THE TUPILAQ: IMAGE AND LABEL: UNDERSTANDING EAST GREENLAND CARVINGS

by

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This thesis attempts to understand the nature of the Greenlandic image "Tupilaq" in traditional Kalaadlit culture and in its modern context. The same term is applied today in Greenland to a variety of images carved as small figures for the tourist or art markets. This thesis examines the ways in which the images and the application of the term have changed.

This study describes the traditional context of the TUPILAQ image and establishes a time frame for the inception of carvings labelled "Tupilaq". Data used to support this investigation were drawn from ethnographic records, historical accounts, and museum exhibit reports. It becomes clear that the Tupilaq figure exists as a distinct and new category of material culture which stands apart from its mythic image.

An analysis of these carvings and interviews with their carvers show that the content of Tupilaq figures is not what their label implies. The analysis is carried a step further, examining the development of this carving production, the market for these carvings as cultural artifacts, and the concerns of their producers and consumers. This investigation demonstrates that the ways in which East Greenlanders modified and continue to modify this carving production relates directly to their necessity to establish their group's identity in a changing
cultural environment. This thesis shows that the label -Tupilaq- is the symbolic link between traditional and contemporary society.

In conclusion, interpretation of material culture is discussed as it applies to Tupilaq figures; we need to go beyond the label for a more adequate interpretation of the content and the occurrence of cultural images as material objects.
The reader will find several word usages in this study which are perhaps unfamiliar. The word KALAADLIT is more commonly used in East Greenland, instead of the term INUIT, and refers to "the people". In West Greenland it is spelled KALAALLIT, but I use the East Greenlandic form. The word ANGAKKOK (plural - ANGAKKUT) refers to "shaman", but there are variant versions of the spelling used by writers and ethnographers of Greenland's indigenous culture. I use the spelling, ANGAKKOK, throughout this paper, as it is the version used by my East Greenlandic informants and translators. Where I have quoted from previous writers, I use their own spelling of Greenlandic words. The same holds for the term TUPILAQ (plural - TUPILAT) which refers to "a humanly created malevolent non-human being". I use capital letters for the word "TUPILAQ" to designate the traditional spirit being of that name and its traditional culture image. I use lower case letters for the word "Tupilaq" to refer to the image of the spirit being in contact times, and to the carved forms that represent spirit beings which are given this same label. Other KALAADLIT and INUIT words used in this thesis, and their English translations are given in the glossary.
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I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my late mother, Molly Balshine, who nurtured my interest in indigenous peoples, and who insisted that I "do anthropology".
INTRODUCTION

Images seem to speak to the eye, but they are really addressed to the mind. They are ways of thinking, in the guise of ways of seeing. The eye can sometimes be satisfied with form alone, but the mind can only be satisfied with meanings, which can be contemplated, more consciously or less, after the eye is closed.

(Duff 1975:12)

The aim of this thesis is to further our understanding of East Greenland culture by focusing on one image of that culture, the TUPILAQ\(^1\) in all its forms of thought and representation.

Today in Greenland (and other countries such as Canada and Denmark) the word "Tupilaq" refers to a small carved figure of stone, antler, wood, walrus or whale tooth. It has many carved forms all of which are the supposed concrete images of the mythic TUPILAQ; a humanly created harmful spirit being. In East Greenland today, one hears stories of Angakut (pl.-shamans) and Ilisitsut (pl.-evil doers) constructing TUPILAT (pl.) and sending them off specifically to kill particular hunters. Given the various verbal and visual images which the TUPILAQ may take, it is not possible for the western observer to find one image which is somehow more representative of the East Greenland concept of TUPILAQ than are the others. The meaning of these images can only be grasped by examining them within the context of their

\(^1\) In quotations from the ethnographic records, I use the lettered word forms direct from those ethnographers. There is "Tupilek" and "Tupilak", but they both refer to the same mythic being, "TUPILAQ".
own cultural reality. I propose that a new approach to a cross-cultural interpretation might lead us to a better understanding of such non-western cultural images.2

Central to this study, and to anthropology, is the problem of translation. I propose to broaden the scope of this study to deal with the more general problem of "interpretation of cultural art". By enquiring into the production of Tupilaq figures, I intend to explicate their significance for both East Greenlanders and non-Greenlanders to provide a more adequate interpretation of their possible meanings. I confine the subject of my study to the images produced by one culture, East Greenland. This has the advantage of keeping the data semantically integrated. Furthermore, confining the analysis to a single concept or image benefits the study, by allowing for a more controlled body of information. On the other hand, I have included in the context of the TUPILAQ/Tupilaq all available pertinent sources of information. My investigation encompasses not only carvers, but also their physical environment, ethnographic records, marketing personnel and consumers.

A. Problems of Interpretation

In order to develop an interpretation of the Tupilaq image,

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2 However, it must be kept in mind that an interpretation cannot stand as a truth, for it is but one way of looking at a phenomenon, translating what is seen, and then communicating what is understood.
I have elected to study both the verbal and visual images in order to give a more complete picture of "Tupilaq", from mythic being to carving subject. My study covers images of "Tupilaq" that are available in both artistic traditions; that of carver and of raconteur.

A non-western cultural phenomenon can be better understood by western culture if an appropriate frame of reference is found in which to translate that phenomenon into a comparable western idiom. For the TUPILAQ image, a first problem of interpretation arises in the objectifying of the idea, of translating mythic reality into documentary reality, or rather, a thought image into a visual image. Western scientific language has a linear quality which biases western interpretation towards a visual and lineal codification of reality, and makes it difficult to grasp a reality built on the concept of transformation and multidimensional images, such as: Man-Spirit being - Seal-Man. Lineal condification of reality is premised on apprehending and formulating experienced reality in a visual documentary form based on sequential patterns. Dorothy Lee has stated this succinctly in her assumption,

that a member of a given society not only codifies experienced reality through the use of specific language and other patterned behaviour characteristics of his culture, but that he actually grasps reality as it is presented to him in this code. 

(1950:151)
Kalaadlit reality is not limited to a lineal or fixed dimension, and their mythic reality is organized through verbal non-static, non-lineal codification systems. Rink acknowledges a difference between verbal and visual codification systems and remarked:

Greenland tales and legends presuppose an oral recitation and an audience which feels quite at home in the conditions and the life depicted in them. In other words, if they are to be properly appreciated, they should be heard in the Greenlandic tongue and in Greenland itself, and the hearer ought to be able to enter into the Greenland mode of thought.  
([1887] 1912:309)

They are intended for an audience who merely require a hint to understand the meaning.  
([1887] 1912:317)

A mythic image that is conveyed as a verbal image can only become a concrete visual image when it has gone through an adaptive process.

One has to attend to the meanings contained in the cultural construct of TUPILAQ and of "Tupilaq figures" before one is able to offer interpretations that might enhance our understanding of the carved figures. I suggest that ethnographers and art-historians have missed the essential significance of "Tupilaq carved figures" in that they have failed to perceive these artifacts as a unique and distinct category of material culture which exists apart from the mythic image of TUPILAQ. Ethnographers know of both the mythic TUPILAQ and the more recent carved Tupilaq, yet they remain quite indifferent to the unique-
ness of the carved form. The Tupilaq figure has seemed a product of a complex evolution of idea, and therefore the total occurrence, production, and presentation, a complex evolution of form. But is the evolution of the form concordant with the acculturation of the idea or image of TUPILAQ being? I think not. The impact of the acculturation process on the idea or image of TUPILAQ did not result in various carved representations of that single image. The uniqueness of the Tupilaq phenomenon is portrayed in the way in which individual carvers give tangible form to all Greenlandic mythic images under the umbrella label, "Tupilaq". It is within this cultural context that I find clues which westerners may use to reinterpret the images presented in the distinct category of "Tupilaq figures".

B. Cultural Situation and Area

I focus on East Greenland as the cultural context for the TUPILAQ because it appears to offer the most consistent historical data. Although these spirit beings are mentioned in ethnographies of North, East, and West Greenland, I confine my research to the east coast as that is where the carved form of these mythic beings first appeared. Today the production of "Tupilaq figures" has spread to all populated areas of Greenland, but the district with the largest production output is that of Angmagssalik (Kaalund, 1983:70).
Most Kalaadlit of East Greenland are descendents of what was once the Inugsuk culture or Dorset people of the Northwest of Canada. These people came to Greenland in a major migration wave between 1000 AD - 1300 AD (Bandi 1969:69, Richie 1979:27). They were hunter-gatherers who lived along the east coast of Greenland, north of Tingmiarmiut and south of Scoresbysund, centering in the area of Angmagssalik fiord. Prior to 1900 AD, they lived in extended family groupings during the winter, dividing into nuclear families for nomadic summer hunting.

Before the 1890s, East Greenlanders had very few contacts with other cultures and other Greenlanders (L.J. Dorais 1981:43) as they were cut off from west Greenland by the polar ice cap and heavy east Atlantic ice flows (Rink [1887] 1912:206-210). East Greenlanders spoke their own dialect, which was markedly different from the West Greenlandic language, which was directly derived from the language spoken by the Inugsuk people (Dorais 1981:59). The isolated pre-contact population (416 individuals - Holm [1887] 1912:68) lived mainly along the shores of three fiords: Sermiliqaq, Angmagssalik, and Sermilik.

Danish colonization, begun in West and South Greenland in 1721, reached the Angmagssalik district in 1885. The people underwent great social upheavals connected with colonization, the introduction of Christianity, and the Danish Reform Policy of the 1950s (Lynge 1976:32). During the early years, and continuing from when Greenland was formally incorporated into the
Danish kingdom in 1953 (Erngaard 1972:182), East Greenlanders underwent intensive cultural change due to the influence of Danish culture. Acculturation and assimilation were active processes in Greenland for 200 years.

The pre-contact cosmology consisted of the acknowledgement of spirits which inhabited the world and were perceived mostly by Angakkut (pl. shaman) (Holm [1887] 1912:82). It was by the agency of the Angakkok that the spirits were rendered helpful or harmful to these people, and supernatural power was sought by all able-bodied individuals. Spirit beings were capable of communicating with the people and their images were familiar to everyone.

In the proper sense of the traditional\(^3\) cognitive image, "TUPILAQ" refers to a malevolent, transformational spirit being which is composed and animated by someone knowledgable in magic and who sends this off to harm a specific individual (Rink 1875:53). Ethnographers now translate the mythic TUPILAQ into the western idiom of cultural art as carved images and representations called "Tupilaq figures".

C. Theoretical Problems

This paper is an attempt to enquire into the manner of giving symbolic and physical form to cultural knowledge that is

\(^3\) I define "traditional" as the time before Danish colonization on the east coast.
undergoing internal and external change. When speaking of carved images whose meanings and understanding are posited within a specific cultural reality,

"What we must acknowledge most of all is that our world of reality is very different from the world of reality within which they were created."

(Duff 1975:15)

Interpretation of such culture specific images as the TUPILAQ must include recognition of the multi-faceted cultural knowledge that is the context of the image. Misunderstandings of cultural imagery due to the imposition of foreign categories can be clarified through the study of indigenous categories. My research approach is an example for western interpretation of non-western cultural constructs or images.

For Tupilaq figure carvings, there is a basic problem: "How is a specific cultural thought capable of being translated into carved images for sale to out-of-culture buyers?" I propose that East Greenlanders do not relate to a carved "Tupilaq" image in the same way as they do to a verbal TUPILAQ image, because the visual image is the antithesis of the Kalaadlit semantic code for TUPILAQ. My hypothesis is that the contemporary Tupilaq figures are a cultural art form whose subjects reflect a range of concepts which may have little or nothing to do with the original cultural notion of TUPILAQ.

I shall determine empirically:
1. the range of subjects for Tupilaq figures.

2. what cultural and outside influences direct the carver's decision to produce a particular subject or form.

3. culturally viable explanations for the maintenance of the label "Tupilaq figure" in use for this entire genre of carving.

4. consumers' expectations of these figure carvings.

5. a cross-cultural interpretation of "Tupilaq figure" carvings.

D. Methodological Approach

This study is, to a large extent, an inductive search for empirical regularities. My method of research is three-fold:

1. an analysis of the mythic and oral traditions of spirit beings and the TUPILAQ, with a thorough examination of the ethnographic literature.

2. an analysis of literature on colonization of West and East Greenland, and the acculturation process as it affected changes in the traditional knowledge of spirit beings.

3. an analysis of the form and content of Tupilaq figures, interviews with carvers and story-tellers, as well as, of consumers and marketing management.

In order to carry out the third step of my analysis, four summer field studies were undertaken in the villages of Angmagssalik, Kap Dan and Kungmiut, and in Copenhagen. A total of 15 weeks were spent in East Greenland, 3 weeks in West Greenland, and 3 weeks in Copenhagen. In Angmagssalik, Thorvald Kuitse and his family took me into their home and accepted me as a daughter, which gave me an entrance into Kalaadlit homes as well as access
to carvers. Thorvald's oldest daughter, Anna Kuitse Meyer, was my major interpreter/informant over a three year period and Thorvald's step-sister, Anna Kuitse Kemper, spent two weeks as my interpreter.

Field research was conducted in three stages:

1. Participant-observation studies of carvers, marketing managers, consumers (purchasers of Tupilaq figures) and villagers.

2. Interviews with carvers, shop-keepers, Royal Greenland Trade Department personnel and consumers.

3. Questionnaires were given to carvers and to consumers (following a purchase of a Tupilaq figure) (see Appendix VI).

The objective of this thesis is to provide a more complete translation of the TUPILAQ image in all its oral, documentary and visual forms. My aim is to develop a new out-of-culture interpretation of "Tupilaq figures" and to document an ethno-history of the development of this specific carving production. Few westerners have ever questioned what they see when they look at carved Tupilat, and I intend to show how westerners might look at non-western images and see with more understanding. Interpretations of cultural images must not be set apart from the culture which created the images. Just as cultures are not static so interpretations of cultural phenomena are not static. I also intend to reveal how the present use of the term "Tupilaq" is misleading with respect to understanding what image has been carved, but is helpful for understanding and identifying the art form.

Introduction

Tupilaq figures have not been given the critical attention they deserve by historians and ethnographers of East Greenlandic culture (e.g. Thalbitzer 1914, 1936; Meldgaard 1940, 1983; Ritchie 1975, 1979). These writers and others were satisfied with the term "Tupilaq" for these multifarious figures, assuming that the carvings were individualistic representations of mythic TUPILAQ beings (PLATES 1 and 2, pages 13 and 14).

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify the Kalaadlit category of TUPILAQ being. The descriptions of other spirit beings are presented to help situate the TUPILAQ being in the structure of East Greenlandic reality. I examine descriptions of such beings (extracted from the myths), creators of such beings, and conditions under which such beings were thought to be alive.

In the first section of this chapter I give my interpretation of East Greenlandic reality and show how that reality is maintained. In the second section I identify and differentiate spirit beings from the category of TUPILAQ being. The semantic field of the TUPILAQ is explored to show that the Kalaadlit consider it to be a different category from the contemporary Tupilaq figures.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as Tupilaq figures, 1978; left side carving - in Kap Dan, right side carving - in Copenhagen.)

* Unless otherwise acknowledged, all photographs taken by the author.

** Unless otherwise stated, "plastic" refers to the black substance placed in the eye sockets of all the carved figures.
PLATES 2a and 2b


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a Tupilaq figure, 1979, in Copenhagen.)
A. Mythic Reality

"Culture exists on the conceptual level and consists of a set of concepts, ideas, beliefs, and attitudes about the universe of action and being. Cultural concepts do not just (or even necessarily) identify what exists in the objective world; cultural systems, in one sense, create the world. Reality itself is culturally defined, and cultural constructs partition this reality into numerous categories. Cultural categories are thus conceptual categories."

