cf. Freuchen 1961). At this point, I should mention that the sun's disappearance was considered a potential threat to the group's reproduction and to cosmic order, and that it is therefore not surprising that ritual spouse exchanges may, at the time of the winter solstice, have followed public shamanic séances, as several authors report (quoted by Kjellstrom 1973). It was at this time that séances of the *Ipiqtalik* type took place in Igloolik (as illustrated in Fig. 14), during which the shaman was harpooned in the back like a walrus; similarly, Sedna was also harpooned at winter festivals with spouse exchanges on Baffin Island. In any case, I have noted numerous references in the accounts I have studied to the therapeutic effects, the purification (of the actors) and even the pacifying effect (on the mistress of the marine animals) of the trials of strength and the ritual spouse exchanges.

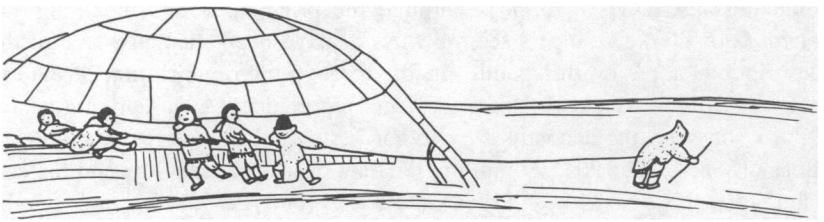


Fig. 14. At great shamanic séances, some particularly powerful shamans would have themselves harpooned in the back like walruses. The shaman *ipiqtalik* (who has been harpooned), filled with irresistible strength, leaves the igloo and goes into every igloo in the camp, uttering guttural sounds like a walrus and spitting water and blood. After a drawing by Zebedee Enoogoo, Arctic Bay 1964, reproduced in Blodgett 1986.

This connection between shamanism and sexuality, which should no doubt be considered an aspect of the connection between religion and sexuality (cf. Frazer 1926; Bastide 1973; Hamayon 1982), is even more obvious when one takes into account the fact that shamans used to be responsible for remedying the infertility of couples; women shamans dealt particularly with problems related to pregnancy and labour, and men shamans with those having to do with fecundation and conception. Treatment of this second type of problem might involve symbolic intervention in the form of a shamanic séance during which the shaman went to seek a baby which had emerged from the earth (a myth recounts that the two first humans were born in this way) and introduced it into the woman's uterus. He might visit brother moon and ask him to carry out this fecundation (cf. Saladin d'Anglure 1988a). He might also intervene personally by having sexual relations with the patient.[48]

I have already mentioned, when dealing earlier with the relationship between *Idluriik* (exchanging adversaries) and the *Tivajuut* festival, in other

words, with the articulation between a restricted system of spouse exchange in the first case, and a generalized ritual system of spouse exchange in the second, that the *idluriik* were shamans in Aatuat's account. In that narrative the festivities began with duels between *idluriik* and continued with a ritual spouse exchange, which enabled participants to playact exchange and antagonism on the public as well as the private level. The present author even felt this articulation of two systems to be interesting enough to encourage their re-examination as two aspects of a single system rather than separately as was the case in the few studies devoted to them. Other data emerged to encourage me in this course when, in the course of a study of adoption in Iglulik, my informants talked about simple spouse exchange as a remedy for infertility which was frequently resorted to in the past, concurrently with adoption. On this occasion they gave me a series of examples which enabled me, against all expectations, to study simple or private spouse exchange in relation not only to infertility and adoption but also to shamanism. I was in fact very surprised to discover that out of 17 exchanging couples studied, in other words, 34 individuals, 10 men out of 17 and 3 women out of 17 were shamans. This is twice as high a proportion of shamans as that observed in the total adult population (cf. Saladin d'Anglure 1988b).[49] Shamans, both male and female, were therefore twice as given to exchanging (privately) as non-shamans. I also noted twice as many cases of sterility or infertility among shamans as among non-shamans, which raises another problem, that of the possibility that there is an inverse proportion between the shamanic function and the procreative function among the Inuit; other Amerindian peoples also seem to express this fact, at least in their discourse. Might not this inverse proportion be equally applicable, in a more general way, to the religious function and the procreative function? The shaman is, like the priest, a great social and symbolic reproducer; for this purpose (or because of it) must their procreative capacities be reduced or controlled?

