KIVGIQ: A CELEBRATION OF WHO WE ARE

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To my mind, there is nothing which civilization can supply which can take the place of healthy exercise, social enjoyment, commercial advantage, and spiritual uplift of these dances. Where missionary sentiment is overwhelming they are gradually being abandoned; where there is a mistaken opinion in regard to their use they have been given up altogether; but the tenacity with which the Eskimo clings to these ancient observances . . . is an evidence of the vitality of these ancient rites [Hawkes 1914:19-20].

In January, 1988, Kivgiq, the Messenger Feast, was reborn on the North Slope. The last formal Messenger Feast had been held at Wainwright in 1914-15, with guests from Barrow attending [Spencer 1959:211]. The "new" Kivgiq has become as important as the "old" Kivgiq, which was: " . . . the principal social event of the year" [:210].

In Spencer's opinion, Kivgiq's significance could not be underestimated:

> . . . for communities that lacked formalized political controls, the Messenger Feast served as an integrating element, one which enforced the otherwise vague sense of community solidarity. [:ibid]

The A.N.C.S.A. corporations, borough and village governments of Arctic Alaska integrate modern Inupiat communities economically and socially. These institutions also provide residents with some sense of community solidarity. They are "Western" institutions, though, based upon non-Inupiat concepts of social organization. The modern Kivgiq is a vibrant Inupiaq custom which fosters Inupiat community solidarity through the rejuvenation of tradition.

Kivgiq helps maintain the extended family relationships which undergird Inupiat society. Kivgiq blends traditional and modern values. North Slope community integration is enhanced through Kivgiq.

Many changes have occurred in the lives of local Inupiat in the years since the Navy began oil exploration and construction on the North Slope in 1944. The material culture has been transformed due to the increased availability of cash, and social problems have resulted from the increased abuse of alcohol [Worl and Smythe 1986:49]. As drastic as the changes have been, the Inupiat have maintained a strong identity. Barrow in particular has maintained its community identity [:379]:

> Barrow is unique in the high level of community integration which has been maintained throughout this century, and it continues to be characteristic in the modern setting. The integration is effected through extended family relationships and, in the recent period, through the Inupiat's use of new and formal institutions in the development and improvement of the community.

Kivgiq consists of three days of Inupiat dancing, singing, story and joke telling, trading, bartering and

socializing, all of which reinforce North Slope Inupiat unity. Kivgiq brings North Slope villagers together in Barrow for the event, helping to strengthen kinship and partnerships. Kivgiq fosters traditional values such as sharing, spiritual guidance, storytelling, respect for elders and gratefulness for local game animals. Kivgiq promotes leadership qualities. Kivgiq is a celebration of living the Inupiaq way.

KIVGIQ AS A SOCIO-RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL

Kivgiq was practiced by both Bering Sea Eskimo and Inupiat people. Ray [1967:35] noted social and religious aspects of the Messenger Feast ceremonial:

> From the Kuskokwim to Point Barrow, the Messenger Feast integrated homage to game animals, entertainment, feasting, trade, and romance.

Spencer [1959:211] contended that Kivgiq was more social than religious, but broadly stated:

> . . . [there are] one or two religious suggestions which apply to the festival. The umealit, owners of boats and crew leaders, were those who officiated at the festival and who acted as principal hosts. By definition, of course, such men had the greatest wealth in the community and were, by virtue of their continuing gift giving, able to command the loyalty of their respective crews. Since the community was divided, among other ways, along the lines of whaling-crew membership, and since each crew had its respective ceremonial house (karigi), it follows that the Messenger Feast served to implement the socioreligious solidarity of the whaling crew. Likewise, certain restrictions and prohibitions applied to those who participated as leaders in the Messenger Feast.