(Witherspoon, 1977:412)

Cultural knowledge consists of prescribed relations which set out rules of identification. An individual's thoughts and observations are perceived as facts when they are placed in a classificatory system. Collective acknowledgement of that system offers a cultural reality: certainties whose meanings are understood and agreed upon through group experience. One can say, then, that:

"All there is to know about the world is already known because the world was organized according to this knowledge."

(Witherspoon, 1977:33)

Traditional East Greenlandic knowledge maintains that the world is inhabited by people (KALAADLIT) and spirits (INUE) (Rink, 1875:37). The people know that the events having to do with the creation of the world (to which many of their stories and myths refer) took place on the same coast, which they themselves or their immediate ancestors have seen (Thalbitzer, 1912: 331). They know that spirit beings are everywhere in their world, that "the sky is also peopled with spirits" (Holm [1887]
and that INUE are ever-present. Such cultural knowledge is supported through their oral tradition, wherein thought images are transformed into verbal images thus providing the basis of their identification system.

The idea of beings transforming from man to beast to man to spirit and back is a part of their knowledge (Graburn 1978:14). They express this through the symbolic units which make up their system of myth. These beings mirror the opposition between important social and moral elements and thus function as symbolic classificatory agents which mediate between social reality and mythic reality. These cognitive images of spirit beings become interpretants of east Greenlandic cultural knowledge and give order to their cultural reality through vocal expression.

B. Oral Tradition

"Words, like thoughts, are considered to have creative power. In mythology things came into being or happened as people thought or talked about them."

(Witherspoon, 1978:22)

East Greenlanders base their cultural reality on the myths, stories, experiences and customs which are handed down orally from one generation to the next. Stories and legends are often told in the long winter evenings.

"Another pastime for winter evenings is the singing of old songs which have been handed down from olden days. The young are taught to sing by their elders. Every expression, every tone, every sound, every movement is
traditional and is handed down from the old to the young." (Holm [1887] 1912:125-26)

The limits of the East Greenlandic conceptual world are clearly defined through this oral tradition. Myths and old stories give explanations of experiences that are concurrent with the conceptual forms of their culture. These patterned verbal images are harboured in and released through their spoken language. Their knowledge and ideas of life are, therefore, constituted by specific verbal images. Osargag explains this as follows:

"Our tales are men's experiences, and the things one hears are not always lovely things. But one cannot deck a tale to make it pleasant, if at the same time it shall be true.

The tongue must be the echo of the event and cannot adapt itself to taste or caprice. To the words of the new born none give much credence, but the experience of older generations contains truth. When I narrate legends, it is not I who speak, it is the wisdom of our forefathers, speaking through me."

(Rasmussen 1908:97)

Through myth the people know what was, what is, and what will be. Their oral tradition functions as a mechanism of cultural maintenance in that it contains responses to and prescriptions for all experience. Referring to their prescriptions and responses, Rasmussen explains this as follows: "They are to them, not the only possible ones, but merely the best that they know, through the traditions of their forefathers" (Rasmussen 1908:124).
East Greenlandic stories and myths contain accounts of helpful and of malevolent beings who inhabit their world. Each of these beings is described in the myths according to its own specific domain and classification (Thalbitzer 1938:82). As symbolic agents of their mythic reality, these spirit beings are a natural part of the total consciousness of the East Greenlanders.

C. Spirit Beings Known and Accounted For

The concept and abundance of spirit beings constantly mentioned by the Kalaadlit is known to have intrigued early western oriented authors and travellers in Greenland (Holm [1887] 1912, Rasmussen 1908, Thalbitzer 1912). Several of these beings are noted, but no corroboration or compilation of attributes is attempted. The data recorded on spirit beings is peripheral to descriptions of amulets and the ornamentation of artifacts (Thalbitzer 1912:617). Records of the myths, tales, and legends include minimal descriptions of spirit beings (Holm [1887] 1912:232-305, Rink [1887] 1912:311-17, Rasmussen 1908:308-357). Symbolic content and subject matter are of far less importance to these early observers than straight description.

The logic of individual human beings and spirit beings occupying the same spatial territory reflects the East Greenland social order and the importance of spirit beings. Throughout Kalaadlit imagery, transformation is a power given to all
beings, human and otherwise, and one identifies a spirit being by the symbolic components that are present at a specific time. Each person might see a slightly different form of the same spirit being due to its being in a different stage of transformation, or due to his or her own personal vision at a particular time. All the beings are known; they exist and have names. Bodil Kaalund writes:

"....as these beings were accepted as having a definite appearance and manifestation. Nobody doubted that they looked the way they were described by the Shaman. They were realities."

(1983:64)

They are ever-present and have the ability to lead lives that correspond to those of the East Greenlanders (Holm [1887] 1912: 257,66).

According to Kalaadlit verbal categories, spirit beings are thought of as belonging to two non-oppositional states; those that are alive as human-like or animal spirit beings having their own INUA-SPIRIT, and those spirit beings not having their own INUA, but rather the spirit of someone or something else (as in our notions of ghosts or shades). Both types are fear provoking for ordinary humans but both types can also be helping spirits if the individual to whom they present themselves has the power and ability to subjugate them. Each verbal image is known and recognizable, as a distinct defined being. They all belong to the indigenous category of TORNAK (a spirit helper who
is alive of its own power) (Ebbe Josvassen, Angmaqssalik, 1983).

East Greenlander are familiar with the individual verbal symbolic patterns of spirit beings. Although, according to the ethnographic records of mythic accounts, each being is not characterized identically in all physical aspects, there are certain attributes which do not vary. Many of the names of spirit beings are concomitant with their attributes. There are the INGNERSSUIT = noseless fire people (Rasmussen 1908:327,339) and the ERKILIK = giant dog people that live inland (Holm [1887] 1912:84,266). In these instances the names define the beings in both form and attributes. Therefore, if an East Greenlander were to meet one of these beings, he would need only one detail from the total symbolic pattern ascribed to the being in order for him to recount the incident knowing which being he had met (Egon Poulsen, Kap Dan, 1982). For example, he might report that he had seen an ERKILIK that looked like a human but sprang like a dog (Holm [1887] 1912:267).

There are seven spirit beings that are often mentioned in both Holm's and Rasmussen's records. I list them with others in Appendix I according to their physical descriptions and attributes. These seven more common spirits are: ERKINGASEK, APERKETEQ, INGNERSSUIT, ERKIGDLIT, TIMERSIT, AMOTORTOK, and TORNAK (the spelling of spirit names varies according to indivi-

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4 Many spirit being names have been recorded, and I include 15 of the more common names with physical descriptions according to texts in Appendix I.
dual ethnographers). According to Kalaadlit traditional knowledge, all of these beings can be met when hunting inland, on the water, or on the ice, or they can be requested to appear for specific personal assistance if one has the special power to do so. When a TORNAK is subjugated it becomes a TARTOK (the personal helping spirit of the powerful individual who made it thus). The TORNAK and TARTOK are of the same indigenous category (Poulsen 1982), and ANGAKKUT often call on their TARTOK to help them locate and destroy TUPILAT (Holm [1887] 1912:290, Mikkaelsen 1982). The presence of TARTUT (plural) is acknowledged and accepted; they share the same spatial area as East Greenlanders and lead identical daily lives. For these spirit beings and others, the attributes are specific yet the total visual image, as it is verbally recounted, may vary.

D. The Semantic Field of the TUPILAQ

The TUPILAQ being is traditionally thought of as differing from other spirit beings. It is not a TORNAK or a TARTOK, rather, it is "a living creature, made by a human being, for the purpose of doing harm or bringing misfortune over another" (Rasmussen 1938:159). As cognitive images, TUPILAT are man-made spirit beings that transform into multi-dimensional malevolent spirit beings; "magically created beasts, composed and animated by a person skilled in sorcery who might be a shaman though not necessarily one" (Petersen 1964:73). According to Rasmussen,
the maker of a TUPILAQ "would have put the bones of various animals together, covered them with turf and clots of blood, and conjured the object into life by a special magic song" (IBID 1908:156). Most TUPILAQ beings are invisible, except to the person they are sent out to kill and/or to an ANGAKKOK during a seance. They are the most feared of all spirit beings for it is known that they have the power to kill, they are created for that specific purpose, and that they accomplish their purpose.

"Tupilat were considered to be so dangerous that if they merely appeared to the person they were to harm, he would die."
(Rasmussen 1938:164)

The person who creates a TUPILAQ is an ANGAKKOK or an ILISITSOQ, either a man or a woman who believes he or she can control supernatural power, and who is endowed with special wisdom or power (Rink 1875:39).

"An Angakok who can call down misfortune on his fellows is called an Ilisitsq; without showing himself to his victim, he can kill him with a "Tupilak", an animal made by the magician himself, as a rule a seal, which appears to the man against whom he bears a grudge."
(Rasmussen 1908:155)

East Greenlanders know who are the ANGAKKUT in their villages; they know which persons have special powers and to whom they can go for personal aid. "Whereas the Angakut commune with the spirit world in the presence of others and as a general rule help rather than harm their fellow creatures, the Ilisitsut commune with the spirit world in secret and only in order to
harm their enemies or society. Women can become Ilisitsut and make Tupilaks as well as men" (Holm [1887] 1912:100).

The TUPILAQ, known to all East Greenlanders as malevolent, is thought to be created by a human being for the sole purpose of bringing harm to another person. This reality is expressed orally in the following ways: a) personal accounts of how a TUPILAQ appeared to a hunting group and then killed a family member or friend of the raconteur; b) shamanic seances wherein TUPILAT are discovered by the ANGAKKOK as being the cause of an illness (Rasmussen 1938:165); c) personal accounts of old ANGAKKUT who have confessed to having made TUPILAT; d) traditional stories of hunters who are killed by or escape from TUPILAT (Holm [1887] 1912:280). As a cognitive image, the TUPILAQ is a product of the fundamental knowledge system of East Greenlanders. A person might control power and use it in secret for evil purposes. Only a shaman could discover who might be responsible for this as, according to East Greenland culture, "it is the ANGAKKOK who has the gift of special power and knows how to discover TUPILAT and their makers" (Holms [1887] 1912: 101).

E. Old Visions: Knowledge and Creation

It is known that the TUPILAQ is not carved - it is assembled, always in a particular pattern, and always in private. Most often it is constructed of the bones of several animals,
moss and/or turf, seaweed, and implements or possessions that are taken from a proposed victim. The assemblage could also contain parts of a corpse (Holm [1887] 1912:281, Rasmussen 1939:159). It is of less importance whether a whole animal, bones from several beasts of the same kind, or those from different beasts are used, for it is known that using bones from various birds or animals means that the TUPILAQ will possess the identity of these different creatures at different stages in its life. A TUPILAQ can alter its size and shape, transforming from one animal to the next in its search for its victim, but attacks in the mode of whichever animal form it is in when it locates its victim (Holm [1887] 1912:102). The symbolic characteristics of TUPILAT lie in the cultural logic that harbours the images of their creation. Since ANGAKKUT know when TUPILAT are about and have the knowledge to detect and catch them without being harmed themselves, it is through ANGAKKUT descriptions and discovery seances that most East Greenlanders become familiar with the characteristics of TUPILAT (Poulsen 1983).

Descriptions do vary for they depend on who has seen a TUPILAQ and who tells the story of the experience. Three examples of these accounts provide illustrations.

First is the story "Navagijak" told by Kutuluk:

"One day, when Navagijak was out hunting, he hurled his harpoon at a tupilak, although he was well aware that it was one; for it had a hood on its head, and its hinder parts were like those of a dog."

(G. Holm [1887] 1912:272)
Second is "A Tupilak Story" told by Kutuluk:

"The angakok arts commenced, and presently the tupilak came into the passageway. It gave forth all manner of sounds; now it shrieked: ungal, now erko!, now it cried like a fox, now like a grouse. It kept in the passageway all the while. The sounds changed; it sounded now like umiaks, now like kaiaks, now like the rustling of bushes, and now like seals. It uttered all these sounds because it was made of all these things." (G. Holm [1887] 1912:282)

And third is the confession of Perkitigsak, relating how he had been an ILISITSOQ, and revealing information about the TUPILAT he had sent out. His confession is recorded by Holm:

"In his anger he made a tupilak of walrus skin, fragments of the man's game and many other things. It resembled a walrus wearing women's drawers. He created and made it grow in the usual way, after which he sent it forth to kill the man who had taken the walrus from him."

(Holm [1887] 1912:102)

To create a TUPILAQ being, bones and other material are placed into a prescribed position by an ILISITSOQ who uses only his or her thumb and forefinger (Peterson 1964:72). According to several ethnographic reports of this process, it is the ILISITSOQ who knows this secret procedure and who passes this knowledge on to other ILISITSUT. If any prescribed step is left out or done in an incorrect manner, the particular TUPILAQ thus made loses its power (Rasmussen 1938:162). An example of how one goes about making a TUPILAQ is given by G. Holm:

"The most important art of the ilisitsut is to create tupileks which will kill the people against whom they are sent. They are
made from different animals, such as bears, foxes, ptarmigan, and seals. The tupilek must also contain a piece of the anorak, or the hunting spoil, or something else of the man against whom it is to be sent. It is then animated by chanting a magic charm over it. In order that the tupilek may grow, the ilisisok makes it suckle himself between his legs. Before doing this he turns his anorak so that he has the back of it in front; then he draws up the hood before his face. He sits on a heap of stones close to where a river discharges itself into the sea and makes the tupilek suckle. When the latter has grown big, it glides down into the water and disappears. It is to bring death or misfortune to the man for whom it is destined."

(Holm [1887] 1912:100)

ANGAKKUT and ILISITSUT know magic songs of a malevolent nature that blow life into TUPILAT, but these secret songs are the personal knowledge of these powerful people (Peterson 1964:75). Often other spirit beings under the power of an ILISITSOQ will aid him in composing a TUPILAQ (Holm [1887] 1912:290,299).

When life is successfully given to a TUPILAQ it does not mean that revenge will occur immediately, as it may take some time for the TUPILAQ to locate the person for whom it is destined. The TUPILAQ does not have its own power or will so it obeys its master, the possessor of such powers. It is the maker who tells the TUPULAQ whom to attack, when to attack, and where the revenge should take place (Rasmussen, 1938:162). Once a TUPILAQ has attacked its victim it disappears with no trace, but if it fails to reach the intended victim it can turn against its
creator. Tale 126, from "Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo", makes this knowledge explicitly clear:

"126. THE TUPILAK - An old man named Nikook, who had given up seal-hunting, once, entirely by chance, brought home a walrus. The middle one of some brothers with whom he lived grew jealous of him at this, and every morning repaired to the opposite shore of an island, where he secretly worked at a tupilak. Nikook got a suspicion of this, and following him, he surprised the wretch in the act of allowing his own body to be sucked by the monster, at the same time repeating the words, "Thou shalt take Nikook." But Nikook hurried down, and seized him, crying, "What art thou doing there?" At that moment the man fell down lifeless. Meanwhile the brothers had also reached the island, and on being guided to the place by Nikook, they found the tupilak still sucking the dead. They then killed it with stones, sinking it, as well as the maker of it, into the sea. During five nights Nikook was disturbed by a bubbling sound, but afterwards nothing more was perceived."

(Rink 1875:461-62)

It is the duty of ANGAKKUT to locate and catch TUPILAT that have turned on their makers and to overcome TUPILAT that are searching for intended victims. There are many stories in the ethnographic records that explain how this is done. A TUPILAQ being can be overpowered by the helping spirits of an ANGAKKOK. An example of this is provided by Narsingertek and Adlagdlak,

"When the angakut are catching tupileks, they call Erkingasek, who then catches them with his bird-dart. The angakut have him now and then for their tartok, and even sometimes visit him."