Inuit shamanism disappeared as a cult and as a system of public rites about 50 years ago; two examples from Igloolik illustrate an original transition to Christianity as well as the importance of the links between shamanism and sexual communism. The first of these concerns a former great shaman and great exchanger who introduced Christianity into the region, starting from Pond Inlet (a more northerly village where an Anglican priest lived) in 1922, when the Fifth Thule Expedition led by Rasmussen was visiting the Iglulik territory. "In order to raise the morale of the group, Umik decided to raise a tax, for the benefit of his family, on all goods from the trade stores, and then forbade wife exchange between the men of the camp, keeping it exclusively for himself" (Freuchen 1939:404). Freuchen was not the most objective of researchers in the team, but the facts are likely.

The second example deals with another shaman, Quliktalik, the nephew of Aatuat, who was also a great exchanger (he appears as Qu in the diagram in Fig. 15); he became the principal Anglican catechist of the area, and when, towards the end of his life, his name was given to one of his great-granddaughters, he asked the child's parents to be very liberal and permissive with her where sexuality was concerned because, he said, he had been a great lover of women and she, being his namesake, would not want to restrict herself to one husband.

Let us return to the proposals put forward by Mauss and Beuchat, according to whom winter sexual communism was the high point of Inuit social life and stood in opposition to summer individualism as expressed particularly in adoption, in other words, in the individual appropriation of children. By developing a binary, or dualist, approach to Inuit social life in an ecological milieu in which winter and summer stand in such great contrast, these two authors provided themselves with a powerful tool which enabled them to reduce to simple oppositions the multiple and complex data about Inuit social morphology as well as religious life, jural life and what they call the property system. In doing this they achieved a global theoretical analysis of Inuit society which is without parallel in the ethnological literature on this people, while not hiding a certain bias in favour of the winter pole, where society and religion exist, since these are the two themes that interest them. In this bias, Mauss's socialist political choices show through very clearly; following in the steps of Jaurès, Mauss condemns revolutionary violence just as much as the utopia of an absolute socialism (as is shown clearly by Karady 1968:xxi and Birnbaum 1972:43), and preaches a moral rather than an economic socialism, "a new way of seeing, thinking and acting," to be realized thanks to "a new law, a new scale of value." Did Mauss think he had found among the Inuit an original example—observable in an elementary and seasonal form—of such a form of socialism ? It is not impossible, especially as in the course of 1905-1906, one of the two academic years (with 1904-1905) which Mauss devoted to the Inuit in his courses at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, and also the year in which he and Beuchat put the finishing touches to the *Essai*, he visited Russia, where the first Russian bourgeois democratic revolution had just broken out, and where the first workers' Soviet had just come into being. We know that during this journey he was in touch with several Bolsheviks, former refugees whom he had met previously in France (cf. Karady 1968:xxi). However that may be, Inuit winter communism, from this viewpoint, became the high point of the Social, its apogee, and summer individualism a sort of rest after such intensity of social life. But does not this theory, to which Mauss and Beuchat lend an almost universal applicability, however brilliant it may be, suffer from a certain reductionism, particularly in its interpretation of the seasonal variations of Inuit social morphology? Could

