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ABSTRACT

Problems in education of the younger generation as opposed to the adult generation in the Canadian Arctic were considered in both social and cultural perspectives. Cross-cultural effects were seen to be of substantial influence in the development of problems. Relatively simple, isolated community structures prevailed in early northern Canada but, in recent years, a process of urbanization has eliminated many of the smaller communities. Technology and the influx of non-indigents have also affected the region. An awareness of these factors, plus the uniqueness of the Canadian Eskimo culture and characteristics, was seen as essential to understanding this minority group. (BD)

Background Paper - 5.A.

CONFERENCE ON CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION IN THE NORTH

Montreal - August 1969

THE CULTURAL SITUATION IN THE NORTH

Eskimos of Canada as a Minority Group: Social and Cultural Perspectives

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I present social and cultural perspectives within which participants at the Conference are invited to view specific problems of education in the Canadian Arctic. Because most of the participants are not professional social scientists, I avoid discussion of the technical and methodological issues which could be raised concerning many of the points made in the paper.

Most of what I have to say is gleaned from recent research reports on the Canadian Arctic beyond the Tree Line and from my own experiences in southern and northern Canada. Occasionally I bring in findings from other places, but these references are kept to a minimum because expert participants have been invited to compare and contrast the picture I present here with that found in their own countries and regions.

It has been shown on innumerable occasions that human behaviour which seems odd, inexplicable, or even grotesque becomes understandable when the individuals concerned are viewed in terms of what things look like through their eyes. How persons perceive the world and the meanings they attribute are to some extent a purely individual matter, but also to a large extent determined by their social situation and by the understandings and ways of knowing which they share with others. Concrete examples of this point are provided in this paper on Pages 21 and 27. Despite the now commonplace character of this kind of observation, it is surprising how in certain fields of endeavour it is ignored in favour of a bias towards viewing happenings solely in terms of individuals taken out of context, much as are rats in experiments. One reason for this bias is an ideological bent towards individualism but I suggest that another reason for this bias is the nature of highly developed institutions. Let me explain.

In modern societies certain services and activities have become so

organized, specialized, and professionalized that they lead an almost autonomous existence. Medicine, for instance, is often viewed as a thing-in-itself having its locale in doctors' surgeries and hospitals and for many purposes isolated from the world around it. It gets associated with a technological and scientific apparatus, manned by experts. It is a humane service, but the approach taken is perceived as primarily rational. Each patient is viewed as an individual with given defects who, if he cooperates and accepts the right treatment, should get well. The individual psychological aspects of patients are sometimes taken into account, both experimentally and in practice. However, in only a peripheral way are patients viewed in terms of the social and cultural networks in which they are embedded.

Formal education shows many of the attributes of the medical world in modern society and is often viewed in abstraction from its place in the total picture. Thus there is an abundance of research materials on training in classroom situations, on teaching techniques and materials. The pupils are analogous to patients whose individual defects can be corrected in a rational manner through treatments, some of which have been tested in experiments. The focus is on getting the pupils to do what the teachers want done, indeed to <u>want</u> to do what the teachers want done. In this endeavour, individually oriented psychology, to some extent based on animal experiments, is called into play, but only peripheral consideration is given to the goals and values of the groups whose influence contributes so much to the personality and motivation of the pupils.

Some doctors have learned that a knowledge of the social and cultural dimensions of their own and their patients' lives is vital, particularly in situations involving behavioural disorders. Educators, too, have come to realize that an understanding of the social and cultural contexts in which they and their pupils move help them make more sense out of what happens to themselves and their pupils in and outside of the classroom situation. The growing number and significance of courses in the anthropology and sociology of education, and the increase in sociocultural orientation courses for teachers, evince the awareness of this need for social and cultural perspectives.

There is an awareness of this need in places where the people involved are relatively homogeneous in background, coming from the same linguistic and national groupings, but differing according to social class and other sub-cultural backgrounds. We expect that there would be much more awareness of this need in situations where the educators are of one linguistic and cultural background and the pupils of another. However, in Canada it is only within the past decade that special attention and resources have been channeled into providing educators with this awareness of the significance of social and cultural settings through conferences and courses.

This paper is not simply a plea for the exposure of teachers, administrators and other professionals involved in cross-cultural situations to courses, conferences and reading materials of a social scientific nature. I use the trends in this direction as illustrative of a perceived need for the kind of background insight and information on group structure and processes as distinct from those that focus on the individual as such.