(Holm [1887] 1912:290)
Ethnographic accounts do contain descriptive stories of ANGAKKUT who have caught and destroyed TUPILAT (Holm and Rasmussen).

Men and women who are known to have ANGAKKOK power tell stories of their experiences in locating TUPILAT, and how they and their helping spirits (TARTOK) kill these malevolent beings. ANGAKKUT are known through the acts they perform, and these become known as people talk about them. Once a TUPILAQ is discovered by an ANGAKKOK it is killed during a special public ANGAKKOK performance. Once the intended victim is rid of his or her pursuer he or she can talk about the experience and often give an explicit description of that particular TUPILAQ. The TUPILAQ may also be described by the ANGAKKOK who has given the performance or by a spectator. If an individual has an ANGAKKOK as a relative or ancestor, he or she will often recount stories that prove the strength and power of his or her kin in order to raise his or her own social standing. It is through these stories that Kalaadlit have formed their cognitive images of the TUPILAQ beings and have come to know and fear them. The following presentation of one such story will provide an example of an East Greenland verbal image of "TUPILAQ".

29. A TUPILEK STORY

told by Kutuluk

"In olden days an old childless married couple came here from the south and wintered up here. When spring came, a bear was caught by the people who lived in the nearest dwelling-place up the fiord. The old folks now travelled up to them to get some of the bear to eat; but when they had en-
tered the house, the man who had caught the bear said: "Who in the world wants to have these old folks as guests?" However, they gave them some bear's flesh and blubber; but the old people did not eat of it, but tied it up to make a tupilek of it. When the bear's paws were boiled, the old people said: "If they would only give us some of them!", and when the food was divided amongst the guests, they did receive a couple of toes. But they did not eat these either, but took them home with them.

When they got home they began to long for the spring, so that they could travel south again. In the meantime the wife of the man who had caught the bear brought forth a child, which died, and the old married couple took it to make a tupilek of. They now travelled south, and the wife wrapped up the child well and put it in front of them on the horns of the umiak. When they touched land, the wife stepped out of the boat, and then the husband handed the child to her. This they did the whole way while they were journeying south.

It was not till they came to their own country again that they made from the corpse a tupilek which could kill all the children the bear-catcher's wife bore. The tupilek was given a fox's jaw and a grouses jaw, and its head was covered with dog-skin. It was then made alive. When there came time of scarcity, the bear-catcher killed his dog and sang magic charms over it, because he wanted his children to live.

Once when the bear-catcher's wife had brought forth a child which died just like the others, she journeyed up to Kernertuar-suk. She heard someone singing from up the fiord, and as she walked she saw an umiak coming down the fiord. The people in the boat were going out to have a drum-match, and they took her with them. As she was sorrowful, they did not have a drum-match, but angakok arts were to be performed by six angakut to cheer her up. She went and sat down near the place where the angakut
were to perform their arts, and the lamps were extinguished.

The five angakut performed their arts, and she expected that they should say something to her, but they said nothing. It was now the turn of the sixth angakut, who was called Akerdlegsanalik, to begin. The lamps were lit, he was given a new skin to sit on, and a smaller lamp was placed by his side. He began to beat the drum and the dried skin before the passage, and the skin on which he sat began to move.

As he was drumming, his natit slipped down and at last fell off altogether. As he drummed, he sometimes made the back of his head almost touch the ground, and he threw the drum aside and it began to move of its own accord. All this the angakok did to gladden the heart of the sorrowful one. Then the lamps were extinguished. While Akerdlegsanalik was performing angakok arts, and the drum was moving by itself, he said to the grieving woman: "It is as if you had a child in your bosom". They stayed up the whole night and performed angakok arts.

When they were about to depart, the grieving woman said to the angakut: "It would be well if you would come over to Umivik to kill the tupilek." They now all went over to Umivik, and when they came there, they cut a seal in pieces and ate it. When they had finished eating, they began to perform angakok arts in order to catch the tupilek. First the five performed angakok arts, but did not say anything to the grieving woman. It was now Akerdlegsanalik's turn to begin. The smaller lamp was lit, and Akerdlegsanalik drummed and sang. He cast the drum aside, and it went on moving by itself until at last it stood quite still. The angakok sometimes nearly touched the ground with the back of his neck and his neck and his feet were firmly planted on the ground. At the time when Akerdlegsanalik was learning to perform angakok arts and stood in front of the house, he saw some asagisat
behind the house, and it was them he used as his tartoks. When the drum rose in the air, the lamp was put out, and the arts were continued. "There is the tupilek!" said Akerdlegsanalik. It was sitting at the bottom of the platform. He lifted up the skin of the platform to stab it; but as he stabbed he chanced to pull the line, so that the harpoon head fell off, and the tupilek slipped away. "It is as if the tupilek had not gone far away," said the angakok. The tornak arts now ceased for this evening.

The following evening they took seven pieces of the grieving woman's garments, tied them up in a bundle, and hung them up under the roof. The tupilek was to creep into the garments, and then when he was well inside, they were to pull the string. The angakok arts commenced, and presently the tupilek came into the passageway. It gave forth all manner of sounds; now it shrieked: unga!, now erko!, now it cried like a fox, now like a grouse. It kept in the passageway all the while. The sounds changed; it sounded now like umiaks, now like kaiaks, now like the rustling of bushes, and now like seals. It uttered all these sounds because it was made of these things. It now entered the house and crept into the garments. The angakok said: "Dava!" and the others pulled the string. Then they struck it with their clenched fists; but while they were striking it, it slipped away through a little hole in the outermost garment, a gut-skin coat, although there was no hole in the other garments; but now a hole burst in the others, and it slipped out.

The lamps were lit, the garment was examined, and the hole was sewn up; then the lamps were again extinguished, so that they might catch the tupilek. It came now into the passageway uttering similar sounds as before, and came to the place where it was to creep into the garments. Then it made its way into the garments shrieking: "Erko! Erko!" As soon as it was well in-
side, they pulled the string and began to beat it. Those that beat it cried, "Ala, ala!", because the tupilek bit them. When at last it was quiet, the lamps were lit, and the angakok had the tupilek in his bosom; and she who had made the tupilek ran round about, in and out, putting out the lamps, while the others were trying to light a fire. The angakok said that those who were not quite well were to turn their faced inwards, and fire was drilled down in a urine-tub, in order that the tupilek's mother might not pull it out.

When the lamps had now been properly lit, they saw a nice little child with grouse's feet in its breast; but when the angakok had breathed on it, all the grouse feathers fell off. It was red as if with dried blood in the corners of the mouth, from all the dead children's souls it had eaten. It had still a dog-skin on its head, but this they ripped up. Gradually a whole pile of grouse feathers and all the things the tupilek had been made up of were heaped up about it.

When they had finished with it, they went up to the mountain above Umivik and boiled it. The bear-catchers wife brought forth a child for the last time, and it lived, as well as the child she had born (sic.) before the tupilek had been made.

The tupilek was now caught, and so this is the end of our tale."
(Holm [1887] 1921:280-83)

Thus, according to East Greenland knowledge, a TUPILAQ being is: 1) composed and created by a human being; 2) alive for a specific time; 3) in a form with the properties and images of different animals also present in the natural environment; 4) capable of being seen by an ANGAKKOK or person with special powers, and by the intended victim; 5) capable of being killed by
an ANGAKOQ and/or his helping spirit; 6) a fear inspiring image; and 7) assembled and given life for the sole purpose of killing human beings. Thus its verbal characteristics come from the cognitive image which is set in the life-world of East Greenlanders and is imbedded in the mythic reality of Kalaadlit culture. The semantic field of TUPILAT is the life-world of East Greenlanders, yet these beings occupy a very distinct cognitive category amongst Greenlandic categories and images.

All non-human beings evolve from the same Greenlandic cognitive system (cultural reality), but a distinction is made between a) spirit beings that are ever-present and capable of leading lives similar to and coextensive with those of East Greenlanders, and b) beings that are humanly created with a specific life expectancy and for the specific purpose of carrying out the intent of the creator. Therefore, as the cognitive images of these two indigenous categories are not similar, there can be no singular classificatory system in which to group both spirit beings and TUPILAT. TUPILAT are unique and distinct entities in the semantic field of East Greenlanders.

Thus, it is the indigenous categories which hold clues to cultural meanings and to the understanding of cultural images. Yet due to the imposition of foreign categories and/or the misapplication of Greenlandic categories these cultural images are often misunderstood. In order to offer an adequate interpretation of contemporary east Greenlandic cultural images it is
necessary to explicate the way in which the process of acculturation affected traditional Kalaadlit images.
II. Confrontation and Acculturation

Introduction

In this section I present ethnographic data and historical accounts which record the early period of contact between Danish and East Greenlandic cultures. I also include data concerning the acculturation of the production of east Greenlandic material culture. My purpose in this chapter is to indicate how the introduction and production of mythic images as artifacts occurred, and through the acculturation process, allowed for the form and label Tupilaq figure. This section is organized so that the events of contact, colonization, conversion, and communication and their effects on the image of the TUPILAQ are examined in sequence.

It is in the latter half of this chapter that I address the problem of the interpretation and misinterpretation of material culture. An examination of the colonization process presents evidence of pressures to restructure traditional Kalaadlit imagery in the form of adaptations in their material culture. This in turn, by rechanneling mythic knowledge, permits bi-cultural presentation of traditional images as ethnic artifacts.

A. Historical Accounts: Colonization, Conversion, and Convenience

1. Colonization

East Greenlanders were abruptly confronted with aspects of
west European Danish culture as a result of Captain Gustov Holm's sojourn in Angmagssalik in 1884-1885. According to Holm's account, the acculturation process began as follows:

"We found at Angmagssalik a branch of Eskimo who had not previously been into contact with Europeans."

"In 1884 I went to Angmagssalik with the screwbark "HVIDBJRNEN" for the purpose of establishing the missionary and trading station just mentioned. The latter was placed under the command of my former interpreter JOHAN PETERSON, now colonial governor, and of the missionary RUTTEL. These two men have worked with rare energy, perseverance and patience for the civilization of the natives. Some of the people have now been christened, and murder, polygamy, and other heathen practices are now rare, if not entirely abolished."

(Holm [1887] 1912:16)

A process of rapid acculturation was begun in East Greenland, "due to the Danish colonial power's wish to bring East Greenland to the same level of western European modernization, as there was in West Greenland, in half the time that it took the latter (colonized by the joint kingdom of Denmark and Norway in 1721)" (Lynge 1976:5). Bodil Kaalund stated:

"It was only in 1884 that contact was established on the east coast, however, which is why the development of East and West Greenland has been quite different."

(IBID, 1983:36)

The colonial policy of Denmark encouraged rapid change within an overall policy of isolation:

"The basic principle of Danish rule since Egede has been to assist the people of
Greenland to achieve the fullest possible life, protected as far as may be from the disadvantages which might accrue from connection with the outside world."
(Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1952:35)

The attitude of the colonial government towards East Greenlanders was paternalistic:

"an attitude which over centuries was confirmed by strict political, economic and religious measures of a protectionist nature."  
(Lynge, 1976:6)

The Danes felt it their duty to rescue East Greenlanders from their backward condition. Danish culture stressed and promoted a liberal (favourable to democratic reform and individual liberty), industrialized western society that maintained specifically Danish moral and religious ideologies. Thus, Danes extended their Greenland colonial policy to include the entire population on the east coast. Danes believed that the people of Angmagssalik had been saved from extinction by the timely intervention of Gustav Holm and his crew (Williamson 1953:46), and in their desire to bring them to "the fullest possible life" (Holm [1887] 1912:16), there was an implicit urge to integrate them into western European Danish culture.

The principle aim of the colonizers was "to Christianize the Eskimos, to suppress all Eskimo traditional beliefs and replace them with Christianity in its Lutheran form" (Lynge 1976:14). The most cataclysmic force in Danish colonization was Christianity. Christians suppressed Kalaadlit traditional knowledge and stressed their own belief system and social
values. The effect was to undermine the entire cultural system as it had existed prior to colonization.

2. Conversion

When Danish authorities established a settlement in east Greenland in 1895 it became clear to the Kalaadlit that admission to the Danish community required the adoption of Lutheranism (Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1952:134). Thalbitzer wrote:

"Heathens regard baptism as equivalent to incorporation in the European community."

(1912:343)

Christianity not only introduced new beliefs, but also new morals, a new pattern of social relationships, and a new symbolic/semantic domain. These brought about almost immediate changes in East Greenlandic society, belief, and knowledge. East Greenlanders had to adapt and reorganize. Rasmussen recorded a conversation with Autdaruta, who was a newly baptized "Christian", and who had been an ANGAKKOK. Autdaruta explained his newly acquired religious situation as a betrayal of specific cultural knowledge:

"I had a great many helping-spirits among the fire people. When I made up my mind to journey to the West Coast to be baptized, they appeared to me and urged me not to do so. But I did what I willed, all the same. Since then they have not shown themselves to me, because I betrayed them by my baptism."

(Rasmussen 1908:308)
The Kalaadlit were not immediately converted—they acknowledged Christian beliefs and teachings as required for adaptation to their changing world. Assimilation was a positive aspect of their traditional way of life as in their countless migrations new materials and production methods were constantly being assimilated with the old. Thus with the arrival of the Danes old symbolic sets were not negated, they became less important, but they could still be recognized. Rasmussen explained this early stage in the acculturation process:

"the accounts which I have received from old shamans who have tried to tell me about their apprenticeships and communion with the spirits made the definite impression on me that they themselves believed in it; and even shamans who have been baptized and have had explained to them by their priests and teachers that their ancient arts were nothing but lies and self deceit, to me have explained the whole question by saying that the super-natural world in which they had formerly lived had not ceased to exist, but that they themselves through their Christian faith had turned their backs on it and given up intercourse with it."

(Rasmussen 1938:103)

Mythic and oral traditions were no longer adequate as instruments of social and cultural communication and traditional mythic symbols were no longer the paramount containers of cultural knowledge (see page 17). Descriptions and cognitive images of spirit beings were still known, but their value had been discredited. Christianity was ushered in via the written word and was promoted by early catechists:
"clergy and catechists had, from 1900 taught at schools for East Greenland children."

(Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs 1952:140)

With the availability of literacy, a documentary reality began to replace mythic reality as a major instrument of cultural communication. Christianity was introduced and maintained through the written word, and thus it promoted and stressed literacy, a tool of Danish society:

"A documentary reality is fundamental to the process of governing, managing, and administration of this form of society. The primary mode of action and decision in the superstructures of business, government, the professions, and other like agencies, is in symbols, whether words, mathematical symbols, or some other. It is a mode of action which depends upon a reality constituted in documentary form."

(Smith 1973:252)

Literacy was another force which brought East Greenlanders new modes for the apprehension of reality. To Kalaadlit, the written document presented a visual image containing strict visual symbols with which to regulate the semantic domain. Literacy, as it was offered by Danish society, carried with it specific perceptual and experiential communicative forms: written Danish and written West Greenlandic Eskimo. Danish documentary reality presented new symbols to East Greenlanders and aided in the acculturation process. Literacy replaced old boundaries of cognition with new visual images which were accorded cultural value. Mythic traditions which were presented orally were not
considered concomitant with Christianity, as they contained no semblance to Lutheran doctrine, and so the Kalaadlit became receptive to the new, written communications. Thus Greenlanders accepted the rechanneling of their own cultural knowledge because of their desire to be accepted into the Danish community. Yet it was a slow process as Kaalund wrote:

"It was only in 1921 that all East Greenlanders were baptized."  
(1983:62)

3. Convenience

It was the Danes who, removed from the experience of traditional Kalaadlit culture, created written accounts and explanations of how the Greenlanders had lived and what their belief system had entailed. These Danish interpretations were given for the convenience of explicating the unfamiliar, and became a documentary reality that imposed Danish images and classifications on East Greenland culture. They were Danish accounts of Danish experience, presented in Danish. These interpretations tended to bypass cultural information that East Greenlanders coded (through verbal imagery) as relevant to their system of meaning, and consequently remained necessarily incomplete.