Kivgiq's role as an Inupiaq religious feast originated in ceremonial acts of respect for spirits which controlled game animals. Dances and mask performances were ways of showing respect and thanks to the spirits. Other religious aspects of the "traditional" Kivgiq include the restrictions and prohibitions which leaders were compelled to follow, and the holiness of the messenger staffs [Osterman 1952:103]. Bessie Ericklook remembers her father describing shamanic acts which were once part of Kivgiq [NSB v.2:8]:

> . . . he would mention of a shaman breathing out fire a long string . . . and whoever got singed would end up dead shortly thereafter. And the Inupiat word for it is "Tagvaq." So therefore if Kivgiq is revived we won't be able to do all that was done in it . . . it will be rather different, as shamanism was also included.

This refers to the practice of tarfvartuaq or "fire test" which occurred during the greeting of the Kivgiq guests as told to Rasmussen [Osterman 1952:107]. If anyone was singed with the tarfvat (torches) during the fire test, it was a bad omen. Kivgiq's shamanic component was central to the feast.

Another reference to shamanism and Kivgiq was noted by Arctic John Etalook [Riley nd: 5]. While camping at Nigliq at the mouth of the Colville River one summer, Etalook's grandfather spent the evening in Etalook's tent:

> My father had binoculars which he uses for hunting. He [grandfather] would point the binoculars towards Barrow, inside the tent. How was he to see anything? I guess he was using his shamanistic powers to see what was going on over there. So he would say something once in a while as to what he sees. He was one of those kind of shaman.

Although the Inupiat have adapted to the 20th century, the Inupiaq universe is still seen by many as ordered through bonds between the human world, the natural and the supernatural worlds. Events in one can and do affect the other. For instance, at the 1989 Kivgik, during the utuqqaqtaq performance by the Point Hope group, a mechanical device of whalebone spun to end the dance did not spin freely. It is considered an omen of poor hunting conditions. Kivgiq traditions embody and preserve the Inupiaq worldview.

The modern Kivgiq has religious connotations although it is not a formal religious ceremony. A local Assembly of God congregation member who attended in the 1989 Kivgiq commented that he had never participated in a celebration filled with more genuine expressions of joy. Other non-churchgoing participants commented that they were caught up in "the spirit" of Kivgiq. This "spirit" was described as an aura of spiritual feeling, almost like an anatkuq [shamanic] spirit flowing through the participants. This religious or spiritual aspect of the modern Kivgiq is a result from the participants renewing their socio-religious

bonds through food-sharing, dancing and gift-giving.

Another socio-religious facet of the modern Kivgiq was evident in the invocations given at the start of the 1989 Kivgiq. Herman Rexford, an elder from Kaktovik prayed that joy would fill the air during Kivgiq. He asked that there be no problems during the festivities. The problems he alluded to were problems with substance abuse. Barrow City Mayor Nate Oleman commented that present and former substance abusers can find hope in Kivgiq, and that Kivgiq provides many reasons for Inupiat to be proud of who they are.

Kivgiq has ties to the growing sobriety movement among Alaska native people. Trading partnerships play a central role in Kivgiq. These partnerships involve pairs of friends or relatives who ritually exchange gifts at Kivgiq. Partnerships provide an infastructure for dealing with substance abuse. Partners trust and care for each other, and can be relied upon for assistance in times of stress. Kivgiq may eventually include a formal component for treating substance abuse by incorporating traditional trade partnerships into a formal healing process.

THE TRADITIONAL MESSENGER FEAST [KIVGIQ]

"Traditional" Inupiat culture is difficult to define because Inupiat ethnographic data have diverse origins. Ethnographic data collected by anthropologists in the 20th century has limited applicability to the prehistoric past. Hall [1984] discussed ethnography's limits in the interpretation of archaeological resources. Limits stem from population replacement, informant disagreement and what Hall terms "leveling" of cultural knowledge in northern Alaska [:137]. These limits are also applicable when using ethnography to reconstruct prehistoric Inupiat social life, therefore the word "traditional" is used provisionally in regards to Kivgiq.