In the sections which follow are considered those social and cultural aspects of Canada and of its Arctic regions in particular, which I feel are most pertinent to education in the French sense. In English usage education tends to be equated with what the French regard as instruction and training, important but limited elements in the total educational process which embraces much more than what goes on in classrooms, libraries, conferences, and so on. In the following section, we begin with some 'big picture' observations, gradually narrowing the focus onto the 'little pictures' of specific Arctic situations.

PART I

THE CANADIAN MOSAIC AND THE ESKIMOS

As part of the background picture of affairs in the Canadian Arctic there are certain global features of Canadian society and character which should be sketched in. First it is important to keep in mind that Canada is highly industrialized and urbanized country. Until a generation ago, the bulk of the population was in primary and secondary occupations. The trend in this generation is shrinkage in the primary, and a swelling in the tertiary, or service sectors of the economy. There are many pockets in the East and North where the majority are still linked to primary occupations, if indeed they are employed at all, and where the rural, outdoor life enshrined in the stereotypes of Canada, still prevails. However, the vast majority are committed to the industrialized and urbanized way of life and hardly conform to the old Canadian stereotype. An important element in this stereotype is the northern frontier and the supposedly consuming concern with conquering and living in it. Actually, the evidence indicates that if large numbers of Canadians are oriented to the northern frontier in sentiment, a very large proportion of those who actually go north to live out this sentiment come from countries other than Canada.

Given the prevalence of a real commitment to the urban industrialized south, it is still true to say that several traits of the rural society partly define the national character. It has often been said, and occasionally demonstrated, that the Canadian character can be described succinctly as a conservative syndrome.

> "...made up of a tendency to be guided by tradition; to accept the decision-making functions of elites, many of whom virtually or actually inherit their positions; to put a strong emphasis on the maintenance of order and predictability... This pervasive conservatism is common to both French- and English-speaking components in the population and acts as a tie that binds them." [1]

The Canadian way is the pragmatic way of gradual change and is dominated by an almost obsessive concern to maintain unity in the face of regional and ethnic cleavages.

Another feature of the Canadian society of relevance to our concern here is the role of government in administering and planning on behalf of the public. As in modern countries everywhere, so in Canada governments have been expanding into almost every realm of life. This is not a sudden departure from precedent, for there are many examples from past decades of government intervention in developing and administering certain aspects of industry and communication. Many have remarked on the Canadian combination of free-enterprise capitalism and public welfare.

It cannot be concluded from this record of government activity that Canadian governments, federal, provincial, and territorial, have deliberately and with long foresight, laid down far-reaching plans in the manner of the five-year plans of socialist countries. As we have said elsewhere, the prominence of government,

> "...does not imply the prevalence of a socialistic ideology in Canada, an ideology whose adherents feel impelled to deliberately use the state as a positive instrument even where other instruments are available. With few exceptions government involvement in development, welfare, and other matters has been due to lack of capital and other resources from the private sectors, or to exigencies that threatened the creation and viability of the nation. There has been relatively little long-range, comprehensive planning for the country as a whole, and overtures in this direction are often frustrated by the allocation of authority between federal and provincial jurisdictions." [2]

It is especially important to keep these points in mind when comparing Canadian development in its Arctic reaches with development in other countries where, for whatever reasons, governments monopolize control over their northern regions and people.

A feature of Canadian society which many mistakenly think makes it unique is the fostering of cultural pluralism based on ethnic origin, or as it is sometimes called in the United States and Europe, national origin. Our use of ethnicity parallels these usages of nationality. I use the former here because among English-speaking Canadians the term nationality refers to political citizenship rather than to origin. In my usage,

> "...the ethnicity of a group refers to descent from ancestors who shared a common culture based on national origin, language, religion, or race, or a combination of these. Ethnicity...is an ascribed attribute, like age and sex (one is born with such ascribed attributes), defining status and role in certain situations." [3]

An ethnically plural society is one in which ethnic origin is used as an important component of identification and where the ethnic groups have some distinctive social and cultural characteristics. Of course, most modern states are ethnically plural in this sense. In Canada, regional and ethnic diversity co-exist with an overall French-English linguistic dualism. The prevalent sentiment expressed publicly by most national leaders in Canada is in favour of this pluralism, often called the Canadian Mosaic, an important component in the Canadian ideology.