For example, oral mythic accounts of spirit beings lost their meaning when translated. Rink put the case clearly:

"When these emmanations from the spiritual life of a people are committed to writing, and still more, when they are translated, the poetic spirit with which they are inbred more or less evaporates."

(Rink 1912:309)
Acculturation brought about a synthesis of verbal and visual images. For the Kalaadlit to render all spirit beings visible and powerless required a reorganization of their old ideas concerning these beings and resulted in a modified symbolic classification set. Such modifications were generated by Christian precepts which negated, in varying degrees, the cultural validity of traditional images. Rasmussen met with some newly baptized Angmagssalikers and commented that:

"All those former East Greenlanders were, in spite of their baptism, only very slightly regenerated spiritually, and still spoke their own dialect....they by no means, in their hearts, considered their pagan beliefs to be deception, rather regarding them as something forbidden to them by their new faith."

(Rasmussen 1908:285)

B. Dawning History, Fading Images

The change in the perception of the TUPILAQ image had as its origin the purpose of benefiting a western European classificatory system (Thalbitzer 1912:643). It was westerners who first gave interpretations of the TUPILAQ figures and which began "the acculturation process of the Tupilaq image" as it was from this point in time that westerners included these figures in their category of "Eskimo Art." My definition of accultura-

"Those phenomena which result from groups of individuals having differing cultures coming into first-hand contact, with subse-
quent changes in the original culture of either or both groups."
(Redfield, Linton, Herskovitz 1936:149)

In order to be included in the European community East Greenlanders turned their supernaturally powered spirit images into impotent carved forms and accepted a classification system which was provided to them by the Danes. Prior to colonization, the Kaaladlit had produced potent carvings of their helping spirits in order to aid their hunting or general well-being (Kaalund, 1979:19,110). Carved figures, once traditional expressions of wide ranging multi-level images, became secular and bounded images categorically labelled "Tupilaq" under the western construct of "Eskimo art", and considered by westerners to be representative of the spirit being "TUPILAQ." Thus, carved figures became the acculturated rendition of TORNAT (spirit beings) and TUPILAT. A restructured category and a modified form evolved, which had meaning to both Danes and East Greenlanders. Non-Greenlanders began to request and purchase specific carved figures called "Tupilaq", and a new source of economic assistance and cultural pride became available to Greenlanders. Since it was "Tupilaq figures" that were requested, it was convenient for both cultures to attach this label to all figure carvings that could be placed in the new category - "representational art".

Ivory relief ornamentation and miniature figures have been carved in Greenland from 500 A.D. to the present day (Ernggaard
According to Carpenter the Dorset people (early East Greenlanders) produced tiny carvings of both animals and humans (1973:126,129,149). Figures that could not be neatly classified as human or animal were also produced, and have been considered in many Danish ethnographies as spirit representations or transformational beings (Thalbitzer 1912:617-618).

In Gustav Holm's account of his first stay in Angmagssalik, he mentions several figures as being "representations of helping spirits" (Holm [1887] 1912:120). In the earlier Danish literature he is credited with asking for a carved "Tupilaq" and this is thought to be the beginning of the present day "Tupilaq" production throughout Greenland (Royal Greenland Trade Department 1976:3). Yet Holm makes no mention of this in any of his ethnographic records. Thus, the prior statement is uncorroborated. Holm did document specific spirit beings which were carved as miniature toys, models, and as ivory relief ornamentation on various implements, (Figure 1) (Holm [1887] 1912:120) but these did not include "TUPILAQ". Carving has been a cultural medium utilized by the East Greenlanders to express and communicate cultural images having both secular and/or mythic natures.

It is important to note that the label "Tupilaq Figure" is not seen in ethnographic records describing carving, models, art or ornamentation prior to Thalbitzer's written account in 1912.

Both Hans Egede (1721) and Henry Rink (1875) have recorded
stories of TUPILAQ beings in West Greenland and have included in their writings accounts of angakkut who tried to discover TUPILAT (Rink 1875: 148,197,414,461). *Nowhere in their records do they mention specific carved figures designated "Tupilaq" by Greenlanders.* Verbal accounts of TUPILAQ beings are recorded by Holm in his material on myths and Angakkut performances (Holm [1887] 1912:101,272,280,289). After his 1887 stay on the east coast of Greenland, Holm offers a lengthy description of Angmagssalik art and ornamentation. Of this art he writes:

"As formerly they are not acquainted with drawing, engraving and painting, their artistic ideas are always represented in carving.

Their dolls and models of animals show a keen perception, prominence being given to essential characteristics.

As examples of these carvings may be named a human head on a drum handle (fig. 362), and a bear's head on a knife (fig. 42) excellently carved in ivory, further a so-called angakok-bear (fig. 45), recognizable by its thick neck and thin body, and a block of wood with carved faces on all sides, the faces being said to represent INERSUAKS (fig. 45). Both this block of wood and the angakok-bear are carved as toys."

(Holm [1887] 1912:115-116)

And of their carving he writes:

"Another form which the art of this people assumes are the ornaments which are carved in the shape of low relief figures of ivory and bone, and are fastened by means of bone nails on to hunting implements (especially throwing sticks), eye-shades, and cooper's work."

(Holm [1887] 1912:118)
"Among relief ornaments there occur occasionally effigies of certain mythical figures (figs. 48 and 49). On the throwing stick (fig. 48) several of these figures are seen; these occur not merely in the bottom row, but also higher up in the wood. The natives told us they were meant to represent TORNARSUKS (p. 83), and the low figures in the bottom-most row but one represent APERKETEKS, which, according to the description, are furnished with claws. These figures are, however, certainly quite conventional."

(PLATE 3, page 47)

"As we might naturally suppose, the craftsmen execute with their own hand the ornaments on the objects they have made; moreover — with the exception of the conventional seals and TORNARSUKS — they always produce something original, yet without departing to any great extent from the current type."

(Holm [1887] 1912:119-122)

Thus, the earliest ethnographic records from East Greenland do not include descriptions of carvings designated as representations of TUPILAQ beings. Because of a cultural tradition of carving and carved ornamentation ethnographers after Holm have assumed that the subjects depicted in the carvings are categorically the same subjects that are mentioned in the myths. Yet, as has been said, Holm never mentions a carved form of a TUPILAQ being. From the time of Holm's visit to Angmagssalik in 1884 until Thalbitzer's visit in 1905, there is no ethnographic record from East or West Greenland which mentions a carved "TUPILAQ" or a carved representation of a TUPILAQ being. "The first figures were carved in 1905 by the shaman Mitsivarniangua
PLATE 3

Harpoon throwing board, wood and ivory, from East Greenland. Carver unknown, date unknown. (National Museum of Greenland, Godthab-Nuuk.)
for the Danish ethnologist William Thalbitzer, and were "tupilak portraits" of the shaman and his family's altogether concrete misfortune-beings" (Kaalund, 1983:68).

It is William Thalbitzer who in 1912, first labels some carved figures that Johan Petersen collected in Angmagssalik as "Tupilaq figures" (1912:643-644) and identifies them as models of TUPILAQ beings. It was at Thalbitzer's request that these carved representations of TUPILAQ beings were made. He writes:

"Fig. 365c also shows a wooden model of a tupilak made by Mitsuarnianga, who himself was sure that he had seen it alive. The real tupilak consisted of the body of a dog with the legs of a fox and a human head. It had originally been made by a man called Pikinak who had been dead for several years when Mitsuarniaga and his companion Pergilaak suddenly one day caught sight of the tupilak while they were rowing along the foot of the Angeen mountain in Sermilik. The tupilak was then on the point of creeping on shore dragging behind it two inflated sealing bladders, which were made fast on its back by means of long lines, because it had once been harpooned, unknown by whom."

(Thalbitzer 1912:644)

(PLATE 4, page 49)

Thalbitzer sees the same forms and the use of the same mediums as did Holm, with the exception of the "Tupilaq figures."

"The three wood carvings of religious figures seen in figs. 354-355 (Johan Peterson coll.) have probably not been used as true amulets; like the angakoq bear (fig. 355a) probably found in a grave, they are old or modern imitations showing us the native
PLATE 4

Tupilaq figure, wood, fox fur and seal skin; made by Mitsivarniannqa, Angmagssalik, East Greenland. The carving represents a TUPILAQ once seen by the carver.

(National Museum, Copenhagen, No. L5359. Collected by Johan Petersen, 1911)
artist's conception of the auxiliary spirits of the angakut. The shape which he allows his phantasy to give these carvings is in accordance with the Ammassaliker's conventional conception of these. It is possible that these dolls are old idols, or that like the wooden masks they are the last visible remnants of a religious cult long forgotten.

Fig. 355A and b are wooden carvings of two different fear-inspiring spirits (gimarrat) in the service of the angakok;"

(PLATE 5, page 51)

Thus the first documentary statements attesting to the appearance of carved "Tupilaq" representations occur in 1912. Both Christianity and literacy had been present in East Greenland for 15 years prior to Thalbitzer's documentation of "Tupilaq" models. Although I question his category for "Tupilaks", Jorgen Meldgaard confirmed that when there was extreme fear of a being, there were no carved replicas. He wrote:

"But in the Angmassalik culture the community was so dominated by fear that even the ordinary hunter would have Helping Spirits, known as tupilaks. Except in a few rare cases these creatures of ill-omen do not appear in the form of sculpture until recent times."

(1960:33)

The acculturation process, with its constant pressures, was well established by 1912, and East Greenlanders had already begun adaptive measures to ensure the maintenance of their ideas about spirit beings. Spirit beings, whose visual images had always been acknowledged and accepted in a carved medium, had their powers refuted by the belief structure of Christianity and thus
PLATE 5

Model of spirit helper, wood; Angmagssalik, East Greenland. Carver unknown.

(National Museum, Copenhagen, No. L5357. Collected by Johan Petersen, 1911; termed by collector "a religious animal.")
became secular and non-powerful. The private and sacred realm of the TUPILAQ being, never having a visual image in a carved medium, was reconstructed through the adaptive process with the result that the "TUPILAQ" became a secular visual image; a carving, having no connotation of power or fear. This being the case, verbal images of TUPILAT were transformed and transferred into carved representations. Acculturated ideas were stressed through this newly accepted medium for mythic subjects, and thus the carved form took precedence over the image in the myths and minds of Greenlanders. A synthesis of visual images occurred in the transformation process: the two once separate image categories of spirit being and TUPILAQ coalesced to become a single category of representational spirit carvings labelled "Tupilaq."

As the development of this new and labelled carved form gained momentum, the traditional images of its original subject lost their relevance to everyday society, but the traditional knowledge that they were man-made remained. Therefore we must look at where and what innovations were accepted, and by whom, for the development process of this genre of carving in order to begin to interpret its forms.

It is, however, interesting to note that of all the labels given to particular spirit beings, it is the term "Tupilaq" which gained precedence over the other terms to designate this new genre of carved figures. As we have seen, the label 'TUPILAQ' originally belonged to man-made beings - so from the
man-made being to the man-made artifact, there is one symbolic connection left, the label.

C. Knowledge of a Vision, Knowledge of a Form

Western-oriented writers have given various interpretations of "Tupilaq Figures" and have produced many definitions and labels in attempts to explain them. One such interpretation states:

"A Greenland tupilak, as known to tourists, is a small grotesque figure carved in steatite or in a sperm whale tooth. It has a body, head and four limbs, but resembles some sort of composite animal. It often possessed a distorted face and sometimes is adorned with skeleton ornamentation."

(PLATE 6, page 54)

"Strictly speaking, experts do not call these "tupilaks", but "tupilak figures", as in reality they are depictions of the genuine tupilak, but without its magical properties.

However, it is only in recent years that the eyes of the outside world have been opened to the fact that these figures constitute art in an international class."

(Royal Greenland Trade Department 1972:67)

Such interpretations fail to incorporate the indigenous ideas behind the subject and forms of these carved figures. Pertinent information is bypassed in favour of acculturated information which is considered to be more palatable to westerners. Danes categorize acculturated visions of the TUPILAQ being or spirit beings "in a modern context and idiom as "art", which
PLATE 6


(Private collection, Vancouver, collected as Tupilaq figures, ca. 1960's, Kap Dan, East Greenland.)
suggests a new way of seeing them" (Duff 1975:12). As Duff states, they seek "ways of seeing" as the interpretive route to "ways of knowing". I contend that it is not the vision alone that explains the form and the idea, but also the knowledge behind the vision. As the carved form is now the acculturated rendition of Kalaadlit imagery, it contains the symbolic sets of both West Europe and East Greenland. Interpretation is determined by whichever cultural knowledge base is used as the referent system.

Misunderstandings of Tupilaq figures arise from the confusion of images revitalized through acculturation and reconstituted in a contemporary context. For example:

1. Unlike spirit beings, whose lives mirrored those of the East Greenlanders but on the spirit plane, TUPILAT did not lead identical lives to Greenlanders, nor did they come alive in the same manner; TUPILAT were of a different conceptual category than spirit beings (Holm [1887] 1912:100).

2. According to Kalaadlit knowledge, a representation was equivalent to the living animal or spirit, having a soul and possessing the same inherent power or potential danger (Thalbitzer 1912:630); TUPILAT formed a different substantive category from spirit beings, and a representation of a TUPILAQ would not have been desired by a non-magical person, as it would contain the power to kill.

3. Unlike TARTUT, spirit beings who were capable of communicating with and being recognized by Kalaadlit, TUPILAT were avoided at all costs, seldom mentioned and greatly feared. (Thalbitzer 1912:219)
Westerners request "Tupilaq figures", and so Kalaadlit name their carved images "Tupilaq". However it must be kept in mind that westerners assign their own meanings to these carved forms and that those meanings may have little or nothing to do with the original Kalaadlit notion of "TUPILAQ". If the carver labels his carving "Tupilaq", then westerners, accustomed to documentation as a mode for cultural understanding, accept the carved figure as a representation of a TUPILAQ being, bypassing the content for the cultural logic of the label.
III. Creators and Creations: Arts of Acculturation

Introduction

Tupilaq figures that are produced today are intended for sale to non-Greenlandic consumers. In this chapter I will describe the subjects represented in carvings, indicate those images which are stimulated by consumers, indicate the marketing procedure which governs the production output of these specific carvings, and elicit carvers' views of what consumers want in a Tupilaq figure.

Also, I offer an explanation for the maintenance and continuity of the Greenlandic artifact labelled "Tupilaq figure". To understand this label we must look at out-of-culture interpretations of this material culture because Tupilaq figures have become consumer art.

A. Investigation and Confirmation

During and prior to my field trips to Greenland and Denmark, I have observed that although there are a variety of carved Greenlandic figures of non-human beings for sale in shops, they are all labelled "Tupilaq figure." Why are they all assigned the same label? Perhaps few, if any, are tangible representations of mythic TUPILAT. My premise is that carvers are not only carving representations of TUPILAT known from tradi-
tional stories, but also their own visions of spirit beings and of the many spirit beings whose descriptions are known through Greenlandic oral tradition. The label is not necessarily descriptive of the content of all of this genre of carvings. The carvings today seem to be a new material culture form with an old label. I set out to explicate this by conducting two studies. The object of my first analysis is subject determination - the visual and ethnographic correlation of physical characteristics - physical attributes corroborate a named spirit being, and the object of my second analysis is subject recognition - the verbal consensus of carvers and consumers pertaining to specific names for specific carvings.