Hawkes [1914:19] described the Arctic ceremonial season:

> The Dance Festivals of the Alaskan Eskimos are held during that cold, stormy period of winter when the work of the year is over and hunting is temporarily at an end. At this season the people gather in the kasgi to celebrate the local rites, and at certain intervals invite neighboring tribes to join in the great

intertribal festivals . . .

The traditional (and modern) Inupiaq Messenger Feast featured pre-arranged gift exchanges. In the Kivgiq there was:

> . . . the concept of validation of status and the opportunity to achieve the highest social rank that Alaskan Eskimo society provided [which] indicate[s] a marked parallel to the Northwest Coast idea. [Spencer 1959:227]

Spencer compared the Messenger Feast with the Northwest Coast potlatch:

> . . . there is much in the feast suggestive of the potlatch exchanges of the aboriginal Northwest Coast. . . . the feast is indeed a rephrasing of the basic potlatch idea . . . a man of substance in the community stood to enhance his social status by his participation in the feast, and it is also evident that he depended for support in it on the good will and assistance of his followers. [ibid]

The Northwest Coast potlatch was a ceremonial avenue for distributing surplus. The practice may have originated on Vancouver Island's west coast where large amounts of surplus whale and other sea mammal products were often available aboriginally [Haggarty 1986:pers. comm.]. At this fundamental level, the potlatch and Kivgiq are indistinguishable. However, Lantis reminds us [1947:68] that the basic difference between the potlatch and Kivgiq lies in the fact that at Kivgiq was literally an exchange of goods, whereas potlatching involved wholesale distribution of goods.

Spencer addressed the effect of Euroamerican contact on the Kivgiq: "There is no concept of the staggering rise in the exchange of surplus goods that characterizes the area farther to the south" [:227]. The "staggering rise" in the potlatch which Spencer notes was a result of socioeconomic conditions unique to the Northwest Coast during the historic era. The arrival of large quantities of trade goods in the Arctic did have some effect on the type and quantity of Kivgiq exchange goods. Spencer notes:

> . . . the advent of the European whalers with their trade goods lent an added impetus to the Messenger Feast, the new items allowing so much more latitude for distribution and largesse.

Other similarities between Kivgiq and the Northwest Coast potlatch include the use of box drums, screens, elaborate invitations, and entertaining mechanical devices. The similarity between the Kivgiq origin story and Northwest Coast thunderbird myths is striking. The origin of the Kivgiq is explained in an ancient myth in which an eagle taught mankind to sing and dance [Osterman 1952:110]. A version of the myth was told to Rasmussen by Sagdluaq of Colville River [ibid:38-42]. A hunter learned how to feast and how to build festival houses from an eagle. The myth is similar to Northwest Coast myths in which a boy is taken into the thunderbird's home, given special powers, then returns to share his powers.

According to Margret Lantis [1947:67], Kivgiq or the Messenger Feast differed from informal trading feasts, or formal "trade fairs":

> . . . [the Messenger Feast] was also a hunting festival to the extent that life-like performances depicting the habits of animals and scenes of hunting and warfare were given by masked dancers to please the spirits. The name comes from the custom of formally inviting other villages to take part in the festival and notifying them of the kind of gifts that were expected, this of course requiring messengers . . . Sometimes a festival of this general type had no religious elements but was only a meeting of people from different villages for formalized trading. In this case the dances and songs were given as greetings, eulogies, and for entertainment.

Spencer [1959:210] summarized the basis of the formal Kivgiq: "Basically, the feast lay in the invitation of the umealit of one community by those of another to attend and engage in an economic exchange."

Spencer [:213] described the nature of the Messenger Feast partners:

> One sent to one's kiimik [partner] a specific message via the selected two messengers. To each messenger the same set of messages were given by the various hosts. These were couched in formal language and often were given at considerable length. They involved songs as well as a formal statement of invitation. And they were concluded by a listing if the items which the host expected to receive from his guest.