A number of students of Canadian society have concluded that the mosaic is not arranged horizontally as a combination of equal and distinct parts, but is to a large extent hierarchical. John Porter, who invented the term Vertical Mosaic, and others have shown that there is inequality in the distribution of prestige, power, resources and facilities among Canada's ethnic groups. [4] Most pertinent to this paper, on every index of prestige, power and command over valued resources, the native peoples of Canada are the least advantaged of our ethnic groups. The position of Indians and Eskimos at the bottom of the totem pole mosaic insofar as education, income, health and power are concerned is so well-known that it is unnecessary to document it here.

Even where they form a numerical majority, the native people occupy a minority status, and are a rural, non-agricultural proletariat. To amplify this point, I cite a formulation of Bierstedt's which I have used in previous publications to put the native people's minority status into perspective:

> "As Bierstedt points out, there are three sources of social power for groups: numbers, organization, and access to valued resources (and facilities). All other things equal, the numerical majority is more powerful than the minority. Where two or more groups are equal in number, the one with the most control over crucial resources is more powerful than the other...In the context of Canada as a whole the (native people) are a small (feebly organized) minority with very limited access to significant resources. In the context of the local region and community in the Arctic, the (native people) outnumber the non-native, but they are comparatively unorganized and, by and large, have access to little more than subsistence resources. There is little which they can withhold which would cause the non-native people much discomfort, except their services and their co-operation in helping the non-natives achieve their goals." [5]

One consequence of the imbalance between natives and non-natives in access to facilities and resources is the emergence of a kind of Disestablishment. In this respect the situation in Canada's north is a special case of a more general, if not universal, feature of modern society. With rapid advances in technology, thousands become unemployable because the skills they have are obsolete. Should they live in economic backwaters, they become alienated from the mainstream of social and economic life. Those who guide the system attempt in different ways to prevent the disestablished from remaining outside, by giving them a "stake" inside. These ways vary from grassroots community development to large scale retraining programs. The native population of Canada's north is not unique in

being served with such programs, but a special feature of that population is that it is differentiated racially from the non-Eskimo minority in its midst. This physical factor accentuates the cultural, economic, and social distinctions between groups enjoying different levels of prestige, power and well-being in the society.

One further distinction between Eskimos and non-Eskimos is the special legal status of the former in federal statutes. With the exception of Eskimos in Labrador, who come under the jurisdiction of the Province of Newfoundland and who do not have any special politico-legal status, the other Eskimos in Canada are defined for some purposes as a tribe of Indians and for these purposes come under the Indian Act. The legal implications are not our concern in this paper. The point is mentioned only to underline the distinctiveness of the Eskimo element within the Canadian polity and society. Some local implications of this distinctiveness and 'segregation' are explored in Section II.

B.P. - 5.A.

PART II

THE ANCIEN REGIME IN THE ARCTIC

It is now time to narrow our focus more sharply on relations between ethnic groups in Arctic communities. If the things that distinguish Eskimos from their non-Eskimo compatriots are more impressive than the things which unite them, we should not be surprised in view of the historical development of Canadian Arctic society. This historical development should be put into geographical perspective. Much of the Canadian arctic is a vast and remote desert whose mineral resources are only now being seriously tapped.

The outstanding historical fact distinguishing the Canadian from arctic situations in most other countries is the very long period during which the Canadian arctic was of little economic, political, and military significance. We must continuously remind ourselves of the recency of large-scale Canadian intervention in the Far North. Until about twenty years ago, in most parts of the Canadian Arctic Eskimos had been in contact with only a small and unrepresentative sample of outsiders involved in the fur trade, the churches, and the police.

Apart from sporadic contact with a few explorers, the most sustained of the earliest contact the native people had in northern Canada was with whalers in the early 19th century. This contact was mostly limited to Eskimos who inhabited coastal areas and did not link them into strong chains of inter-dependence with the outsiders. Eskimos were not needed so much as producers, for the crews caught most of their own whales in the Canadian Arctic. The chief influence of the whalers was in the things they introduced, such as liquor, firearms, and an array of other utensils, dancing and clothing styles. Their influence was strongest in the Western Arctic. Another result of contact with whalers was the mixed progeny derived from male crew members and Eskimo women. However, in terms of basic economic and social organization, the whaler influence was not as consequential as that of others who came later.