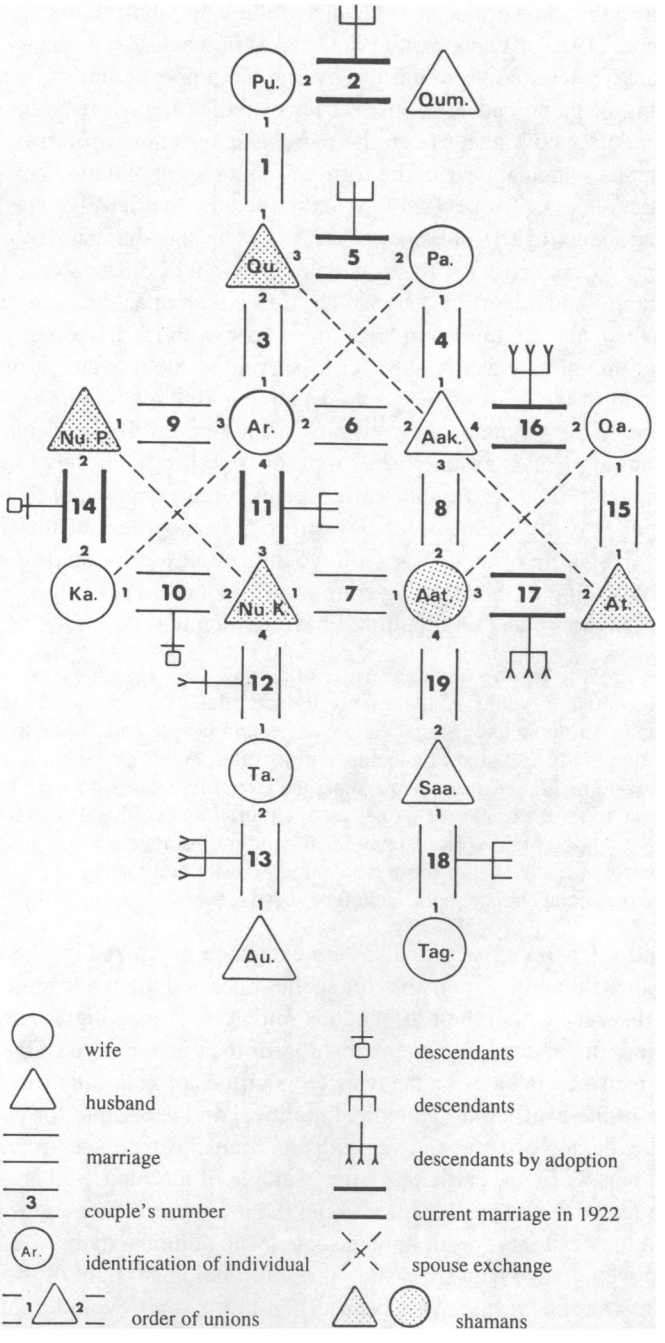


Fig. 15. A spouse exchange network in the Igloolik Inuit area (1900-40).

we not level the same criticism at it which, following Lévi-Strauss (1958, 1962) and Dumont (1973), Tcherkézoff (1983) makes of the dualist or binary illusion?

I have explored adoption and the overlap of domestic units it constitutes, the sharing of game and of spouses; I have studied the overlaps between the social genders which result from the namesake system or from sex ratio imbalances, and which appear in the form of real or symbolic transvestism; and, beyond the realm of the sexes, I have examined the overlaps between the various components of the universe as expressed in the shaman. As a result, I have come to prefer an approach which is not only holistic (Maussian), but also dynamic and tripartite, and which, through shamanism, embraces both individualism and communism. Here, or to borrow the terms used by Dumont (1983), at this hierarchically superior level, and in the movement of the generations and of the seasons, one may perceive a kind of "communistic" violence done to the young as they are just starting out in life, marking them, at the beginning of their productive or reproductive life, with the brand of collective interest. This can apply to the painful tattooing imposed on young girls at puberty, the exclusion of boys from the enjoyment of the first game they kill, the taking of newborns from young couples at the start of marriage, and the obligation of those young couples to take part in collective spouse exchanges. On the subject of adoption, I have written that

> For the group, I believe, it was a matter of arming itself against excessive individualism among young adults, especially when luck was on their side in the production of game and in procreation. . . . young people had to pay their tribute to the group, as a sign of adherence to its rules, and in doing so they themselves were taking out insurance against the risks life held in store for them. A social share of 15 to 30% of game, food, children and conjugal sexuality was certainly not too high a price to pay for this future insurance, which was under the control of the elders, of those who name, transfer and manage, and who exchange the social and symbolic capital of society. (Saladin d'Anglure 1988b)

One could say as much of ritual spouse exchange organized by the shamans, who are those mainly responsible for social order and the management of disorder,[50] disorder which their ambiguous middle position fitted them particularly well to understand, use and reabsorb, for the greater good of the group.[51]

At a time when debates on the respective virtues of individualism and communism (in their different ideological, political and economic forms) are still on the agenda, too often in an overdualistic, Manichean perspective, could we not use Mauss's *Essai*, particularly the example of the Inuit, and an anthropological point of view to think again about the interdependence of the two concepts and the necessity for all human societies to combine them?