Hawkes [1919:19] noted the types of items exchanged in Northwestern Alaska:

> For instance, the northern tribes visiting the south bring presents of reindeer skin or muktuk to eke out the scanty supply of the south, while the latter in return give their vistors loads of dried salmon which the northerners feed to their dogs.

Spencer [ibid] noted that no village could afford to hold Kivgiq every year. He was told that the invited village was selected on the basis of existing trading and joking relationships between community leaders. The Kivgiq location depended upon which community could afford to invite partners [ibid]:

> Such invitations were extended at various times by all the communities up and down the Arctic slope. The village of utkeagvik [Barrow] held such feasts with nuwuk [Point Barrow] at the point, with Wainwright, and with Icy Cape. To the east, invitations were likewise extended to Barter Island and the the Colville River settlements.

A Kivgiq hosted by Utkeagvik in the early 1900's ended in tragedy. Colville River people were the invitees and were infected by a measels epidemic while at Utkeagvik. The people, on advice of their shamans, returned home, and most died along the way amidst the gifts they had received at Kivgiq [Brower 1942:].

Waldo Bodfish, Sr. identified an important Kivgiq location at the headwaters of the Kuukpik River, inland from Wainwright [Kisautaq 1981:139]:

> Let's get together, it is said that they would gather together from everywhere when they are to have a messenger feast, when they are to do something they use it as a gathering place sometimes, this Kanianiq.
>
> When they are to have an Eskimo dance, when they are to have some fun, when they are to have some competitive games, first they would inform each other all fall, then gather together.
>
> Somewhere along Kanianiq's river.
>
> Then after they have celebrated something similar to Christmas, it must have been as if they celebrated Christmas, they would all leave in different

directions, some of the people-of-Kanianiq travelling to the coast.

Samuel Agnasagga of Wainwright also mentioned Kivgiq places:

> Also I have heard about Barrow, Wainwright, and Utuqqaq having a kivgiq, more than once. Also the most important place for Kivgiq would always be at "Kunianiq" up above Utaqqaq, which was abandoned later, as its people moved away [NSB 1988 v.2:3].

Other Kivgiq places have been noted by North Slope Borough elders. Dinah Frankson mentioned that her father was a messenger runner between Point Hope and the Kobuk River people [v.1:1]. Patrick Attungana noted messengers from Point Hope were sent to Kotzebue and Noatak [v.1:3]. Justus Mekiana of Anaktuvuk Pass heard of messengers sent from Tulugaq near Anaktuvuk Pass to Noatak, and also noted that a messenger feast had occurred at Uuliktuk, at the mouth of the Colville River [v.1:5]. Oliver James Agnashuk of Wainwright told of a messenger feast at Wainwright when he was very young in which runners were sent to Pinusugruq, on the coast about 30 miles north of Wainwright [v.1:6]. Samuel Kunaknana described a Kivgiq held at Uliktuq "long, long ago" which he heard about from the elders of his youth. Mr. Kunaknana stated that people from east of Wainwright and "probably from Canada also" were invited [v.2:5]. Arctic John Italook also described his knowledge of Kivgiq, and noted Uliktuq as the site of Kivgiq between inland and coastal people [Riley 1988:7].

The testimony of modern Point Hope elders echoes Spencer's statement that the Point Hope people had Kivgiq festivals with Cape Prince of Wales and other communities in the Bering Sea area [1959:211].

THE MODERN KIVGIQ

Kivgiq dances had been held in conjunction with Christmas and New Years celebrations on the North Slope since the last formal "Messenger Feast" was held in 1915 [Van Valin 1941:53-56]; [Milan 1958:25-28]. Kivgiq, with its emphasis on gift-giving and singing, is similar to Christmas, and the events seem to have been combined during the mid 1900's. In fact, Spencer [1959:214] notes " . . . the modern Christmas and New Year dances at Barrow follow the old Messenger pattern." The competitive races which were once part of Kivgiq have been held for years during the

week between Christmas and New Year's.