The influence of the fur traders was of broader range and went deeper than that of the whalers. Although there were scores of 'free' or private traders, the majority worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. The traders needed the native peoples to solve their problems of economics and logistics. The value of the natives to the traders was in terms of various roles: producers of furs, consumers of trade goods and for a small but ultimately influential segment, intermediaries, guides, and servants. Some traders also saw themselves as bearers of the Christian message, but the evidence suggests that traders had no consuming interest in deliberately changing the basic way of life of the native people. After trapping

became the established economic base, it was in the trader's interest to fight whatever policy kept the native people away from trapping and its associated activities. This was the situation until the influx of other sources of income--from wages, transfer payments and relief, originating from the south--made the Eskimos valuable as consumers independently of their role as producers. The process of the changing relevance of the native people as consumers went on at the same time as the process of decline in significance of wild fur as a commodity.

If the intentions of the whalers and traders were not to change the way of life in a deliberate fashion, the same cannot be said of the missionaries whose very raison d'être was the selective personal and social transformation of the native people. The conversion program was selective in the sense that only those aspects of the way of life which were judged as inimical to Christianity were to be transformed. The remainder of the way of life was to be maintained. In terms of ideology, the traders and missionaries were more conservative than radical, seeking to alter only those ideas and practices which militated against their mandate.

The same may be said for the third element in the familiar triumvirate of non-native settlers in the north, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The purpose of the Police was not only to maintain law and order by checking the few deviant customs which went against the codes they imported with them. More important was the purpose of representing the government of Canada as living symbols of that country's sovereign rights to Arctic regions. The Police had no explicit program of planned change for the native peoples.

So far I have dwelt on the manifest purposes of the outsiders who made up the first non-native settlers in the Canadian Arctic. The intended consequences of their efforts should be reviewed briefly. As for the traders, in most regions the native people did indeed become producers of fur and consumers of imported products, adapting certain of their living habits and attitudes in the process. The native response to the missionary was to become adherents to a denomination and to publicly abandon those practices which were forbidden by church rules, although many such traditional practices survived in a kind of underground. The missions also introduced literacy in the Eskimo languages through the translation of scriptures. Furthermore, a number of natives accepted the very much limited formal education which the churches offered in the absence of government schools. As for the Police, whatever minimal demands they made on the way of life were usually accommodated by the native people.

These are 'Big Picture' generalizations which require much amending and refining in any given local situation. For instance, individual outsiders had personal intentions concerning the native people which were not actually required of them by the institutions

they represented. Thus some undertook to teach, heal, punish, and act in loco parentis, even though they were not, strictly speaking, required to do so. The important thing to note is that there was general compliance with the wishes of the outsiders and certainly no organized opposition to them on the part of the native people. The outsiders were able to fulfill most of their intentions without seeking a total replacement of the indigenous culture.

Of special interest are the unintended consequences of the settlement of traders, missionaries and policemen. Several chapters could be devoted to this topic, touch on changes in technology, seasonal cycles, health, and a variety of other matters. The chief concern of this section being with intergroup relations within the context of changing community life, the discussion is restricted to this topic, dwelling first on the kind of community which came to typify the Canadian Arctic before the very recent advent of the planned towns and villages.

During the first quarter of the twentieth century there emerged patterns of residence in the Canadian Arctic which would become stabilized and would characterize the human scene in the Arctic for up to fifty years. In other words, during that period there developed what in the 1960's is regarded as the ancien regime. Dotting the coastal areas and barren lands were scores of tiny settlements, most of them dominated by the trading post. In some of these tiny posts, the trader would be joined in permanent residence by the missionary and policeman.

Reflected in the location of these settlements was the growing significance of the outside world for the native people. Previous to the fur trade period, the location of Eskimo living sites were determined by whatever animals they were exploiting at a given time. The most important factor in the placing of the trading posts was access to the outside world, places which ships could visit to deliver their goods and to pick up furs.

Actually, only a small number of native people were encouraged to settle in thes places, those who served the outside agencies: the trader's post servant, the policeman's assistant or special constable, the missionary's catechist. The remainder of the population continued a nomadic life in scattered camps, from which regular, but widely-spaced visits would be made to the posts. Some of these land camps would be visited by traders, missionaries and policemen on their occasional tours between posts.

The trading system introduced an element of structuring into Eskimo groupings, such as extended families and camp groups, because the traders preferred to deal with one or a few Eskimos whom they regarded as representatives or leaders of the nomadic people who lived on the land. Some missionaries, policemen and, later, government administrators reinforced this tendency.