1. Visual and Ethnographic Study

a) Method

I took photographs of the first 300 "Tupilaq figures" (designated as such by either the owner or the label) that I saw in homes, shops, books, and museums both prior to and during my first two field trips. I used these as my research sample, as the photographs encompassed carvings made during the years 1912-1982. I studied these photographs in conjunction with mythic stories and ethnographic accounts of spirit beings and TUPILAT. In several publications of East Greenlandic myths there were accompanying drawings which illustrated specific named spirit beings (Gitz-
Johansen, 1949:10,14,18,30). I also used translations of my own direct recordings of stories concerning mythic beings taken from present day Greenlanders (Egon Poulsen, 1982, Thorvald Mikkaelsen, 1982, Ebbe Josvassen, 1983, Henrik Singertat, 1983). I read the ethnographic descriptions repeatedly in order to discern whether specific physical characteristics were associated with specific named beings, and then I looked for these same characteristics in the photographs of the carved figures. I looked for stylistic and physical similarities between carvings in order to ascertain their designated subjects.

b) Results

i) In the traditional stories there was no single label given to all beings identifiable according to physical attributes. No one being name could be matched to all of the carvings in my research sample.

ii) Twenty-nine photographed carvings (see Appendix I) from my sample corresponded in carved characteristics with the physical descriptions of specific mythic beings encountered in ethnographic records. One matched with a particular story about the spirit of a deceased Angakkok (Appendix V), and I have since seen
several carvings of this specific spirit figure. 
(PLATES 7a and 7b, page 61).

iii) The twenty-nine photographed carvings that matched mythic descriptions (as in [ii]) matched with eight named spirit beings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Spirit Being</th>
<th>Plate No. of Matching Carved Representation(2)</th>
<th>Total No. of Carvings Matching Mythic Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AJUMAQ</td>
<td>PLATES 33 and 34</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMOTORTOQ</td>
<td>PLATES 35 - 37</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APERKETEQ/ANGUIT(3)</td>
<td>PLATES 38 - 42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERKIGDLEK/ERQQILIK</td>
<td>PLATES 43 - 47</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGNERNSSUAK</td>
<td>PLATES 48 and 49</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMIRTSEQ</td>
<td>PLATES 50 - 54</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TORNAT/TOORNAARSUK</td>
<td>PLATES 55 - 58</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUPILAQ</td>
<td>PLATES 59 - 61a, b, c</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Matching by author of carved representations with mythic beings.

(2) These photographs are found in Appendix II, Plates 2 - 5.

(3) West Greenlandic is before East Greenlandic, but it is the same being.
Figure carving, ivory, wood, and string. Carver unknown, ca. 1973-78, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", identified as "angakkok spirit" representation by J. Faber, 1983.)

Note: Plate 7b shows the lack of shoulder blade and leg bone on skeleton. Refer to Appendix 4, for stories collected by Holm and author which describe a spirit being of this nature.
Ten percent of my photographic sample, therefore, matched descriptions of spirit beings, and one percent matched descriptions of TUPILAT.

iv) Eighty-nine percent of my sample had no physical match to descriptions of spirit beings to be found in the available literature. The majority of subjects were not specific named spirit beings existing within what my informants know of East Greenlandic mythology.

v) It was difficult to recognize specific named spirit beings by correlating mythic descriptions with physical characteristics presented in carvings. Very few carvings from the total sample were obvious matches to specific described beings, in particular to TUPILAT. Several of the carvings had symbolic characteristics of spirit beings, such as prominent skeletal parts or facial striation (Kaalund, 1983:68) (Plates 8 and 9, pages 63 and 64), but did not contain specific physical characteristics that would connect them to a named mythic being. Many of the figures were representations of multi-form beings and/or beings in the process of transforming (PLATES 10 and 11, pages 65 and 66). Many of the myths told of people who transformed into animals, or of animals that trans-
PLATE 8

Spirit representation figure, ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1960's, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", 1980, Vancouver.)
PLATE 9


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from Elizabetht Seward Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure".)
PLATE 10


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, in Copenhagen. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", and termed by collector, "Transformation figure".)
PLATE 11


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", in 1981, in Godthab- Nuuk, West Greenland. Termed by collector, "Transformation figure of man and spirit being").
formed into other animals, but often no specific spirit being name was given. The majority of carvings in my sample had a transformational nature - images of several beings flowing into one another (PLATES 12 - 14, pages 68 and 69) - and were linked to mythic stories through that imagery (Thalbitzer, 1938:82; Kaa-lund, 1983:35). Traditional Kalaadlit logic assumes transformation as a capacity inherent in all beings (Holm [1887]1912: 257-64), thus, Kalaadlit representational figures are by definition figures capable of transformation.

C. Conclusions

"Tupilaq figure" carvings have transformational natures, but they are not all of one single subject - a TUPILAQ, nor do they often represent a specific TUPILAQ. Tupilaq figures are not only representations of mythic TUPILAT, but also representations of the carvers' own cultural images.

The quality and quantity of my data are functions of my photographic sample. Although this exercise could be expanded by using a larger sample of "Tupilaq figures", I do not think that the percentage that would match specific mythic descriptions would differ significantly from that
PLATE 12


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", in 1983, in Angmagssalik. Termed by carver E. Jossvassen, "spirit beings together".)
PLATE 13


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupi-laq figure", 1981, Godthab-Nuuk, West Greenland.)

PLATE 14


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupi-laq spirit", 1980, Sondre Stromfjord, West Greenland.)
which I first obtained. My findings substantiate my hypothesis that most of the carvings do not possess carved characteristics which are specific to either the spirit and name TUPILAQ or to other spirit beings within the Kalaadlit cultural tradition. What each of the carved figures does contain is imagery from traditional Greenland culture within a contemporary cultural context and presentational form.

2. Verbal Study
   a) Method

   I proposed to ask contemporary carvers what was represented in the photographs. If Greenland carvers could identify specific spirit beings by name or specific TUPILAQ, by viewing these photographed figures, it would corroborate the findings of my first analysis. For convenience in the field, I chose a smaller sample consisting of two photographs from each of the seven named spirit being sets, two from the TUPILAQ set, one of the Angakkok spirit, and thirteen from the unmatched remaining 270. I took a total of 30 photographs to Greenland (See Appendix III). I requested my interpreters, Anna Kuitse Meyer, Anna Kemper, and Vikktoria Sanimuinaq to arrange interviews with old and

---

5 Since 1983 I compared another set of 200 photographs with the same corpus of mythic descriptions and found only 11 of these to be close matches in physical characteristics to specific described spirit beings. Only one matched a mythic TUPILAQ description.
young carvers in the villages of Kap Dan, Kungmiut and Angmagssalik in East Greenland (See Appendix V). I also proposed to ask Danes who had lived in Greenland what was represented in the photographs.

b) Procedure

I numbered each photograph on the upper right back-side corner and kept them all together in an unmarked envelope. All the photographs had been mixed together. As I met with each carver and the wife of a deceased carver, I exchanged personal information (place and date of birth, occupation, and marital status) and asked permission to tape record his or her responses. I also asked permission to include their name and information in the body of my thesis. I then asked him or her to look at the photographs in order and to tell me anything about the figure presented. I tape recorded the responses to enable a cross-check on the data obtained.
c) Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>SPIRIT REPRESENTED</th>
<th>INFORMANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JOSVASEN</td>
<td>POULO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AJUMAQ</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>INGNERSSUAK</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>NSN(2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>NSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>APERKETEQ/ANGUAK</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>AMOTORTOQ</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>NSN</td>
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</tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>TUPILAQ</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>NSN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>NSN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>AJUMAQ</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>TORNAK/TOORNAARSUK</td>
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<td>NSN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>INGNERSSUAK</td>
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</table>
TABLE II (continued)
RECOGNITION OF SPIRIT BEING REPRESENTATIONS

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>NSN</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>ERKIGDLEK/ERQQILIK</td>
<td>X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>TIMERTSEQ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>ANGAKKOK SPIRIT</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>NSN</td>
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<td>TORNAK/TOORNAARSUK</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>APERKETEQ/ANGUAK</td>
<td>X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>NSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>AMOTORTOQ</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>NSN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>ERKIGDLEK/ERQQILIK</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>TUPILAQ</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Danish informants who agreed to allow their information to be included in this study.

2 NSN - Not a specific named being according to physical characteristic.
i) All six carvers recognized both TUPILAT representations, and the ANGAKKOK SPIRIT representation. Five carvers recognized more than one other representation.

ii) The deceased carver's wife recognized the two TUPILAT representations and the ANGAKKOK SPIRIT representation. She also recognized one of the AJUMAQ representations.

iii) The Greenlandic respondents had heard stories describing these spirit beings, and others, and they knew specific names for most of the represented beings that they recognized in my sample.

iv) Both Danes recognized at least one of the TUPILAT representations, but no other representation was recognized by name.

All the photographs of carvings that I had matched to mythic being descriptions and names other than TUPILAQ were verified by east Greenland carvers as not representing known mythic TUPILAQ. Many of the unmatched photographs were commented upon by the informants, but these comments referred to aesthetic preferences, quality of carving, and presentational form, particularly with my Danish inform-
ants. Several carvers recognized the work of other carvers. Two of the photographed figures were executed by two of the carvers interviewed.6

d) Conclusions

The interviewed carvers all concurred that the majority of carved figures were not representations of a mythic TUPILAQ. They indicated that only a few of the many known spirit beings were depicted as these carved figures. All informants insisted that the majority of Tupilaq figures represent beings that took shape through the thoughts and imagination of the carvers who created them. Each carver maintained that unpleasant or frightening figures sold better to the non-Greenlandic public than did naturalistic carvings.

"Today it is hard to hunt seal and fish so that men have little time to be original in what they carve. They take a kind (form) they know and do it over and over with little changes. In other times men got ideas from their fathers like I did, but today Tupilaq figures are of spirit-men or spirits from the old stories or they come from the head of the carver."

(Egon Poulsen, 1982, Kap Dan)

Carvers said that they sold their Tupilaq figures to tourists on a one-to-one basis, to a Royal Greenland Trade Department representative, or directly to shop keepers.

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6 Photograph No. 4 was carved by Thorvald Mikkaelsen, 1980; Kap Dan; photograph No. 24 was carved by Johan Elio, 1978, Kap Dan
(this latter opportunity is not often available). Non-Greenlanders had always requested "Tupilaq figures" by that name, and whatever the carver created, if it was non-human, was accepted as such.

"We sell Tupilat to tourists and the Royal Greenland Trade Department representative, for that is what they ask us to carve. They do not ask for other spirits, they ask only for Tupilat. Whatever we make them, if it is not like a real animal or man, they take as a Tupilaq.

(Johan Elio, 1980, Kap Dan)

All the carvers interviewed avowed that natural figure carvings (realistic and naturalistic animals, birds, and humans) did not sell as well as the ones called "Tupilaq", which possessed non-human or quasi-animal characteristics. Bodil Kaalund wrote that, "It soon proved that the more bizarre and alarming the figure appeared, the more fascinating it was to the European purchasers" (1983:n7). Thus, it was more profitable to carve the type requested and to call them all "Tupilaq". None of the carvers kept these figures on display in their homes, and they did not carve them at the request of other Kalaadlit. The carvers all maintained that they sold every Tupilaq figure that they made, and that Kalaadlit did not purchase them unless they were to be a gift for a tourist or non-Greenlandic resident. The carvers produced these figures as representations of their cultural imagery not necessarily as representations of a specific TUPILAQ.
The data obtained in this study are a direct result of my interviews with a number of specific carvers and informants. With a different test group of carvers my results may have altered slightly due to the traditional cultural knowledge held by different individuals. Some of the younger carvers did not know certain traditional stories and thus they may not have known the specific physical characteristics of certain spirit beings. Yet carvers today, both young and old, are aware of transformational powers attributed to spirit beings in their own cultural context. They utilize the symbols and logic of their own culture in order to carve non-human transformation figures. Carvers maintain that these carvings may not all be representations of mythic TUPILAT but, as they are sold as Tupilaq figures, they are uniquely Greenlandic (Thorvald Mikkaelsen, 1982, Kap Dan) (PLATES 15 - 18, pages 78 - 81). Their logic is that they are not misrepresenting their work, as it contains Greenlandic imagery, and thus, it is a part of their material culture production.

B. Image and Identity

Tupilaq figures stand today as one of the symbols of the indigenous culture of Greenland. It is mainly this image which maintains the ethnicity of Kalaadlit to out-of-culture visitors and consumers of this cultural art form. A Tupilaq figure is depicted on a Greenland postage stamp, on sweatshirts, on news-
"Tupilaq figure" carving, ivory and plastic. Carved by Josef Nakinge, 1979, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", 1981, in Sondre Stromfjord, West Greenland.)

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", 1981, Sondre Stromfiord, West Greenland.)

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", but carver termed it "spirit helpers").

Note: O. Kilime is from Kap Dan, but he was residing in Godthab-Nuuk, 1980-1982.
PLATE 18


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", but carver termed it "a spirit helper".)
paper logos, and on shopping bags from the Greenland supermarket chain Bruggsen (operated by the Royal Greenland Trade Department). These occurrences pose several questions: What do these images say to the out-of-culture art consumers? Why is the Tupilaq image (in a carved form) one which should symbolically represent Greenlandic indigenous culture, and who chose it? In the following sections I offer possible answers to these problems.

1. Promotion and Support of a "Cultural Art Revival"

In order to begin to answer the questions stated above, I went to the offices of the Royal Greenland Trade Department centred in Copenhagen, Denmark. This department was established by the Danish government in order to control both the internal trade between Greenland and Denmark and the external trade between Greenland and all other countries. I quote from one of their own publications:

"Since 1774 the Danish State has, through this official body, taken care of manifold responsibilities towards the population of Arctic Greenland....

From this Greenland there comes a stream of highly processed consumer goods to the world market....

The Royal Greenland Trade Department is now, as before, the natural link between the world market and the Greenland fishermen, hunters and farmers...."

(Welcome to Greenland, 1972:14)

Another issue stated:
"The Danish Parliament, by decree in 1952, set out the tasks of the Royal Greenland Trade Department. We were charged to buy all produce from Greenland's own fishermen, farmers, and hunters.

We also had to innovate, manufacture and find outlets for new products on the world market - however remote from Greenland."
(Welcome to Greenland, 1973:10)

Thus it became the responsibility of the R.G.T.D.7 to look for marketable products that were made in Greenland from indigenous materials and by the indigenous population.

It was during World War II that Denmark became aware that East Greenlanders were producing spirit figures from whale tooth and selling them to American, Danish, and Canadian army personnel stationed in the Angmagssalik-Kulussuk area (PLATES 19 and 20, pages 84 and 85). As some carvers stated:

"It was Tupilaq figures that the soldiers wanted and that is what the carvers made. The carvers carved beings which they knew from our old stories, but sold them as "TUPILAQ".

"During the big war the hunters had more time to carve for their hunting was restricted by the soldiers. Also the white men wanted to buy everything we carved."
(Ebbe Josvassen, 1983, Angmagssalik)

An American and Joint-Forces service base was situated on Kulussuk Island, East Greenland thus supplying the indigenous population with readily available consumers of their carvings. As

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7 The abbreviation for the Royal Greenland Trade Department used by the Danish government when using the English language.
Figure carving, ivory. Carver unknown, Angmagssalik, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from Elizabeth Seward Collection, 1978, in San Francisco. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure").
PLATE 20

Figure carving, 1930-45, ivory and wood. Carver unknown, East Greenland. Photographed by F. Cheng.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from Elizabeth Seward Collection, 1978, in San Francisco. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure").
more carvings were requested, more hunters turned to carving and found that they had an aptitude for it. Thus the R.G.T.D. encouraged a large scale revival of carving in the early 1960's in order to establish a market production which would utilize an already viable product native to Greenland.