The first formal Kivgiq event on the North Slope since 1915 was held in January 1988 under the direction of Rex Okakok, Special Assistant to North Slope Borough Mayor George Ahmaogak. The success of the 1988 Kivgiq has resulted in the establishment of Kivgiq as an annual event.

The 1988 Kivgiq was highlighted by the distribution of large numbers of valuable gifts by Amos Lane of Point Hope, an elder who has subsequently passed away. Those who attended that Kivgiq still talk about Amos' generosity, and how he embodied the spirit of Kivgiq.

Kivgiq 1989 was held in the Barrow High School Gym on January 5, 6 and 7. The event began with invocations and welcoming speeches by elders and dignitaries. Elders who remembered Kivgiq from their youth, or who remembered Kivgiq stories came to the microphone in the gym and told the audience their recollections.

Ross Angasuk described yugaq, an informal gift giving which occurred between neighboring groups and didn't involve formal messengers. In addition, David Frankson of Point Hope stated that two qarigis (festival house) at Point Hope - the qan jmaktuut and the unjasiksikaat had yugaq in the past. Ross Angasuk also talked of ulugiaq - the arrow shooting episode directed at the spirits [see Osterman 1952:107]. Ross noted that this practice never occurred inside, always out of doors.

Harriet Kasak of Nuiqsut told how important dancing with one's maglak gift is prior to giving the gift away. Dancing with the gift, then giving it and dancing with the recipient are the correct sequence for maglak. She told how her father didn't like to dance, so he made her give away his gifts. She was expected to dance with the arrows he was giving away, but, she admitted, she never liked to do it when he asked her.

Jacob Lane of Point Hope described the special personal songs one uses when giving away gifts. He currently has his grandfather's song for giftgiving. Some gifts were large. Gift givers from one kargi had special phrases associated with gift giving.

Dinah Frankson, also of Point Hope, talked about kimi. When someone from Point Hope wants to give a partner a gift, and wants the drummers to play their song, they "kimi" - the action of skipping. The little skip is a device which

results in a growing feeling of anticipation in the audience as they wait to see who is going to be "maglak-ed."

Mark Ahsogak of Barrow said that his father asked for skins from his trading partner, so he would have something soft to sit on.

Samuel Kunaknana of Barrow descibed the messenger pole and use of marks on the pole which designated gift requests. He noted how difficult yet important it was for the runner who carried the pole to remember what was asked for in the invitation/gift-exchange.

Later that evening the Barrow, Atqasuk, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, Anaktuvuk Pass, Wainwright, Point Hope and Point Lay dance groups paraded into the Barrow High School gym to perform welcoming dances. The dancing hasn't changed all that much since Rasmussen's visit in the 1920's [Osterman 1952:28]:

> . . . The men radiate strength: in all their movements they are supposed to make an attractive and harmonious display of the suppleness of their bodies: and whenever the chorus joins in, and as often as the words of the song occasion it, they put . . . humor into their arm gestures and body writhings.
>
> The men moved about constantly, wheras the female dancers scarcely moved from where they stood, swaying at the hips, now on their toes, now on their heels, their arms keeping perfect time with the rythym of the music. Their object is to represent charm, beauty and femininity; and truly, with their half-closed veiled eyes and their light, graceful movements they captivated the onlookers and made an extremely effective foil to the wanton muscle-play of the men.

The dancing lasted until the early hours of Friday morning, and the festivities resumed Saturday afternoon.

The Barrow Woman's Club put on a talent show featuring singing, comedy and dance. There was a skin-sewing modeling session - uuksi (women wearing something they had made; having it critiqued) during which the talents of women skin-sewers were admired.

After the uuksi session, ajaupiaq (messenger poles) were paraded around the gym by the messengers, and partnership gift-exchange messages were read. Then the dancing resumed, with the dance groups performing in reverse

order from the previous evening. The dancing lasted well into Saturday morning with many uplifting performances. One of the highlights of the evening was the gift of a drum by John Tingook, a drummer from Point Hope to Warren Neakok of Barrow during the performance by the Point Hope group. Warrem was without a drum, and graciously accepted the fine gift. He later unselfishly loaned it back to John for the rest of the Point Hope portion of the dance, and John was obviously glad to be able to continue drumming. The warmth and grace which characterized this exchange is an example of the spirit of generosity which pervades Kivgiq.