Because the Canadian government had scant interest in the Arctic regions until after the Second World War, the matter of native affairs was left to the agencies with personnel resident in the Arctic, namely the churches, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Except for the latter who represented the federal government, and many of whose policemen were Canadian citizens, the outsiders among the Eskimos were mostly from Britain, Newfoundland, and French-speaking parts of Western Europe, with a handful from Scandinavia. They can hardly be said to have been strongly oriented to the Canadian polity. Indeed, the bulk of the Arctic population, Eskimos and outsiders, were Canadian in only the technical sense of inhabiting geographical space to which Canada laid claim. Each of the communities and sub-regions of the Arctic was a self-contained little world whose frail and tenuous connections with the centres of the Canadian polity only highlighted its isolation and autonomy.

In this situation the outsiders interacted directly and personally with the Eskimos in their midst. From this interaction there developed sets of relationships between the settlers from outside and selected Eskimos and their families. The latter became intermediaries, the forerunners of a kind of elite of native settlement dwellers about whom more will be said later. During the ancien regime these intermediaries broke from their camp and band networks to move from post to post, in some cases ending up in regions far distant from their original homelands. This mobility was in a sense sponsored by the agencies with which the intermediaries were affiliated, thus enhancing the dependence of the intermediaries on their agencies or, more specifically, on the local representatives of the agencies. They were more oriented to the agencies they served than to the communities in which they happened to reside at a given time. They were the first Eskimo cosmopolitans in the Canadian Arctic.

To summarize, the typical communities into which outsiders moved were isolated, tiny, with only a few Eskimo people sharing living space with the outsiders over most of the year. Each place was dominated by one or two male persons representing outside agencies. Settlement organization was simple. The small population and lack of a complex division of labour required little in the way of coordination and structure.

B.P. 5.A.

PART III

THE CONTEMPORARY ARCTIC SCENE

Surveying the scene in the late 1960's we find that many of these small posts have been abandoned; a handful of others survive with minor adaptations to the new world, such as the addition of a new school and nursing station; a few have been modified and expanded beyond recognition; besides, many new settlements have been established, some of them planned by experts. Although there are no large towns by outside standards above the Tree Line, even places with from 300 to 500 people are 'urban' areas by the traditional standards. Most Eskimo people live in settlements of this magnitude. There are four communities with between 500 and 1000 and two, Inuvik in the West and Frobisher in the East, with more than 1500 each. By any standards these are small urban centres. This urbanization which channels Eskimos into larger aggregates and sees them settle as sedentary village dwellers is only one, albeit an important one, of the changes which occurred in response to the suddenly heightened significance of the Arctic for Canada as a whole.

After the Second World War, the Canadian Arctic which, as we saw, had been a twilight zone hardly within the span of Canadian consciousness rather suddenly became the centre of much attention. The military significance of the Arctic was demonstrated during the War when airfields were set up as part of a staging route for planes and material between North America and Europe. With the postwar development of tensions between the Soviet Bloc and the West, the Canadian Arctic assumed further military significance as a kind of no-man's-land between the potential belligerents. Defence installations and warning systems were spotted across the Arctic. Military units conducted exercises in the Barren Lands. The most advanced technology suddenly appeared in more than a dozen places, vastly improving the systems of transportation and communication.

Now the military intrusion itself, important to be sure, was not as crucial in propelling the process of change as was the advent of government. As the missionary often followed the trader, so the government followed the military and took over direct responsibility for Eskimo affairs, providing facilities and services that touched on every aspect of native life.

In the material sense, the Eskimo's standard of living has been greatly improved since government intervention. Housing standards are far below those typical of the country as a whole, but are vastly superior to what they were. Famine is a thing of the past, what one hopes to have been the last one occurring in 1959 in an area far

removed from a settlement. A sweeping health program cut deeply into the very high death rate, although this is still much higher than for the Canadian population as a whole. The continuing high birth rate and the small amount of out-migration brought the population from about 8000 Canadian Eskimos in 1948 to about 12,000 in 1968, so that in terms of its traditional wildlife resources, this vast desert region is already overpopulated and will continue to be so until large scale economic development materializes.

Within a generation the whole economic base has shifted. A minority still make a living from the more or less exclusive combination of hunting and trapping. The majority get a little from these pursuits and what they do get is supplemented by income from sources which did not exist a generation ago: wages, sales of handicrafts, family allowances and various pensions, and relief. For most Eskimos the economic sphere is unstable, unpredictable. Less than 25 per cent can be regarded as fully employed in some occupation. The single largest employer of full-time and casual labour is the federal government. Like the Indians of the Northwest Territories, the Eskimos have been able to take only minimal advantage of mining and other developments taking place on their own doorstep. There are several reasons for this, the chief one being lack of training and experience in industrial occupations.