Would we not also gain by casting the anthropological light of the Inuit example on what has in the West been called the sexual revolution and which took the form, most notably, after May 1968, either of attempts at communal

living with economic and sexual sharing, under the authority of patriarchs, which attempts usually drifted back towards the reconstitution of conjugal families, or of organizing limited spouse exchanges (the North American "swingers")? One could no doubt classify these phenomena as part of the tradition of utopian socialisms which emerged at a time of the most thoroughgoing 19th-century puritanism, when the first descriptions of Inuit sexual communism were published. These are large questions which certainly go beyond the limits of this modest ethnographic contribution, but when one refers to Mauss and Beuchat's stimulating *Essai* it is tempting to consider human phenomena in their diverse expressions and dimensions, even from the starting point of a single ethnographic example.[52]

Acknowledgments

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are now no more, among them Aatuat and Ujaraq, whose information was so important to this article. I am much indebted to Iqallijuq, tirelessly willing to impart Inuit knowledge, countless pieces of information, verifications and cross-references, without which it would have been very hard to complete this research. I wish to render special homage to them.

Translator's Notes

* This is the translation by James Fox of the quotation from the *Essai sur les variation saisonnières des sociétés eskimos,* pp. 468-469 (p. 135 of Saladin d'Anglure's French text):

> The Eskimos are one of the peoples who have made the most use of the practice of adoption, yet it would be neither possible nor useful if the winter group retained its unity throughout the year.... If the nuclear family did not periodically replace the large family, there would be no cause for married couples without children to be concerned about their future material and spiritual welfare. They would feel no need to adopt some young relative or stranger to care for them when they were old. (Mauss and Beuchat 1979:74)

** James Fox's translation of passage quoted from the *Essai* (pp. 135-136 of Saladin d'Anglure's text):

> The *kashim* [*qaggiq*] is built exclusively during the winter. This is itself good evidence that it is the distinctive feature of winter life (Mauss and Beuchat 1979:46).... [It] is always essentially a public place that manifests the unity of the group. This unity is indeed so strong that, inside the *kashim* [*qaggiq*], the individuality of families and of particular houses disappears; they all merge in the totality of the society.... The winter settlement lives in a state of continuous religious exaltation.... The slightest event requires the more or less solemn intervention of the magicians, the *angekok*. The winter solstice festivals [celebrated in the *qaqgiq*] are always and everywhere accompanied, quite significantly, by the phenomenon of sexual licence.... Communal sex is a form of communion, perhaps the most intimate form there is [ibid.:57-60].... The best evidence of genuine kinship among members of the same settlement is the custom of exchanging women. This is reported in almost all Eskimo societies. These exchanges take place in winter between all the men and all the women of the settlement.... These general exchanges take place among all the members of the group and form a kind of sexual ritual. And there are other more or less permanent exchanges of women contracted between individuals for specific reasons. Some occur in the winter house; others are contracted just before the group disperses in June for the summer season.... The men who make these exchanges become brothers by adoption; the women who are exchanged are considered to be each other's sisters; and the same applies to all the children born from these unions [ibid.:68-69].

Notes

1. It is no doubt in this work and with reference to the Inuit that Marcel Mauss made most use of the concept of communism, both from the economic point of view, as regards the distribution and redistribution of game (1973:467) and from the sexual point of view, as regards collective or restricted spouse-exchange. It is surprising to see that a recent work like *Primitive communism*, whose author, Alain Testart (1985), claims to base his argument in part on the Inuit example, can completely ignore Mauss and Beuchat's *Essai*, to the point of not even

citing it. Some very interesting data would have been found in it which is unfortunately absent from the more recent ethnographies used.