There is a difference between the formal trade partnerships (kiimik) and the gift exchanges between kin and friends (maglak). A trade partnership is characterized by message-sending and reciprocity of gift giving. There is often an exchange of gifts which are difficult to obtain in one's home area. Examples of requests in 1989 included a walrus head, walrus skin delicacy, whaling equipment and caribou back strap.

The guidelines for formal partnerships may need to be re-defined to fit the modern age, or at least they need to be more widely understood. For example, at the 1989 Kivgiq, a man from Nuiqsut asked individuals from Barrow for whaling bombs, whaling guns and other expensive whaling gear. According to one of the Barrow men, the man is a business associate, and not a trade partner. In the past, this request would not even have been made, let alone considered, since the requestor was not a trading partner with the requestees. The requestees have decided they will honor the request. They feel that the need to adhere to the spirit of giving supercedes the lack of protocol in this matter. The incident shows that guidelines for formal partnerships have been forgotten by some and are being adapted to fit modern circumstances.

The final day of Kivgiq featured a community potluck attended by hundreds of people. Caribou, duck soup, muktuk and other delicacies were enjoyed by the participants. The evening dance performances were anxiously awaited.

The Barrow, Wainwright, Nuiqsut and Point Hope dance groups each performed the kalukaq [box drum] dances. The first dance began with the leader wearing a loon head dress as he lead the dancers single file onto the dance floor. They circled the floor before exiting. The kalukaq was suspended from the ceiling, and was gripped by a handle by the drummer. During one of the dances, the box drummer held the box by its handle and moved it in various positions

thereby directing the actions of the dancers. The final dance involved pairs of a male and a female dancer doing short freestyle dances in which the sex roles of the individuals were sometimes reversed - the females doing more masculine dances and the vice versa. These short dances were very entertaining freestyle events which elicited lots of cheering from the audience.

The utuqqaqtaq [traditional or "old" dance] performance by the Point Hope group was the final event of Kivgiq 1989. The performance had not been done outside of the Point Hope community before, so no cameras or tape recorders were permitted. Dinah Frankson described the dances in Inupiaq, but her comments were neither recorded nor translated. In order to respect the wishes of the Point Hope elders, I will not describe these sacred dance performances other than to say that they featured masked performers, a mechanical doll, frontlets and fancy dance clothing. The dances were very similar to those described in Appendix A. The 11 dances held the audience spellbound, and the performance was the apex of the 1989 Kivgiq celebration.

Following the utuqqaqtaq performance, drummmers from all the villages joined in a final series of songs. The crowd, sensing the finale, danced with added energy even though it was well past midnight. This final hour of dancing brought the Kivgiq to a close, but the spirit of warmth and friendship lingered on into the January night, and people leaving the festival were overheard making plans for the 1990 Kivgiq.

APPENDIX A.

In 1924, Knud Rasmussen talked with many North Slope Inupiat about their culture. He was told details of the Kivgiq, or "Great Trade Festival" [Ostermann 1952:103-112]. A man from King Island named Arnasungaq had participated in the festivals as a messenger, and told Rasmussen a great deal about Kivgiq. Although Arnasungaq was from King Island, names of Point Hope people and kargis appear in his Messenger Feast account. It is likely that he participated in feasts with Point Hope people, as the Point Hope people feasted with groups to the south. This lengthy description of Kivgiq is extracted from the detailed account which Rasmussen compiled with Arnasungaq's help [ibid]:

> When the hunt has been unusually sucessful, and there are large stores of meat and delicacies, one settlement will send two young men as messengers to another.
>
> The settlement sending the message is called the kivggit, and the one receiving it arpataussut. The two young messengers are known as kivgaq.
>
> Each kivgaq is provided with a stick: ajaupiaq, on which a ring is marked with a red stone: ivishau; sometimes they use stones of different colors . . .
>
> This ring represents the name of an invited guest . . .
>
> Every ring made on the stick means the name of an inviter and a guest, and it is of great importance that the messenger should remember the invitations in the proper order . . .
>
> Fastened to the end of the stick are two tufts of eagle's down, the attachment of which at once makes the stick holy; this again means that no work of any kind can be done as long as the stick is in the festival house.
>
> Over their eyes the two messengers bear a broad line: isgaq, painted with a soft dark stone: torssumiutaq; if the line is very broad it means that the hosts have very large stores of meat, but if it is narrow, the guests must not expect any abundance.
>
> When the two messengers arrive, all the men proceed to the festival house; qagsse . . . all the people of the settlement sit behind a kind of curtain and cannot be

seen by the messengers. The invitations are then issued, first one and then the other messenger calling the names in turn until all the rings, i.e. the names, have been gone through. . .

When all have been invited the curtain falls and the two messengers have to be fed by those who have received invitations . . .

The kivggersuat have as their special umialik an eagle, that is invisible; it is the soul of an eagle once being used by the first kivggersuat [see Osterman 1952:38-42], and this eagle will not tolerate any food being left over . . . The two pieces of eagle's down on the invitation sticks are in fact a symbol of this eagle.

The eagle symbol is carried through everything connected with the trade feast. . . a stuffed eagle on a long pole is passed into the qagsse through the window in the roof . . . It is from the inner thigh of this eagle that the down is taken for the invitation sticks.

As soon as the messengers have passed the invitations on and have rested . . . they must return to their own settlement and report on the result.

When their people see them coming . . . they must hide behind a curtain [in the qagsse] exactly in the same way as the invited people were concealed from the messengers.

When the two arrive inside the qagsse . . . they communicate some message or other sent by the invited guests usually in the form of a jest, whereby the hosts becomes confused and in the end have no idea whether their invitation has been accepted or not.

The point is that those invited may not be able to accept . . . If they have had a bad year and caught nothing, they would be ashamed to come and receive handsome presents without giving something in return.

Then when confusion was rife, the truth would come out.

The moment the messengers have delivered their answers, all the men in the qagsee fall upon them and search them; for disposed about their clothing . . . are small pieces of wood about the size of a match, and the

number of these indicates how many sledges will be coming. This is a scene which gives cause for a good deal of amusement. . .

Then the arrival of the guests is awaited. . .

There must now be dancing and singing in order to find a partugssaq - a young man who can be sent out to meet the guests. . .

In this manner every host has his own partoq, and a sledge is now dispatched, usually drawn by young girls because girls are the faster. Sometimes the distance traversed is long.

Now when the guests catch sight of the partut or welcomers, they halt and sing a song. . .

When the singing comes to an end the welcomers one by one walk, or rather hop with arms outstretched as during a dance, and place themselves behind the guests. When all are in position behind the guest each one is to honor, they hop forward and now stand in front, but this time as they reach their new position they say: So-and-so has sent me to meet so-and-so. . .

When the welcomers have sung their first song of welcome . . . there is a race for the qagsse. . . If one of the guests gets to the qagsse before the welcomer he must run round it, and the saying then is that a stranger has taken the qagsse from its own people. This is looked upon as a disgrace, whereas there is great jubilation if one of the welcomers gets there first. . .

After [a] feast there is a general song-festival in the qagsse, comprising the people of the settlement and the few guests who have been able to keep up with the young runners. . .

Then at last come all the long-awaited guests, men, women and children, whole trains of sledges, all in festival dress, which means new, not thick-haired skins (torsrungivtunik).

The guests come to a halt in front of the settlement, where they are again met by special envoys . . . old men and children. . .

. . . before the guests approach close to the houses

there still remain various ceremonies.