While there has been a rise in the standard of living, it has been accompanied by a rise in the level and number of wants. The gap between income and wants has been widening. In the settlements where a substantial number of outsiders now live, the Eskimos see what the outsiders regard as a normal 'standard package' of possessions for a family. Furthermore, in the settlements the more acculturated Eskimos, many of them descendants of the intermediaries referred to earlier, enjoy a standard of living which, while inferior to that of the Kabloona* in their midst, is far superior to that of the average Eskimo. The latter, and the younger among them in particular, come to compare their lot with the Kabloona and the better-off Eskimo, and while their standard of living is higher than it was a decade ago, they tend to feel deprived.

This is not to say that the contemporary Eskimo is highly acquisitive and materialistic. I suggest that the gap between the average Eskimo Kabloona families is of most significance symbolically, in that it serves to mark off groups from one another. To use the terms of an earlier section, the imbalance in access to resources marks off the established from the disestablished.

As long as Eskimos lived in isolation and in contact with only a few outsiders, their distinctiveness from the outside world was of little or no significance to them. But that distinctiveness becomes salient and is thrust into one's awareness in the settlements where

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*Kabloona is the term used by the Eskimos to denote white man.

Eskimos are exposed to a wide range of outsiders, such as nurses, teachers, administrators, mechanics, anthropologists, engineers, and their families. To these government sponsored outsiders are being added private entrepreneurs, small businessmen, insurance agents, merchants, and so on. The latter are not so numerous in Eastern Arctic communities but are coming to form a sizeable segment of a few Western Arctic settlements. We know that the outsiders are differentiated among themselves in terms of occupation, class, commitment to the North, government department, and so on; we also know that Eskimos in these settlements are differentiated among themselves in terms of region of origin, closeness to the outsiders, religious denomination, and so on. However, more impressive than these internal divisions is the more global, overall division noted by so many writers: to oversimplify, there exist two sub-communities, one Eskimo and the other Kabloona, in the new-style settlements, with the Eskimo one definitely subordinate to the other.

In the process of differentiation between groups certain qualities which are used initially to identify one or the other, such as style of life or standard of living, can become relatively fixed attributes, regarded as inherent and inevitable. This is most likely to occur where segregation between the groups prevails. The many studies of Arctic settlements describe the marked tendency to segregate unofficially along lines of native and non-native. [6]

Now this would not be so serious if it were not for the fact that individuals and groups have histories. What I mean by this is that once a pattern gets set - say a pattern of segregation between two groups, one of which looks down on the other - the pattern does not disappear in one generation but survives and even gets nourished in a kind of vicious spiral. Subordinate groups have a way of adjusting to their condition, to their lack of power, through hostile withdrawal, passivity, submission, fantasy, displaced aggression, and other means. Superordinate groups have a way of accepting the rightness of their advantaged position and of accounting for the imbalance between themselves and the disestablished, sometimes in terms of heredity. The latter, like the established, have families and transmitted to younger generations in the families of both groups are the subtle ways of assessing and evaluating their social worlds. The vicious spiral, once set, is very difficult to break through.

To some extent this vicious spiral has already been set in motion in the Northwest Territories and Arctic Quebec. I have referred chiefly so far to the economic sphere, perhaps putting too much emphasis on it; but the same point could be made with reference to organization and to participating in decisions that affect one's family and friends.

Here again there has been a one-sidedness, with the Eskimos usually in a dependent position - almost always the client or go-between,

almost never the patron. Deliberate attempts have been made at several levels to involve Eskimo people through having them represented on such bodies as the Northwest Territories Legislative Councils, Community Advisory Councils, and the like, to some extent changing the traditional passive role of the native people vis-a-vis the outsiders. However, representation is one thing, meaningful participation another. I refer here to participation in decisions in many spheres of group life and not only the official ones. In most of the community studies with which I am familiar, it is the outsiders who are presented as the key decision-makers in a wide range of matters. [7]

This is partly due to the persistence of traditional social patterns. Living in small, egalitarian, nomadic groups the Eskimos had no reason to set up and get enthusiastic about formal organization. The process of formal debate, of voting, of majority rule, which many outsiders take for granted, was unknown and indeed was imposed from outside. The Eskimo style was that of consensus in decision-making. It might take a long time to achieve that concensus on particular issues, but that time would be so invested and what we would regard as highly developed human relations skills brought into play to achieve concensus. In the modern settlements, the imported practice of formal debate and resolution by voting leaves many Eskimos unenthusiastic. Their silence is sometimes mistaken for assent by the outsiders.