2. Throughout this article I shall refer to the edition of the *Essai* which appeared in Marcel Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie*, 5th ed. (Paris: PUF, 1973). In 1979, an English translation by James J. Fox was published by Routledge Kegan Paul.
3. As Balikci (1986) so rightly points out; see also Saladin d'Anglure (1986).
4. Volume edited by D. Damas (1984) which includes 40 or so contributions from contemporary specialists on the Inuit. Having served on the editing committee for this volume, the author must assume his share of responsibility for the omission.
5. To adopt the terminology introduced by the Fifth Thule Expedition led by Rasmussen (1921-24). Before that, when the terms Igloolik or Iglulik were used, they meant Inuit groups settled north of the Fox Basin around the very ancient winter and spring camp called Iglulik (see map, Fig. 2) on the island of the same name. Rasmussen and his team extended its use to cover all the groups—who according to them were very closely related—settled in a region including the present villages of Arctic Bay (Tununirusiq), Pond Inlet (Tununiq), Igloolik (Iglulik), Repulse Bay (Naujaat) and Chesterfield Inlet (Igluligarjuk). Most contemporary authors have simply adopted Rasmussen's typology without any rigorous critical discussion having been held on the subject (cf. Saladin d'Anglure 1989). My research was carried out in Igloolik itself, that is to say, in the heart of the Iglulik group.
6. Mauss and Beuchat in fact talk about wife exchange, but this author prefers to use the more neutral term spouse exchange until such time as the facts demonstrate quite unequivocally that it is women who are being exchanged. As early as 1961 Guemple had adopted this second usage.
7. *Kashim* is the traditional term used for the ceremonial house among the Yupik of the Bering Sea, in Alaska (cf. Nelson 1899), which Mauss adopted; *Qasgiq* is the modern written form of this (cf. Fienup-Riordan 1988). In the Central Arctic *qaggiq* means the big ceremonial snow igloo and also the circular stone structures used in some places for summer gatherings. I prefer the latter form as my data is principally for the Central Arctic.
8. The most recent edition of the *Handbook of North American Indians* (*Arctic* [1984] 5), devoted to the Inuit, only mentions private spouse exchange with reference to 12 of the 20 large Inuit groups described. And of those 12, in only 3 cases is ritual or public exchange mentioned in connection with collective festivals conducted by shamans or including shamanic séances. Apart from Kleivan's interesting comparative study (1960), work on festivals of the type Mauss and Beuchat examine, such as those of Thalbitzer (1925-41), Lantis (1947) or Nooter (1975) have little to say about spouse exchange and the shaman's involvement in those exchanges. To this author's knowledge, only one study has taken Inuit spouse exchange as its main theme, and that is Lee Guemple's (1961); this is an important comparative work of compilation which deals with private and ceremonial exchange, but from the point of view of social relations and kinship rather than its connections with the religious domain. Alongside this study, a few articles on Alaska should be mentioned, that of Rubel (1961) on spouse exchange between economic exchange partners, that of Hennigh (1970) on the exchange of women and that of Spencer (1968) on spouse exchange in northern Alaska. Finally, I shall mention the interesting update on Inuit marriage by Kjellstrom (1973) which devotes a chapter to spouse exchange. Thus, for the Central Arctic we have had very little new ethnographic information since the publication of Mauss and Beuchat's *Essai*.
9. According to Lee Guemple (1986), we owe this distinction between ritual exchange and common exchange to Thalbitzer (1941); however, we have seen above that Mauss made the distinction almost in the same terms.
10. This is the recent official (Anglo-Saxon) spelling of the island's name. When I am speaking of the group I shall therefore talk about the Iglulik and when I refer to the present village I shall use Igloolik.

11. This is probably a relationship determined by eponymy, because they are cross-cousins.
12. Both were shamans; Qaumauk was known for his moon voyages (cf. Thérien 1978).
13. Franz Boas was among the first to describe her cult in the Baffin region, and since then she has usually been known in the literature as *Sedna*, another localizing demonstrative with a similar meaning ("she from below"), used in the Cumberland Sound area visited by Boas (1888, 1901, 1907). More recently, Savard (1970) has made a structural analysis of the variants of this myth, as has Oosten (1976) of the Iglulik and Netsilik traditions. There is an abundant bibliography about this myth which is too long to give here. I shall, however, mention the voluminous and as yet unpublished work of Sonne (1990) which attempts by means of an approach borrowed from the history of religion to make an historical criticism of the available texts on Sedna; she tries to show the importance of factors connected with Western acculturation in the construction of some versions of the myth, particularly the Iglulik version reported by Rasmussen (1929). I have reservations about her conclusion, in the absence of the least systematic and comparative ethnographic investigation of the theme. This work could however serve as the basis of such a study.
14. It is also the name by which she is known on the west coast of Greenland.
15. This small island, which in the myth was connected, at low water at the time of the spring tides, with the main island of Iglulik, is now a peninsula. It should therefore be theoretically possible to date the version of this myth as it has been handed down in Iglulik, by taking into account the known and measurable phenomenon of uplift of the earth's crust in this region, linked to isostasy and the effect of climatic variation on sea levels. This type of study would no doubt introduce new and interesting arguments for dealing with the historical production of myths, taking into account, in particular, the critical analysis of Sonne (1990) who disputes the antiquity of the Iglulik version of the Sedna myth. She sees in the second episode of the myth, that of the petrel (which in other areas is the subject of an independent myth) a recent development attributable to whalers.
16. This camp, now used in summer, is a former winter camp where there are many archaeological traces of semi-underground houses. The Parry-Lyon expedition wintered a little off-shore from this camp in 1822. The place takes its name from a structure of circular stones which, according to the Inuit, served as a gathering place and a place of celebration, a sort of summer *Qaggiq*; the name means "which looks like the first circle of snow blocks of an igloo"; in the middle of the circle there is a block of stone which, judging by the traces which remain, must have served to hold an oil lamp; see Parry's description (1842:362) and his description of its use in connection with the capture of a large whale.
17. This is the same term as the one described in the previous note but with the suffix "*kuluk*," meaning "little."
18. On the other hand, it emerges from Boas's data (1888, 1901, 1907) from the south and southeast of Baffin Island, a region fairly distant from Iglulik, that the reference to *Sedna* (the name there given to *Kannaaluk*, cf. note 13) is much more explicit in the autumn festivals with masquerades and spouse exchanges; perhaps it is less necessary to make an explicit reference in Iglulik, the site of the myth?
19. In the mythical geography of the Inuit Central Arctic, the island of Iglulik occupies a special place which is recognized for hundreds of kilometres around. One day a map should be made of the geographical inscription of the myths of origin in Inuit lands so as better to determine the large, regional cultural divisions. It goes without saying that a number of places may have the same mythical status in the same large area of the Arctic. But a certain mythical regional specialization also appears, which should be looked at in relation to other historical, cultural, and social variables. It is astonishing that this question has escaped the sagacity of ethnographers and geographers of the Inuit Arctic. Even the recent article by Malaurie (1986): " Another reading of Arctic space, for a sacred geography of place," although it claims to take into account native categories and representations in elaborating a sacred