The guests then line up in a long row in front of the settlement, and at once all the local people turn out with drums . . . Some songs have to be sung in the open air before the qagsse is occupied . . .

. . . Then comes the tarfvartuaq, or fire test.

Two men with long burning tarfvat (torches) come running out of the qagsse . . .

These two torchbearers have to be dressed in worn-out, shabby, half-bare furs with naked arms, no hood . . . and this no matter how cold the weather is.

The tarfvartuat now run in and out among the arpatut, hold the torches close to their faces, in between their legs, close to their furs, etc., shouting: a Kangianeq-dweller wants to thaw you out. This if the tarfvartuaq was born at Kangianeq, as he must always name his place of birth.

When the fire-test is over, two more ragged men make their appearance, one behind the other, both archers, their faces blackened beyond recognition, their kamiks pushed down . . .

One archer steals along the rows of arpatat (the guests), the other along those of the kivggersuat (the hosts). They advance by dance-hops . . . and under the arm is a bow with a sharpened iron-headed arrow. They hop in and out between the rows, mysterious, suspicious-looking, awesome . . . until halting in front of one of the biggest men, one in each row, they present the bow and aim at him, then shoot the arrow over his head. They do the same in the second row, and simultaneously everybody raises his arms in the air, thus shooting all evil and danger away from the feast-makers.

Songs are then sung . . . [and] all proceed to the house where the guests are given the welcome-food they wished for.

The two messengers (kivgat) now divide, one being a kind of herald for the arpatath, the other for the hosts (kivggersuat).

At last comes the great moment when the guests are to

enter the qagsse. First the messenger who has been attached to them, followed by the guests, and he shows each one his place, every guest sitting on the kind of fur he wished for. When all the guests are seated, the messenger takes up his position at the outer end of the entrance . . .

While the hosts sqat there [at the back of the house] with their backs to the guests, a particularly powerful drummer strikes his drum - a thunderous beat - every time a guest comes inside. This particular drum is called katdlukaq. It is not round, but square or oblong; sometimes an ordinary drum is fastened to its other side for the purpose of intensifying the sound. This katdlukaq is fastened to a post hanging loose from the roof so it can be moved to and fro . . .
Midway between hosts and guests is a wooden doll (inunguaq), named pioraq (piungitsaq); . . . in its hand it has a small drum of very good tone, and the whole contrivance is so made that it can move its arms and head and beat the drum when a man behind pulls certain strings.

When a female guest enters, the doll turns its head towards her and sends her a sigh.

The pioraq is made merely qinerlautarquvdlugo: to give guests something to wonder at . . . there is nothing religious about it. . .

When all the guests are inside, a tremendous blow is struck on the festival drum, at which signal the kimngit slowly rise, swaying at the knees, first half squatting and slowly turning . . . until at last they are standing straight up and facing their guests.

The song over, the drummer sounds the festival drum again . . . Then each host sings his song in which he embodies his desires - the things he wants of the guests . . . the two settlements bartering their property with each other.

The gifts exchanged are called marlautit.

This over, the great feast begins . . . When the guests have received all they wish in the form of furs and other valuables . . . they are supposed to take the festival house from the settlement people . . . This means the qagsse is now the property of the guests.

Then the festival begins all over again, except that the roles are exchanged. This in order to provide an oportunity for reciprocating with other gifts of food.

If there are many people in a settlement and if the guests come in large numbers, the trading transactions are not completed in a single day; it may take several. If the people of the settlement have large stores of food, the guests may remain there for weeks . . .

It is the custom that the guests should return the hospitality when their hunting has been so profitable that they can receive guests in a worthy manner. They always endeavor to akimavoq, i.e. outbid one another in meat and gifts . . .

When the trade festival is over, and the guests are ready to go home, the guests gather all the sacred objects used during the ceremonies . . . for a big bonfire away from the settlement . . . There it is ignited, the arpatat or guests singing new songs, i.e. the ones they have learned of their guests.

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