Besides the lack of precedent in Eskimo culture and the traditional asymmetrical relations between Eskimos and outsiders, another reason for the relative passivity of the Eskimo people has been that the very local affairs about which they could have been deciding were the responsibility of a remote government administration, even for day to day matters, such as the allocation of relief, repairs to small sewers and roads, new windows for the school and so on. While these functions were, and in many places still are, carried out in local settings by government administrators, until recently the ultimate responsibility and decision-making was located in Ottawa. Implied unintentionally in this one-sided allocation of local government functions is that the Eskimos are incapable of even deciding about trivia.

The federal government has recently taken a step to remedy this situation by investing local authorities with more powers and by shifting much of the administrative machinery into the Northwest Territories. The invdvement of the Eskimo people is now very much a matter of how the Territorial Government (and in its region the Quebec Provincial Government) and residents in communities respond to this shift in powers. A key element in this situation is the resident non-Eskimo.

As I have already indicated, one reason for the minor role of Eskimos in community affairs was the availability of non-Eskimos who were only too eager to bear the burden of decision-making. In an earlier period these were the traders, missionaries, policemen. In more recent times, in addition to these, there are the government administrators, teachers, nurses, businessmen, and so on, as well as

the spouses of some of those. The very presence of people eager to play a role in community affairs militates against Eskimo participation, unless a special bid is made for that participation.

I suggest that, crucial to the issue of integration of ethnic groups is the way in which people who are from the outside, but who settle permanently or on a long term basis, exert their power and influence. I refer here to the growing significance of those who, unlike most people connected with government and big industry, make such a commitment and regard themselves as Northerners through and through. Many traders, trappers, and missionaries made this commitment in the past, some marrying Eskimo women and raising families. But as I noted earlier, there is an increasing number of 'new' people who have put down roots in Arctic communities as businessmen, contractors, publishers, and so on. The most common stance of this element is anti-federal government. Within the Territories, many of them are milder equivalents of passionate French-Canadian nationalists in Quebec.

The passion of the New Northerner is correlated with the presence in some communities of people who work for the government and who receive what the non-government people regard as very special treatment: fine housing at low rents, various allowances, linkages to such services as sewers and power. On this particular issue, the New Northerners at times ally with the Eskimos or at least try to see things through the eyes of the latter. On the other hand, there is the possibility that many among the New Northerners, because of their initial head start as controllers of local economics and government, will discourage real Eskimo participation and themselves fill the power vacuums left by the federal government, creating a kind of settler-native imbalance familiar to many parts of the world. We can only speculate on this possibility. I mention it only to drive home the point that issues in the Arctic will be resolved not only in terms of what the Eskimos do as Eskimos, but what they do in interaction with other elements in the population, in particular with those who settle there permanently.

So far I have dwelt on the historical origins of, and the social structural reasons for, the segregation between Eskimo and non-Eskimo people in Canadian Arctic communities. Another dimension which has been only touched upon needs to be added, the dimension of culture. The creation of a true pluralist society, along the lines laid down in the official Canadian ideology, requires the bridging of cultural gaps. This in turn presupposes that the people in whose hands lies the power give some attention, credence, and credit to the culture of the Eskimos, the topic of the next part.

PART IV

ASPECTS OF ESKIMO CHARACTER AND CULTURE

In popular usage, culture is often taken to mean only certain expressive performances and products, such as in architecture, literature, music, and painting. In the anthropological usage followed here, these expressive manifestations are only a part of the totality of culture. In this broad anthropological sense, culture denotes the ideas, values, beliefs and ways of doing things which are shared among the members of a given group and which make that group distinct from others.

In this paper, I concentrate on those aspects of culture which are not readily 'visible', aspects such as values and ways of thinking about the world. I am convinced that it is these aspects which the Arctic establishment, including educators, tolerate the least. It is all very well to applaud the pursuit by a people of its folklore, easter-egg painting, folk dancing, and so on, but this does not imply an enthusiasm for, not an appreciation of, the culture of that people in the sense used here. Indications are that the agents of change in the Arctic are bent upon a policy of cultural replacement.[8] Before plunging into a discussion of this policy, it is well to ask, what culture is there to replace? What are some of the features of the Eskimo way of life and feeling which appear to differ significantly from features which prevail among the majority? A few generalizations on this score are offered in this section.