geography of places, bypasses this important question, while lingering over secondary points, such as the fact that, in the Iglulik region, the traditonal camp of Avvajjaq (cf. map, Fig. 2) was abandoned after the death of the last great Inuit chief who died there. It frequently happened, in fact, according to my informants, that after a series of deaths during epidemics, the site of the camp where such tribulations occurred was abandoned for a number of years, placed in quarantine or left "fallow" in order to escape the lethal spirits drawn there by the superabundance of human remains. An implicit Inuit rule was that the same winter camp was not used for more than three years running.

20. At the time of the Fifth Thule Expedition (1921-24) Mathiassen (1928:199) noted that young girls were having themselves tattooed less and less at Tununiq (Pond Inlet); of the 60 mature women included in his census 16 were not tattooed. According to my data all female shamans and wives of shamans were tattooed at that period.
21. According to the testimony of Mitiarjuk, an Inuit woman informant from the south shore of the Hudson Strait in arctic Québec (Nunavik). Explicit reference is made here to the tarry oil which seeps from an oil lamp. This threat of blackening should be compared with an episode in the myth of origin of the sun and moon in which sister sun (Siqiniq), her curiosity piqued at not recognizing the man coming to take her as his sexual partner, when the game of extinguishing the lamps is being played—during which collective spouse exchange was practiced—smears her breast with soot (or tar from the lamp, according to which version is being told) and realizes the next morning at the sight of the blackened face of her brother (Taqqiq, brother moon) that he has committed the offence of incest.
22. Who, it will be recalled, had her hands cut off by her father who then pushed her down into the depths of the sea. In the captions to the Pakkaq's drawing of a tattooed hand, Rasmussen (1929:148) noted that Kannaaluk liked to see fine tattoos; I believe that a connection can be made between this belief and the fact that Kannaaluk had had her hands cut off.
23. See Maertens (1987a) for an interesting analysis of female tattooing in hunter-gatherer societies. He notes that differentiating tattoos for men and women, according to a logic comparable with what we have just described for the Inuit, can be observed in many "primitive" societies.
24. Jean Blodgett, ed., *North Baffin Drawings, Collected by Terry Ryan on North Baffin Island in 1964* (Toronto Art Gallery of Ontario 1986). Terry Ryan, employed as artistic advisor by the West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative of Cape Dorset, undertook, in 1964, a journey through the northern part of Baffin Island, during which he asked the Inuit for drawings in each of the villages he stopped in. He brought back from this tour 1,850 pages of text and drawings, including Aatuat's. She was then living in Arctic Bay (Tununirusiq) after passing the first part of her life in the Iglulik region.
25. In fact at least three can be distinguished in the drawing (cf. Fig. 5)
26. See the drawing of this character, reproduced from Boas (1888:606), in Fig. 11.
27. The term *Qaggiq* means gathering place; with the suffix *-taq* added, it means a fox trap made of an arch of stones with a hatch on top; in arctic Québec it also means a trap for arctic char, on the foreshore, which holds the fish prisoner when the tide goes down. The Inuit of this region also apply the term to the circular stone structures used, as at Ungalauujaq (see note 16 above), for communal feasts, except in winter, particularly when a big whale had been captured. Most authors who have taken an interest in the *Qaggiq* or the communal festivities held there have recognized its religious importance as a place of mediation with the natural and supernatural worlds (cf. Nelson 1899; Boas 1888 1901 1907; Thalbitzer 1941; Lantis 1947; Kleivan 1960; Kjellstrom 1973, etc.).
28. For a discussion of binary or ternary, diametral or concentric, egalitarian or hierarchical structures, see Lévi-Strauss (1958, 1962), Dumont (1983) and Tcherkézoff (1983).
29. The same term *ikujijut* was used for the sharing out of women performed by the masked dancers, and the sharing out of frozen meat. A woman chosen in this way became a *ikuktaq*, that is, "a piece taken from a whole by a violent act" (blow with an axe or a knife on frozen meat).