In the 1960's a separate division of the R.G.T.D. was established as an autonomous umbrella organization to support, promote, market and distribute the crafts, carvings and art of the Kalaadlit (Bodil Seieroe-Andersen, 1982, Copenhagen). This sparked a resurgence of figure carving the success of which was attested to by all of my informants.

2. **Acculturated Art: Promotion of the Tupilaq Label and Form**

Nelson Graburn defined the arts of acculturation as "art production, which differs significantly from traditional expressions in form, content, function, and medium, and which also differs from the various forms of art production indigenous to ever-growing civilization" (1969a:457). As a marketable commodity for tourists and art collectors, Tupilaq figures offered traditional Greenlandic cultural elements carved in an Arctic Greenland medium (whale tooth) as well as a culture specific label. The combinations of these three phenomena were acceptable to both Greenlandic and western-European aesthetic systems. These carvings were aesthetically acceptable to Greenlanders because they maintained a traditional material form of cultural
expression while they were aesthetically acceptable to non-Greenlanders because they reflected an "other-culture" quality presented in a traditional western form of art - that of sculpture. Kaalund recently wrote:

"Apart from the fact that the old concepts are still remembered in East Greenland, exceptionally many and talented artists are found there. This is probably the reason why so many people automatically associate Greenlandic sculpture with tupilak figures".

(1983:67)

My study showed that the out-of-culture public associated Greenland sculpture with Tupilaq figures due to the strong publicity campaign and promotional programmes developed and maintained by the Royal Greenland Trade Department. The R.G.T.D. played a most decisive and influential role in formulating the non-Greenlander's aesthetic attitude to this carving production and inspiring the creation of new subjects to be sold within the genre of "Tupilaq figures", under the umbrella label "Tupilaq" carvings. An excerpt from a R.G.T.D. promotional pamphlet entitled "Greenland Tupilaks" states:

"The traditional Eskimo art is represented in different types of Tupilak figures, such as:

1) the "magic" stylized art in the grotesque animal and human figures
2) the spontaneous, often naturalistic productions"

(R.G.T.D., 1978:2)

Carvers' reconstructions of traditional beings were guided by ground rules set out by the R.G.T.D., which defined what was
acceptable to the consumer market and what could be included in
the western category of art. The concept of acculturated art
must be applied to Tupilaq figure production in order to under­
stand its cultural content and context.

Contemporary Tupilaq figure production occurred under the
auspices of the Royal Greenland Trade Department. R.G.T.D. re­
presentatives lectured east coast carvers on what consumers ex­
pected of Tupilaq figures (Thorvald Mikkaelsen, 1982, Kap Dan).
Artists' guilds, called KUNSTFORINEGEN in Danish, were estab­
lished in the major villages of the east coast area. The more
prolific carvers were sent to attend seminars held at various
centres, such as Godthab-Nuuk, so that they might learn a more
standardized carved form and size and they might discuss combin­
ations of subjects along with their own work. By the late
1960's there were artists' guilds also established in major vil­
lages on the westcoast and southcoast of Greenland. Some
Tupilaq figures carved in the 1970's were attributed to a vil­
lage artists' guild rather than an artist. (PLATE 21, page 89).

R.G.T.D. village representatives gave their support to both
men and women who wished to become carvers or who were already
well known carvers. It was through the influence of these
R.G.T.D. representatives that some carvers' works became more
popular with the consumer public than others. Raw materials
such as whale teeth from Japan (Etudes/Inuit/Studies, 1981,
Vol.5 No.2:125), narwal tusk and goat horn (PLATE 22, page 90)
KUNSTFORENINGEN figure, ivory and plastic. Attributed to the artists' guild, 1979, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

PLATE 22

Goat horn Tupilaq figure, ivory and goat horn. Carved by Kora Tukula, 1972, Angmagssalik, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, in Copenhagen as a "Tupilaq figure".)
were distributed by the R.G.T.D. through their representatives (Bodil Seieroe-Andersen, 1983, Copenhagen), to carvers whose own hunting had not procured enough quality material for the carving of Tupilaq figures. Most figures were purchased with personal discretion by the R.G.T.D. representative in the production output villages and sent to the warehouse and distribution centre in Copenhagen. By 1981 the R.G.T.D. instituted a monthly quota for how many carvings a village representative could buy (Seieroe-Andersen, 1982, Copenhagen). This warehouse and connecting offices became the official R.G.T.D. marketing centre for Tupilaq carvings. Carvers were given a certain amount for a carving by the R.G.T.D. representative and that carving, then sent to the distribution centre would have its price raised by approximately ten percent. Shopkeepers who purchased stock at the R.G.T.D. warehouse would then sell the carvings in their own shops with their own markup added to the purchase price (Ruth Nielsen, 1983, Angmagssalik). A carver from East Greenland who was paid 150 Kroner for his carving might see it offered for sale at 350 Kroner in Denmark or West Greenland. Often if the R.G.T.D. representative did not purchase a carving, the carver would sell it to a tourist or a resident Dane for "ready cash". Consumers of Tupilaq figures were not hard to find, as Kaalund stated:

"If, for some reason, you don't have any other work, you can make a little money selling figures to tourists, resident Danes, the local furniture store, or the
Royal Greenland Trading Company's home crafts department."
(1983:42)

Thus Denmark played a significant role in encouraging, formulati­ng, and maintaining this revitalized form of Greenland material culture. One culture produced the object that was marketed and consumed by the other, yet both cultures contributed to the acculturated carving production of labeled "Tupilaq".

3. The Consumer Market: Promotion of an Image

It was the government division, centred in Copenhagen, which set the policy and determined western attitudes towards these label-specific Greenland carvings. The R.G.T.D., through promotional campaigns and publications, established the Tupilaq image (in a carved form) as an image which would symbolically represent traditional Greenland culture to western-oriented society. This combination, a carved form of TUPILAQ or rather label-specific carvings called Tupilaq Figures, could not have occurred in pre-European contact years. Yet, according to western-European society, these acculturated figures remained aesthetically appropriate for their own out-of-culture conception of Greenlandic context because of the carved form and the culture-specific label.

These figures are presented to the public as being contain­ers of Greenlandic traditional culture and their production is
supported by a western-oriented public as a vehicle to maintain traditional Greenlandic knowledge. Kaalund wrote:

"There is truly a broad tradition in East Greenland, and also the realization that as an artist one has roots in the past and builds on the experience of one's forefathers."

(1979, p.86)

Promoted through R.G.T.D. publications, out-of-culture consumers of this art form are told,

"it is only in recent years that the eyes of the outside world have been opened to the fact that these figures constitute art in an international class. It has also been realized that this old culture will die out unless something effective is done to preserve it."

("Welcome to Greenland", 1972:67)

The consumer market has deemed Tupilaq figures collectible. They are now classed as "art" and are marketed as such:

"The Danish National Museum in Copenhagen has sumptuous collections from the "undisturbed" era in the art of East Greenland, in which the grotesque masks and mythical effigies - the so-called tupilaks - are especially intriguing.

Olaf Olsen, State Antiquary and Director of the National Museum Copenhagen, Denmark.

(Kaalund, 1983:overleaf)

By the 1970's an "official" R.G.T.D. identity tag was designed and designated for all carvings authenticated as "Greenlandic" - made in Greenland by a native Greenlander. All Tupilaq figures required this tag in order to be sold in the international marketplace, and after 1975 the name of the carver, the date and place of the carving were included on the back of
the card (Seieroe-Andersen, 1982, Copenhagen) (PLATES 23 and 24, pages 95 and 96). Those carvings that were not marketed through the proper R.G.T.D. channels did not receive this tag, and carvers could not request a similar price for a non-tagged carving. The R.G.T.D. promoted the growth of this now economically viable product for out-of-culture markets through pictures in their publications. Their brochures explained just what the consumer should expect in the different "types" of Tupilaq figures. The most far reaching promotional mechanism for this specific carving production was the issuance, in 1976, of a Greenland stamp imprinted with the image of a whale tooth Tupilaq figure on a purple background (PLATE 25, page 97). From 1976-1980 the consumer public was guided by visual information which gave proof that authenticated "art" Tupilaq figures were carved from whale tooth (PLATE 26, page 97). This, too, was devised and executed under the auspices of the R.G.T.D.:

"In 1953, when Greenland changed status from a colony to a province on equal footing with the rest of the Danish kingdom, the Greenland Post-Office remained an internationally recognized postal organization under the Royal Greenland Trade Department (R.G.T.D.)."
("Welcome to Greenland", 1972:71)

According to R.G.T.D. publications, Greenland stamps contained traditional Greenlandic content and were expressions of Greenlandic context:

"Greenland stamps are greatly esteemed and sought after amongst philatelists. This is probably due to the choice of themes and motifs and not least because the Greenland-
Identity tag for authentic Greenland art. Artist's name - Johan Kilime, place and date of carving - Kap Dan, August, 1980, and east or west Greenland - East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Carving on left side was collected in Copenhagen in 1978, and carving on right side was collected in Sondre Stromfjord in 1981. Both carvings were collected as "Tupilaq figures".)
Identity tag for authentic Greenland art. Front of card has the R.G.T.D. crest. Figure carved by Ole Poulsen, 1976-78, Kap Dan, East Greenland. Ivory and plastic.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 in Copenhagen. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure").
PLATE 25

Tupilaq figure stamp. Issued in 1976 by the Greenland Post Office.

PLATE 26

Stamp "Tupilaq figure", made in image of tupilaq stamp, ivory and plastic. Carved by Duge Utuak, 1976-78, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, in Copenhagen, as an authentic Tupilaq carving.)
born designer, Jens Rosing, who does the majority of such work for the Greenland Post-Office, knows just how to give the stamps their genuine Greenland character."  
("Welcome to Greenland", 1972:79)

While the R.G.T.D. continues to present the tupilaq image as an important symbol of traditional Greenland culture, the art market and the consumer public continue to accept it as such.

4. Consumer Art: Preservation of an Image

The tupilaq image was not chosen by Kalaadlit as the image which symbolically represented their traditional or contemporary culture. First carvers and then the general Greenland population, came to accept the label and various images that it might imply after years of continued publicity maintained by out-of-culture consumers and the art marketplace. As carvers consented to a material culture commodity production in the form of these specifically labelled figures, Tupilaq carvings were imbued with not only images and ideas from the carvers' traditional culture, but also contemporary images and ideas held by the individual carvers. Referring to Tupilaq figures, Bodil Kaalund wrote:

"It would appear that the Greenlandic artist gets a great deal of release for his imagination and sense of the surreal in making these dread-inspiring figures."  
(1983:24)

Through their carving style carvers expressed their individuality within an accepted acculturated artifact form (PLATES 27 - 31, pages 99 - 103), and one's trademark became one's style,
PLATE 27

Figure carving by Aron Kleist, ivory and plastic. Carved in Julianehab-Qaortoq, 1973. Photographed by L. Balshine.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1973, and termed by collector, "a spirit representation").
PLATE 28

Figure carvings by Aron Kleist, ivory and plastic. Carved in Julianehab-Qakortoq, Southwest Greenland, 1972.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1973 in Vancouver. Collected as "spirit figures".)
Figure carvings by Ole Kreutzmann, ivory. Carved in Kangaamiut, West Greenland, ca. 1930-1950.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, San Francisco. No subject attribution for these three carvings.)
PLATE 30

Figure carvings by Duge Utuak, ivory and plastic. Carved in Kap Dan, East Greenland, 1976-1978.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, in Kap Dan. Collected as Tupilaq figures.)
PLATE 31

Figure carvings by Johan Elio, soapstone. Carved in Kap Dan, East Greenland, 1972.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, in Copenhagen. Collected as "real TUPILAQ representations".)
"Some still carry on the old tradition, others blend something of the tupilak style into ordinary figures, but each follows his own bent and invents his individual style."
(Bodil Kaalund, 1983:77)

Through the process of acculturation their traditional TUPILAQ image was transformed into the consumer's Tupilaq image. The Greenlanders' ideas of Tupilat coalesced under a single cultural image with a single cultural label which they deemed worth preserving because of an international marketplace. For westerners, the artistic image was intriguingly non-western and thus covetable, and for Greenlanders, the artistic image was inherently Greenlandic and thus desirable (Ruth Nielsen, 1983, Angmagssalik). Greenlanders, then, had an artifact, classed by westerners as artistic, which was desired as a symbol and appreciated by consumers for its "other-cultureness". Those images which were represented in figure carvings became a cultural product requested and preserved by the consumer market:

"The tourists ask for Tupilaq figures and tell me that they think they are truly Greenlandic. I think it is because other Eskimo people don't make these types of figures."
(Ruth Nielsen, 1983, Angmagssalik)

The contemporary western marketplace expects traditional themes and subjects in the art of an indigenous people, for example - a hunter harpooning a TUPILAQ (PLATE 32, page 105). Tupilaq carvings are considered ethnic art by the international art marketplace and as such they offer Greenlanders a place in which to present and to preserve their cultural identity. But
PLATE 32

Multi-figure carvings, ivory, plastic and string. Carver unknown, ca. 1970's, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1979 in Vancouver. Collected as a "hunter who has harpooned a real TUPILAQ".)
cultural images are not static and objects are not perceived in a linear fashion. Today's Tupilaq figures are multi-vocal images which have emerged from the multi-dimensional thought processes of the Kalaadlit. Their label and their imagery link Tupilaq figures to the past, but they stand as an art of acculturation - a vital ethnic art still in the process of development. It is an artifact controlled and influenced by the out-of-culture market, and purchased and nurtured by the out-of-culture consumer. Yet, through its development process, Tupilaq figure production ensures the presentation of traditional Kalaadlit images because of its culturally symbolic label. The out-of-culture consumer ensures the preservation of "that other culture's images" through his or her continued support of this labeled material culture production - as "ethnic art".
IV. Conclusions

Through this study of Greenland Tupilaq figures, I have demonstrated that material culture embodies accessible information that can increase our understanding of the culture from which it is created. Earlier, I have shown that the subject these carvings is thought to portray is not the sole subject depicted but, rather, it is the subject whose name is adopted as the label for this genre of carvings. My research has shown that the cultural information expressed through these figures becomes accessible to out-of-culture observers only when the acculturated context as well as the mythic content of each Tupilaq figure is studied simultaneously. As I have demonstrated through this study, the content of these figures is not what their name implies.

My comprehension of certain expressions of Kalaadlit culture was made possible through a study of two aspects of Tupilaq carvings. The first, content and form, communicate visible statements about spirit beings, transformational beings and TUPILAQ beings. Something of the nature of each of these beings, and their relationship to the Kalaadlit, is transmitted through the carvers' use of form, medium, and style. The second aspect, symbolic imagery, is less obvious. It was necessary to examine TUPILAT as they existed in pre-contact times in conjunction with the 'Tupilat' that arose out of the process of accul-
turation, once establishing the major symbolic connection to be the label. 'Man' produces the being, the artifact, and the label. Statements are made through these carvings about man's interpersonal relationships, about man's relations with the spirit world and about society's adaptations to a colonizing society. After the process of acculturation accelerated in the 1950's (when Greenland became a province of Denmark), these carvings came to represent images which resided in the realm of humankind and at the same time in the contemporary logic of Greenlanders.

Once both the cultural content and context of Tupilat are revealed and considered through the knowledge that is expressed in the phenomenon of these carvings, a more adequate interpretation is possible.

To conclude this study, I would like to consider two issues: one is the visual presentation of cultural knowledge through material culture; the other is out-of-culture interpretation of culture-specific carved objects.