30. See Damas (1972b) for a good description of Inuit food-sharing practices in the Central Arctic.
31. If we examine Lee Guemple's compilation (1961:115-118) of kinship and spouse exchange terms, we see that of 32 Inuit groups, 26 associate the term Idlurik with "cousins"; of these, 1 specifies "song-cousins," 4 specify "male cousins," 1 "cousins of the same sex," 11 "cross-cousins" and only one "cross-cousins of the same sex." Such diversity is explained largely by the methodological and ethnographic gaps in the monographs used; in a third of the cases the term implies in addition to "cross-cousinship" a "joking" relationship. There is, however, enough agreement for the concept and the social relations it covers to be made the subject of systematic investigation and thorough comparative analysis in the future. Are we dealing with a case of polysemy or with a semantically overloaded concept? This author inclines towards the second hypothesis.
32. Do the relations between cross-cousins of the same sex express a sort of dualism in Inuit kinship, a cleavage stemming from both antagonism and exchange (play/exchange or war/exchange as Burch and Correll 1972 so rightly point out for Alaska)? Does it not refer us back to the debate begun by C. Lévi-Strauss (1967) and taken up by F. Héritier (1981) over the "asymmetrical pair" constituted by a brother and sister, in other words the pair from whom the cross-cousins issue (cf. also Saladin d'Anglure 1986)? This would be all the more interesting in that the Inuit kinship system still awaits a theory. The cleavage would be observable on both the male and the female sides. Does not Aatuat, who is the symbolic reincarnation of her mother's brother, and who, by (or since) her adoption, has attenuated her links with her father, become in a way a cross-cousin to her own elder sister, and an adversary in singing and games to the members of her father's camp, which includes Ivaluarjuk, her paternal uncle and her dead namegiver's ex-adversary in singing and games? This would explain her swift change of camps and her aggressiveness towards her sister and her father's kin. If we also take into account the fact that Qaumauk had received as his second wife the sister of Ivalu, Nuvvijaq (Qaumauk's cross-cousin), and that this union was broken as a result of the bad treatment meted out to Nuvvijaq by her co-wife (a break-up which led to strong animosity between the two families) we must regret that the ethnographers did not systematically study the relationships of kinship, alliance, and adoption between adversaries in song and games (*idlurik*), throughout their life-histories. A recent and very well documented article by a musicologist (Nattiez 1988), devoted to drum-dancing among the Iglulik, deals with the singing and drumming competitions between *Idlurik* in the *qaggiq*; but because of his mainly musicological and typological preoccupations, the author, who has only made short visits to the region, only adds a few really new elements to the question which interests us here. The same remark may be made about the work of the ethno-jurist Rouland (1979) who only deals with singing duels as a legal means of settling conflicts. We would have to consider *Idlurik* relations as a total social phenomenon, to use Mauss's expression, in order to be able fully to understand their richness. Two attempts to juxtapose the semantics of kinship terms and the social and cultural environment have been made by Dorais (1986) and Thérien (1987) and should be developed further.
33. In other words, embrace Inuit-fashion, "sniffing" each other with their noses (*kunikpuq*), as Aaatuat says at the beginning of her story. This is one of the rare occasions when adult men embrace each other.
34. Guemple (1961:42) notes the same ambiguity in data from Alaska, when he quotes the description of a communal festival on Saint Lawrence Island (Alaska) where dancing and spouse exchange rituals are organized on the basis of *idlurik* relationships.
35. Kleivan (1960) clearly perceived this aspect.
36. When the mask was made of plucked seal skin, the background was black and the imitation tattoos, in scraped seal skin, were white; when it was in caribou skin, with the hair, the background was white and the tattoo marks black, as in Fig. 8. According to Mathiassen (1928: 199) the term *tunniit*, which I have often encountered in the sense of facial tattoo, refers

more particularly to tattoos on the cheeks, for which I have noted the term *uluagutiik*, mentioned by Aatuat (cf. Fig. 1a).

37. It is, no doubt, this strap (which, according to Boas's drawing reproduced in Fig. 11, passes under the artificial penis) which made it possible, by throwing out the chest, to erect the penis, and by stooping the shoulders, to lower it.
38. See Boas's illustration (1888:606) reproduced in Fig. 11.
39. Cf. Tcherkézoff (1983) for a thorough study of this classic theme of anthropology.
40. Maertens (1978b) brings out very well the relation between mask and masculinity, and the fact that it is practically always masked men who take the female parts in rituals. Although in a more recent article (1986) he has attempted to apply his approach to my Inuit material, his explanation, drawn from psychoanalysis, differs from mine which I intended to be more ethnological. Gessain (1954, 1975, 1978, 1984) is one of the very few Inuit ethnologists to have taken an interest in "androgyny," in connection with myths, rites and masks; however, bearing as he does the stamp of his psychoanalytical training, his reading has always been based on the psychoanalytical approach.
41. For more details on androgyny or the "third gender" of these great mythical figures, see Saladin d'Anglure (1988a); see also Randa (1986).
42. The structural analyses carried out by Savard (1970), Oosten (1976, 1986) and Hutchinson (1977) clearly reveal the importance of these two complementary figures.
43. See note 28.
44. See Kjellstrom (1973:151-154) for a good review of sources on this subject.
45. See Kleivan (1960) for some interesting comments on the subject.
46. Cf. Damas (1963, 1975a) and Guemple (1961) for the terminology of exchange at Igloolik.
47. Guemple (1986) notes the complete absence of recent research on ritual spouse exchange, whereas in the 1960s and 1970s common or private spouse exchange was the subject of numerous studies and a renewed approach, taking native categories and the economic and social context in which it operated into account. See in particular Burch and Correll (1972).
48. It would no doubt be interesting to compare this aspect of Inuit shamanism with (positive) psychoanalytic transference, and even with the sexual abuse (according to the Western code of medical professional behaviour) of their patients with which certain psychotherapists are reproached and which sometimes hit the headlines in the West.
49. Fig. 15 representing "A spouse exchange network in the Iglulik region between 1900 and 1940" is taken from this article. It shows eight infertile couples involved in the exchange of spouses; when one of the new combinations became fertile, that new couple became a conjugal family or, if a couple remained childless, they would decide to adopt. Of the 10 individuals involved in the exchange, the outcome of which was new conjugal families, 5 were shamans. For the demographic aspects of matrimonial alliance in the Central Arctic, see Damas 1975a.
50. See Balandier's (1988) interesting essay on the relationship between Order and Disorder in traditional society; his somewhat dualist approach prevents him, however, from seeing the centrality of the overlaps and the ternary dynamic which I am seeking to bring out here. See also the article by H. Hutchinson (1977) on "Order and Chaos in the Cosmology of the Baffin Island Eskimo," of which a similar criticism can be made.
51. I am aware that, like Mauss and Beuchat's *Essai*, my analysis may seem to favour those factors which ensure the proper functioning of Inuit society and to ignore disfunctions, crises, and antagonisms. However, my ternary approach to shamanism, which I intend to be dynamic and thus to integrate disorder, crisis and change, enables me, I believe, to escape criticism for functionalist reductionism.
52. Since the French publication of this paper, the author has published another paper devoted to the astronomical context of the Tivajuut rituals and festivities: "Frère-Lune (Taqqiq), Soeur-Soleil (Siqiniq) et l'intelligence du Monde (Sila)" in *Études Inuit Studies* 14(1-2) (1992).

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