A. Visual Presentation of Cultural Knowledge

The contrast between spirit beings and TUPILAT is explicit in Kalaadlit myth and this opposition is verified in the cultural context within which both beings have their place. In ethnographic accounts there was never any stated contrast between TUPILAT representations, the production of which began in 1905,
and other spirit being representations. Although the contrasting sets of mythic images are familiar to Greenlanders, they leave unchallenged the out-of-culture definitions that have designated these multi-subject carvings as representations of one single spirit, TUPILAQ. I suggest that there evolved a different category which was imbued with new cultural knowledge combined with certain mythic elements of traditional knowledge and which, in turn, facilitated creation of a new material culture form shaped by the demands of the out-of-culture consumer. Mythic images which are produced by a culture undergoing acculturation present many dimensions of the dialectic between the two cultures involved. In this case, the visual images presented in this new art form are influenced simultaneously by knowledge from both cultures.

I assume that the entire context of these visual images as carved figures reflects the thoughts and day-to-day reality of the carvers. Images in the carvings present multi-vocal characters that both express and challenge acculturation as it affects today's native Greenlanders. Carvers present images that come from their acculturated knowledge as does the use of the classificatory label; they are now increasing the relative quantity of images that are not static. Images presented in this particular ethnic art form come from an acculturated reality. These newer images are visual presentations that stand as representations of what traditional knowledge was capable of and what acculturated
knowledge might be capable of today. It is through the use of
the label, "Tupilaq figure", that these carved images take on
new meanings and possibilities for both cultures. By the very
act of applying the label "Tupilaq" to carved figures, Greenlanders ensure that their image in myth no longer corresponds to
their image in art. The cultural knowledge of the Kalaadlit is
still undergoing many changes due to the still active process of
acculturation, and the occurrence of Tupilaq carvings attests to
some of those changes. As they now make their own 'Tupilat',
the Kalaadlit no longer look to spirit beings and men with
supernatural power to control their daily lives. These figure
carvings are therefore a vital, visual aspect of the contemporary knowledge of the Kalaadlit. "Tupilaq figure" has become the
categoric label of a genre of carvings containing acculturated
Greenlandic imagery. Tupilaq figures, as a visual presentation
of cultural knowledge, have become a vehicle for inter-relations
between native Greenlandic and Danish populations in Greenland.

B. Interpretation: Refocus Through Acculturation

It seems ironic that the ethnographic record demonstrates
the distinctiveness of Tupilaq figures but that the meanings of­
er for their form and content are obscure. In many publica­
tions, usually no meaning is usually given, and the different
forms are attributed to the artistic interpretation of the carv­
er. For example:
"The artist was inspired by the shape of the tooth, and consequently no two figures are ever exactly alike."

(R.G.T.D. pamphlet, 1976:3)

When meaning is given, especially when it is given by out-of-culture individuals, interpretations of Tupilaq carvings have always been made in reference to their position in the international art marketplace. Prior to 1979, ethnographers, writers, and art historians failed to explain the individual differences in subject, shape, style, and content, subsuming all the non-human or multi-subject figure carvings under one label and thus one category called, "Tupilaq figures". As "Tupilaq figures", they become one genre of Eskimo Art, and even as spirit representational carvings and carved models of TUPILAT, they are absorbed into the secular category, "contemporary Eskimo Art" (Blodgett, 1978:7; Graburn, 1976:40). Graburn wrote that the agents of colonialist powers collected arts and crafts as souvenirs of their sojourns in the service of the empire, but that they were usually unable to tell whether the items they had bought were truly traditional or whether they were specifically made for the souvenir market (1976:2). Their ways of knowing these figures disregards the multi-dimensionality of the images and stops at the label "Tupilaq figure".

I suggest that the misconception of the label was begun and perpetrated by travellers, ethnographers, and historians who failed to think about or to include the Greenlanders' accultura-
ted knowledge of the represented beings. It is "Tupilaq" that is requested in a carved form, no longer is it "a representation of a TUPILAQ (the representational image of a traditional man-made death-bringing spirit being) so Greenlanders experience the word as their own image of cultural identity. Carvers substitute images which approximate their acculturated logic of the label. Carvers use the label "Tupilaq figure" for these carvings so that out-of-culture consumers will recognize which carvings to purchase. In many instances today, "Tupilaq" refers to a carving style not to a subject (Kaalund, 1983:77). As Graburn wrote:

"A special case of "art metamorphosis" occurs when objects produced in one society are transported to another and labelled as art."

(1976:3)

It follows that out-of-culture interpretations of these figures are made on the basis of the carvings' relation to the cultural art market. Once these label-specific carvings are subsumed under the western category of 'art' western observers seek no deeper understanding of them beyond that categorization and their label.

I propose that a label alone cannot answer all the questions concerning meanings and images presented in the visions that are "Tupilaq figures". Material culture cannot be defined with merely a label, be it the term 'implement', 'weapon', or 'art'. Labels are the product of interpretive processes ground-
ed in culture-specific knowledge. The cognitive plane from which these specific carvings emerged is not the designator nor the perpetrator of their specific label. The influences of Danish knowledge on Kalaadlit knowledge, and the other way around, and the continuation of the acculturation process in East Greenland have all in combination taken part in the design-ation and perpetration of the label, "Tupilaq". Frequently an ethnographer fails to look at inferred background information or overlooks the subjective content because western society's designated label for these carvings is already in place. The label "Tupilaq" qualifies which culture area to refer to for interpretation of the forms, but does not explain the content or the culture-specific logic within these forms. The label "Tupilaq" is the bridge between the man-made spirit beings and the man-made artifacts; it is a link between traditional society and acculturated society.

To begin to understand the cultural continuum of the East Greenland carver, which makes possible the evocation of a traditional image within a contemporary acculturated form and classification, will be to begin to know and to "see" his or her artifacts. For Tupilaq figures, we must try to understand their creators. One needs to consider the place that these people occupy in their own cultural continuum in order to effectively offer interpretations of the cultural logic within their carved images. We must look to the everyday lives of the Greenlanders
for clues to the interpretation of their material culture. The day-to-day reality of the carvings and of the carvers will provide meanings for these figures now labelled "Tupilaq".

Thus my interpretation of this carving form is: Tupilaq carvings seem to be tangible expressions of Kalaadlit knowledge undergoing change. For this genre of carving, the label "Tupilaq" is the imaging podium from which Greenlanders create and re-create their acculturated images in an ongoing process through this ethnic form. As one aspect of Greenlandic material culture, figure carving has changed as the Greenlandic culture has changed. Material culture contains meanings within its forms, content, and cultural context - not solely within its labels. Labels define, but they are not absolute definitions, and if they are set by one culture or society upon another culture's objects, then meanings become obfuscated. Images, subjects, styles, and materials span the bridge of acculturation as do the producers of the artifacts. The Kalaadlit produce their material culture for people, so that new forms occur when innovation and adaptation are called for because of a new audience. "Tupilaq figures" are perhaps that innovation of Greenlandic material culture that is called for to bring the out-of-culture public into a relationship of acceptance and understanding with the Greenlander of today. Ethnographers, art historians, and out-of-culture consumers of "ethnic art" must remember:
"that meaning is not intrinsic in the objects, acts, processes, and so on, which bear it, but - imposed upon them; and the explanation of its properties must therefore be sought in that which does the imposing - men living in society".

(Geertz, 1973:405)
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In order to help the reader who is not familiar with those Greenlandic words used in the text or in quotes, such words have been assembled and explained here. (Specific named spirit beings are listed in Appendix I.)

Angakkok (Angakkut, pl.) - shaman, necromancer, exorcist.

Anorak - skin parka, upper clothing with hood attached.

Asagisat - "your lover", one's lover or loved one.

Dava - "stop, enough".

Ilisitsok (Ilisitsut, pl.) - evil practitioner.

Inua (Inue, pl.) - spirit, soul, one's inner life essence.

Kajak (Kaiak) - a man's boat, made from seal skin sewn together, used in the arctic.

Kalaadlit - native born Greenlanders (East Greenlandic spelling).

Kroner - Danish money, used in Denmark, Faroe Islands and Greenland.

Natit - shorts, seal skin short panty, used as undergarment by women.

Quanartivagai - "thank-you very much", East Greenlandic spelling.

Tartoq - one's personal spirit.

Tornak (Tornat, pl.) - future spirit helper.

Tornarssuk - special personal spirit helper (a spirit under control by a person).

Umiak - women's boat, open boat made of seal or walrus skin sewn together, can take 10-20 women rowers, used in the arctic.
## APPENDIX I

**SPIRIT BEING NAMES AND ETHNOGRAPHIC MYTHIC DESCRIPTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPIRIT BEING NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. AJUMAQ*        | "Ajumaq is a familiar spirit of a very unpleasant type. Everything that it touches rots and perishes. It has a dog's head but a human body. Its arms and legs are black, and it has only three fingers on each hand and three toes on each foot. It never walks, but hovers."
|                   | (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:14) |
|                   | (Bak, 1977:22) |
|                   | (Plates 33 and 34, Appendix II) |
| 2. AMAGAIAT       | "Deep in the heart of the mountains lives a horrible old troll who takes lonely travellers by surprise and puts them in her knapsack (amauten) and carries them home to her hut, where she devours them."
|                   | (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:54) |
| 3. AMOTORTOQ*     | "Most Angakut have an Amotortok as their tartok. It acts during the performances of the angakok as a kind of oracle, bringing news from far distances and answering questions laid before it. It has long black arms and is dangerous to approach, .... It walks with a heavy tread, and roars crying out, "Amo."
|                   | (Holm [1887]1912:88) |
|                   | (Bak, 1977:8) |
|                   | "Amo is a familiar spirit; quite indispensable to any sorcerer. It has a huge head and practically no body, but rather long arms."
|                   | (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:10) |
|                   | (Plates 35, 36 and 37, Appendix II) |
| 4. APERKETEQ/     | "Aperketek may be as much as four feet long. He is black and has nippers in his head."
| ANGUIT*           | (Holm [1887]1912:83) |
|                   | "It can resemble a seal for the hind part, it has long arms and can have claw feet. It is the helper of the spirit helper of the Angakuk."
|                   | (Rink, 1975:43) |

(*Denotes Spirit description which matched study sample photographs)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPIRIT / BEING / NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **4. APERKETEQ/A**/ ANGUIT* | "When people are ill or require information about the success of a seal hunt, the sorcerer must call upon Anguit, a spirit who looks like a seal."
   (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:22)  
   (Plates 38-42, Appendix II) |
| **5. AQAJAROPSISORPUA** | "It has happened more than once that a whole settlement has been terrified to death because there appeared an Agajarop-siorpua, a huge monster which kills everyone at the mere sight of its horrible form as it thunders down to the settlement like a live boulder."
   (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:34) |
| **6. ASIAQ** | "Asiaq is the goddess of the weather and lives somewhere out in the pack ice. When the ice fails to crack in the springtime the sorcerer (Angakkok) must go to her and pacify her, so that she may unloose the warm mountain winds and rain, break up the ice and send it out to sea."
   (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:26)  
   (Bak, 1977:23-25) |
| **7. ERKIGDLIK/ ERQQILIK** | "The ERKILIKS have the form of a man above and that of a dog below. They dwell on the inland ice and are inimical to man."
   (Holm [1887]1912:83)  
   (Rink, 1975:47)  
   (Bak, 1977:34-7)  
   (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:30)  
   (Plates 43a-47, Appendix II) |
| **8. ERKINGASEK** | "On a large island for out to sea lives a solitary man, called ERKINGASEK. He throws his harpoon with his left hand, and he catches people at very long distances with his bladder-dart. He crushes them up so that they die .... When the Angakut are catching TUPILEKKS, they call ERKINGASEK, who then catches them with his bird-dart."  
   (Holm [1887]1912:289-90) |
### APPENDIX I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPIRIT BEING NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. INGNERSSUIT/INERSUAK*</td>
<td>&quot;When a kaiaker is at sea, he is surrounded by INERSUAKS. They live under the sea but otherwise engage in the same occupations as men. They are somewhat broader than men, are closely cropped and have no noses.&quot; (Holm [1887]1912:82-3) (Rink, 1875:46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. QIVITTOQ</td>
<td>&quot;He heard a man call out - &quot;Help me; I am upset.&quot; He paddled up to him and put his kayak right side up, then saw he was one of the noseless people, the fire people.&quot; (Rasmussen, 1908:327 and 339) (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:46) (Plates 48 and 49, Appendix II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. TIMERTSEQ/TIMERSIT*</td>
<td>&quot;Timerseks have the form of a man, but are much bigger, being as tall as an umiak is long. Their soul alone is as large as a man. They live by the chase, ... they are at enmity with the human race, ...&quot; (Holm [1887]1912:83) (Rasmussen, 1903:339)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. TORNAK/TOORNAARSUK*</td>
<td>&quot;Tornarssuk is chief of the familiar spirits. If there is anything that other familiars cannot do, Tornarssuk can do it, but he must live a fearless and lonely life. He goes through mountains as if they were air; for him there are no obstacles.&quot; (Gitz-Johansen, 1949:18) (Bak, 1977:14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPIRIT BEING NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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</table>
| 12. TORNAK/TOORNAARSUK* | "He has long arms, a short neck and short legs. His hind part can be the body of a seal with a human head resting on it. He is the guardian spirit of the Angakok."  
(Holm [1887]1912:82) |
| | "Three days after, the child made her dolls perform TORNAK incantations; ...."  
(Holm [1887]1912:252) |
| 13. TUPILAQ* | "Tupilak is an evil spirit, which may be created by sorcerers or witches. Bones of animals or birds are piled together and hidden in a lonely place. When, one fine day, the sorcerer feels so disposed, he visits his heap of bones and puts them together in the shape of a fantastic creature, but he must touch it only with his thumb and little finger, otherwise the Tupilak loses its strength. As he is reciting magic words over it, it draws nourishment from the sorcerer's sexual parts. When it has reached the required size, he sends it out to sea. One day, when he has need of it, he summons it and orders it to go and kill his enemy. The latter usually dies at the mere sight of the Tupilak's horrible shape."  
(Gitz-Johansen, 1949:58) |
| | Tale 22, told by Kutuluk (Holm [1887]1912:272)  
Tale 29, told by Kutuluk (Holm [1887]1912:280)  
(Bak, 1977:49-52) |
| | "For some time she had been collecting the various parts—snarls of hair, fingernails, and bits of clothing that had belonged to the intended victims—to make the tupilak, which was moreover tricked out with a male sex organ on its chest. The girl had been assisted in working on the tupilak by one of the older women of the settlement, who wanted revenge on her divorced husband."  
(Kaalund, 1983:23-4)  
(Plates 59–61a, b, and c, Appendix II) |
APPENDIX II

PHOTOGRAPHS OF CARVINGS THAT MATCHED WITH NAMED MYTHIC SPIRIT BEINGS

PLATE 33


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in Angmagssalik, 1983. Collected as a "spirit figure").

PLATE 34


(Royal Greenland Trade Department Crafts Centre Collection, Copenhagen. Termed by collector "like the Ajumaq spirit in Ove Bak's book").

PLATE 36

"AMOTORTOQ" representational carving, Buffalo horn. Carved by Peritar Kuitse, 1966, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(R.G.T.D. Crafts Centre Collection, Copenhagen. Collected as a "spirit figure").
"AMOTORTOQ" representational carving, ivory and plastic Carved by Anders Sianiale, 1980, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

APPENDIX II

PLATE 38


(National Museum, Copenhagen. Collected by Therkel Mathiassen, 1931-32, Angmagssalik. Termed by collector, "helping spirit").

PLATE 39

"APERKETEQ/ANGUIT" representational carving, wood and paint. Carver unknown, ca. 1920-30, East Greenland.

APPENDIX II

PLATE 40


(National Museum, Copenhagen. Collected by Therkel Mathiassen, 1931-32, in Angmagssalik.)

PLATE 41

"APERKETEQ/ANGUIT" representational carving, goat horn and ivory. Carver unknown, 1972, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, Copenhagen. Collected as a "representation of a helping spirit").
"APERKETEQ/ANGUIT" representational carving, goathorn and ivory. Carved by Henning Agtigkat, 1972, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

"ERKIGKLEK/ERQQILIK" representational carvings, soapstone and paint. Carver unknown, ca. 1920-30, Tasiilaq, East Greenland.

Plate 43b shows the bones of the spine.

(Private collection, Angmagssalik. Collected as "a spirit that can be very powerful").

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure").
"ERKIGKLEK/ERQILIK" representational carving, bone and wood. Carver unknown, ca. 1940-1957, Kulusuk, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Term¬ed by collector, "Tupilaq Spirit".)
"ERKIGKLEK/ERQILIK" representational carving, ivory.
Carved by Ole Kreutzmann, 1940's, Kangaamiut, Southwest Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Termed by collector, "spirit carving".)
"INGNERSSUAK" representational carving, bone and plastic. Carver unknown, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Termed by collector, "a spirit representation".)
"INGNERSSUAK" representational carving, bone and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1950's, Kulusuk, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Termed by collector, "spirit representation").
"TIMERTSEQ" representational carving, ivory. Carver unknown, ca. 1940's, Kap Dan, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Termed by collector, "an evil spirit".)
"TIMERTSEQ" representational carving, ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1940-1955, location unknown.

(Private collection, Godthab-Nuuk. Termed by collector, "an evil spirit").
"TIMERTSEQ" representational carving, ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1940, Kulusuk, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Termed by collector, "Tupilaq figure").

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure".)
"TIMERTSEQ" representational carving, ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1940's, Kulusuk, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected from the Elisabeth Sewart Collection, 1978, San Francisco. Collected as a, "Tupilaq figure").
APPENDIX II

PLATE 55

"Tornaq/Toornaarsuk" representational carving, wood, ivory, and paint. Carver unknown, ca. 1930, Tasiilaq, East Greenland.


PLATE 56


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure".)

Photograph by F. Cheng.
APPENDIX II

PLATE 57


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq".)

PLATE 58


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure".)

Photograph by F. Cheng.
PLATE 59


(Royal Greenland Trade Department Crafts Centre Collection, Copenhagen. Termed by collected "a Tupilaq representation").

(Royal Greenland Trade Department Crafts Centre Collection, Copenhagen. Termed by collected "a Tupilaq figure").

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure".)
APPENDIX III

PHOTOGRAPHS OF STUDY SAMPLE USED WITH INFORMANTS

#1

PLATE 34

APPENDIX II, page 133

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from Elisabeth Seward Collection.)

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected as a "Tupilaq figure", 1981, Godthab-Nuuk, West Greenland.)
#5

PLATE 38

APPENDIX II, page 137

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1973, Vancouver.)
#7 PLATE 35

APPENDIX II, page 134
APPENDIX III

#8

PLATE 65


(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from the Elisabeth Seward Collection, San Francisco.)
APPENDIX III

PLATE 60

APPENDIX II, page 154

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1980, Angmagssalik, East Greenland.)
APPENDIX III

APPENDIX II, page 150

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, Kap Dan, East Greenland.)
#13

PLATE 33

APPENDIX II, page 133
APPENDIX III

#16

PLATE 49

APPENDIX II, page 145

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1981, Godthab-Nuuk, West Greenland.)

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1980, Angmagssalik, West Greenland.)
APPENDIX III

#19

PLATE 43a

APPENDIX II, page 140
APPENDIX III

#20  PLATE 70


/Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from the Elisabeth Seward Collection, San Francisco./
APPENDIX III

#22

PLATE 7b

Page 62
APPENDIX III

"Tupilaq figure", ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1940's, Kulusuk, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978, Copenhagen.)
APPENDIX III

#24

PLATE 56

APPENDIX II, page 151
APPENDIX III

"Tupilaq figure", ivory and plastic. Carver unknown, ca. 1940's, East Greenland.

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from the Elisabeth Seward Collection, San Francisco.)

(Private collection, Vancouver. Collected in 1978 from the Elisabeth Seward Collection, San Francisco.)
APPENDIX III

#30

PLATE 59

APPENDIX II, page 153
APPENDIX IV

MYTHIC ACCOUNTS OF A SPIRIT BEING AND TUPILAT
WHICH MATCH TO PHOTOGRAPHS IN MY STUDY SAMPLE

PLATES 7a and 7b

Story told to S. Romalis by Jonas Faber, Vancouver, 1983

"One time in the village of Tasiilap there was a great angakkok. He was old and when he died the people buried him close to the village. Many times the children of the village played ball near the place where the angakkok was buried. Many times the children ran over his grave or played on his grave or made so much noise around his grave that the soul of the angakkok was disturbed and angry.

One day the soul of the angakkok became so angry that he decided to teach the children the way to behave. The next day when the children came to play, the soul of the angakkok took the shoulder-blade from his skeleton and also one of his leg bones and he decided to frighten the children. As the children played over his grave, he suddenly came up from the grave. He drum danced on his grave stone with his shoulder blade as the drum and his leg bone as the drumstick and the words he sang frightened the children. The children never played over the graves again and they never disturbed the souls of the dead. The great angakkok could then rest in peace and quiet."
"Ariagsuak was having a drum-match with a dear friend of his. While his friend was having some new clothes sewn for him, because he wanted to travel to Ariagsuak, the latter died. The other went on a journey with four umiaks, one of which had an alugsugak (a foster) as an amulet. As they approached Ariagsuak's house, they sang in the umiak, and he that was to have the drum-match, cried: "Ariagsuak! When one of us dies, shall we still have our drum-match?" It was quite still up in the house, but the stone on the top of the grave began to turn around. The people in the umiak shouted: "A...h", and saw Ariagsuak come fluttering down from the sky to the stone, which raised itself off the grave; and out of the grave he took the shoulder-blade for a drum and the thigh-bone for a drumstick. The eyes hung out of the head on their fibres. As he went up into the air, he went round the same way as the sky. The umiaks rolled in his direction and capsized; only the one which had an alugsugak as an amulet righted itself again, turned her stern-post towards him, and got home. 'Kutuluk has seen with his own eyes the grave which lies between Igdloluarsuk and Akorninar-miut'."

(G. Holm [1887]1912:290)
APPENDIX IV

PLATE 59

Story told to S. Romalis by Thorvald Mikkaelsen and Egon Poulsen, Kap Dan, 1982.

"There were two brothers who lived in Sermiligaq in Ulorgarmiit. There was an island nearby that they call, Nunagitsit, and a family there that had four sons in a row, called Amerdardivagait.

One day in spring the older brother from Ulorgarmiit said to his younger brother, "I will fish the Ammassat and you hunt seals for drying." The younger brother did what he was told. The older brother told him not to go near where the Amerdardivagait hunt, but to go south near Kungmiut.

After the older brother came back from hunting to the fjord, he heard that his younger brother was dead. He discovered that his brother had been standing on a small island watching seals when the four brothers pursued him to kill him. He had hidden in a hole in a cliff at low tide while the Amerdardivagait waited for him to come out at high tide. When the tide came in he had preferred to drown then to be killed by the harpoons of the four brothers.

The older brother decided to revenge his brother's death, to make a Tupilaq. He thought to himself, "I must do this in the right way, and I must get a seal skull from the cache of the Amerdardivagait. There should be skins left and bones from when they took the seal meat away." He was never in that place, but he hoped that there was a skull left behind that was facing the house of the four brothers. He set out to look for it. When he arrived at their cache the skull was lying the right way, so he took it and some seal skin. Now he was hopeful in finishing his work.

Then he started to make his Tupilaq, not by his tent, but not far away, beside the water. When he started to make his Tupilaq he needed help from his grandparents who had been buried a long time ago. He thought, "If they loved me when they were alive, so they can now help me revenge my brother through the Tupilaq". He dug out his grandmother's grave and he heard, "Mmmmmmm". That meant she had loved him, so he cut off her ribs
and her leg, she still had clothes on, and he buried the rest. Then he started the Tupilaq: what the Angakkok used to do when they made a Tupilaq was just to put all the things into the skin and the Tupilaq would be formed by the Angakkok's breath.

When he finished forming the Tupilaq, there was no doubt that it was a seal but its other side had ribs and a leg like a human side.

When an Angakkok has finished forming a Tupilaq, he has to give it life energy.

When he finished making the Tupilaq he could see that it was full of energy and life, and he told it to go. He knew that if he made a mistake in making the Tupilaq he could be killed by it himself. He had to tell it with his own voice what to do. It went into the water and he followed it on land. The Tupilaq came up in the water close by and said "What am I going to do?" So he said to it, "Go to the Amerdardivagait and kill them and take even the women." It went down into the water showing the leg with the kamik (boot) on.

Then he went home with the hope he would get revenge. He listened all summer, but heard nothing about the four brothers. He heard that they went to their winter place near Tiilerilaq. Then he also went there and was welcomed by the people. He forgot about his Tupilaq because he was having such a good time.

Suddenly one day someone said, "Look, a seal!", so everyone rushed to their kayaks. The seal came up near the four brothers and went down again, and he thought, "it will come up near me". He was ready with his harpoon ... it came up, but only the eyes were above water ... then he remembered the Tupilaq. If he had harpooned the Tupilaq he could have been killed, but now he said, "Ah, at last it came."

He waited for what would happen next. It came up again in front of the oldest brother, he harpooned it, and when it went down, the brother held the harpoon line to pull in the seal. It was too heavy, and the other brothers came to help him. They pulled three times but the kayak went down more and more and he fell into the water. Foam and bubbles came up and then he floated up dead.

Then he was the first one to be killed by the Tupilaq. When autumn came, he heard that the youngest brother had drowned, and after that the middle two brothers died. Then he heard that one of the wives had disappeared when the women went out to pick blueberries. They had gone to look for her and found out that she had put her ear down into the bush and she was dead.
The older brother smiled when he heard this and said that it was the truth of the Tupilaq. This was the proof that the Tupilaq had taken the life of the girl in the way that she died. Then he went back to Sermiligaaq and he heard that the other wives had died in the same way. Then he went back to Ulorgarmiit and lived in peace afterwards.
"Once there was a family that lived in Sermilik. The man was a good hunter and he had several wives. It was a large family with many children. One of the man's daughters became very sick. Nothing could cure her so finally the angakkok asked her to make a confession of what she had done. She confessed that she had wanted to kill her whole family, her father, her step-mothers, her brothers, and her sisters. In order to kill her family she had made a tupilaq which looked like an ordinary woman but it had male sex organs on its chest. She had made this tupilaq by collecting things that belonged to all her family members - cuttings of their hair, their fingernails, a tooth, and pieces of clothing. When she had gathered all these things she had gone off with another older woman from the settlement who was ilisitsog, and the older woman had helped her to make the tupilaq. She had decided to make it in the form of a woman so that it would be able to easily follow all her family members and kill them, but it had many powers to overcome the men because it had the male parts also. Then they sent the tupilaq out.

The girl was sure that she had made it in the wrong way so that now it was going to kill her. The tupilaq had not killed her family members and she was sure that the old woman had done things, not to help, but in order to kill her, so now the tupilaq was causing the illness. After the girl confessed this about her strange tupilaq they heard a cry. Then the girl became well."
"Johan Petersen, first manager of the trading station established in Angmagssalik in 1894, ten years after Gustav Holm's uniak expedition, relates:

"Our neighbours, who had returned from a visit in Sermilik, said that a young girl in Sermilik had been very sick. During her illness, she had confessed that in order to harm her family - she wanted to kill her father and stepmother, or rather her two stepmothers and her brothers and sisters - she had fashioned herself a tupilak. For some time she had been collecting the various parts - snarls of hair, fingernails, and bits of clothing that had belonged to the intended victims - to make the tupilak, which was moreover tricked out with a male sexual organ on its chest. The girl had been assisted in working on the tupilak by one of the older women of the settlement, who wanted revenge on her divorced husband."

(Kaalund, 1980, p.23-24)
APPENDIX IV

PLATES 32 and 61a, b and c

Story related by Gustav Holm:

"The most skillful hunter on the Angmagssalik fjord, Perti-tigsak, who had gone through the training without openly proclaiming himself as an angakok, was the sworn enemy of the angakut and lost no opportunity of holding them up to ridicule. When he was afflicted with a boil on his back and afterwards caught fever, angakut appeared from all sides to cure him. When the fever got worse they declared that he was in danger of going mad. We have already described the treatment to which he would be subjected in this eventuality. He then had to confess that he was an ilisitsok and tell a great deal of absurd nonsense about his having sent out four tupileks, who had managed together to kill a score of persons, some of whom were members of his own family.

The last tupilek he made in spring. He was just about to harpoon a walrus, when someone else anticipated him and caught it. In his anger he made a tupilek of walrus skin, fragments of the man's game and many other things. It resembled a walrus wearing women's drawers. He created and made it grow in the usual way, after which he sent it forth to kill the man who had taken the walrus from him. One day after this he saw a walrus at Ikerasarsuak, and was just about to harpoon it, when he discovered that it was the tupilek. It made for the shore and went on land, where it turned into a human being. Some time after it killed the man against whom it was sent.....

A water-poultice which we sent Perkititigsak caused the boil to open, and the fever left him. His cure was ascribed solely to his confession of the crimes he had committed."

APPENDIX V

EAST GREENLAND CARVERS INTERVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>WORK</th>
<th>DATE OF BIRTH/PLACE OF BIRTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.S.P. Mikkaelsen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Aurolia K.A. Amagtangneq</td>
<td>(Wife of Jacob Amagtangneq</td>
<td>Dec. 1903 Ikkatseq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1897-1975 - Hunter &amp; Carver)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ebbe Josvassen</td>
<td>Parish Clerk and Hunter</td>
<td>Autumn, 1909 Ikkatseq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Henrik Singertat</td>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>1907 Tiniteqilaaq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX VI

QUESTION GUIDE FOR CARVING SURVEY

1. Where were you born?
Where do you live?

2. Please look at these photographs. Please comment on each one, in their sequential order. (Use additional page).

3. Are there any of these carvings that you particularly like?
Which one(s)? Why?

4. Are there any of these carvings that you particularly dislike?
Which one(s)? Why?

5. Do you ever buy any of this type of carving?
If yes, what and why?

6. Do you consider Tupilaq figure carving to be authentic Greenland art?

7. How do you feel about the fact that most of the contemporary art forms are made for sale to non-Greenlanders?
Does this have an effect on the carving?

8. Choose the 5 factors that most strongly influence your decision when you are buying a Tupilaq figure (in order of their importance to your decision).

   __ price  __ design  __ quality of workmanship
   __ subject matter  __ size  __ investment potential
   __ artist's name  __ media(material)  __ advice of acquaintance

9. What other kinds of art do you collect or own?

10. Your age:          11. Your sex: __ male
         under 20        __ female
         20 - 29        12. Your occupation: __ professional
         30 - 39        __ homemaker
         40 - 49        __ executive
         50 - 59        __ sales
         60 - 69        __ clerical
         70 and over    __ skilled labour
                          __ unemployed
                          __ clerical
                          __ skilled labour
                          __ other

13. How were you introduced to Tupilaq figure carvings?

   __ family, or friends        __ books
   __ museum exhibits          __ newspaper or magazine
   __ Greenlander acquaintances __ articles
   __ noticed them in stores   __ other (please specify)