These generalizations admit of many exceptions, because Eskimo culture is not uniform over the whole Arctic. Besides, as I showed in the preceding section, Eskimo groups are becoming internally diversified, because the process of acculturation is not an even one applying equally to all Eskimos. The features I do present have been gleaned from the literature on the Eskimo of the Canadian Arctic and my own observations. Only those features about which there have been widespread agreement in the literature are brought out in this section.

There is no doubt that the material culture of the Eskimos in Canada is doomed to the museum, with few elements surviving in isolated areas. Even in these areas, items which are widespread only five years ago, such as dog teams, are being replaced by imported vehicles. To the extent that a people's identity is tied into their distinctive material culture, Eskimo identity is rapidly losing that reference and criterion.

Some material objects with a primarily symbolic or expressive function continue to serve as definers of Eskimoness. Carvings and prints deserve special mention, because they are not only objects of economic value, but also symbols of Eskimoness. Purists may decry the

departures from tradition and the outside influence on styles, claiming that the majority of these objects are not 'really Eskimo', but if the people themselves perceive them as Eskimo and if the outsiders define these objects as Eskimo, then they are indeed Eskimo in terms of their significance for Eskimo identity. In one community in Arctic Quebec where carving is an economic mainstay, carving as an activity is used to sort out those of Eskimo descent who have abandoned their Eskimo identity from those who, no matter what their style of life, still regard themselves as primarily Eskimo. A man who carves even only infrequently, is an Eskimo in this place. This kind of symbolic significance of activities and objects usually escapes the outsiders who deal directly with the Eskimos in Canada. I have known teachers to discourage youngsters from carving on the grounds that the carvings are imitative of outside influence or that it interfered with their school work. These outsiders tend to view carving and print-making either from a purely aesthetic or a purely instrumental point of view.

The same point should be made, even more forcibly, with regard to the most important expressive aspect of culture--language. On the basis of my experience, I must say that a majority of educators in the Canadian Arctic regard the question of language primarily from an instrumental point of view, illustrated in the question, "how is this language going to help the person making a living? How is it going to help him fit into the larger society?" These are, of course, valid and important questions. But language is a fundamental structure and process. Upon it is built much of the way of experiencing and thinking about reality. It is also a symbol of group identification and solidarity. Rules that forbid speaking Eskimo in the classroom or school-yard get across to the Eskimo child that the language of his home is something to be ashamed of, something bizarre which, like the spears and kayaks, will survive only in museums.

Other expressive features of Eskimo culture have been discouraged, especially by missionaries, who equated them with the manifestations of the devil's control in pre-Christian times and with what they regarded as an undue preoccupation with 'sex'.

> "Because so much of the oral literature, song, and dance had to do with the supernatural, as defined by the Eskimos, its open expression is now taboo; again, because so much of this tradition is now defined as 'obscene' by the new moral guardians, those Eskimos who cherish certain vestiges of the tradition are reluctant to pass it on to their children and reluctant to express it publicly, i.e., in the presence of Kabloona. In short, many Eskimos have become ashamed of a large part of their own oral and musical tradition."[9]

Very recently there has been a revival of drum dances and other traditional performances in public, but I have the impression that

these have been drained of their original symbolic meaning and are presented as cultural specimens for the gratification of outsiders, especially tourists.

So far I have talked about fairly explicit manifestations of what used to constitute Eskimo culture. Except for the viable language, these are definitely on the wane, destined to survive as museum pieces and tourist attractions. But how about the massive part of the iceberg of culture, the part that is submerged and about which few people are conscious? I refer here to the ways in which people unselfconsciously know and evaluate the world around them. Authorities on the subject agree that these aspects of culture and personality are the most resistant to change. They also agree that where these basic conceptions differ among people who are forced to interact with one another, the resulting faults in communication have serious consequences. Let us look briefly at some Eskimo ways of knowing and evaluating the world.

Many writers have provided examples of Eskimo ways of thinking about the world, ways of explaining happenings which are different from the explanations of the outsiders. These ways of explaining things make up what are called cultural thought models. A favourite example from my own experience will be cited here, paraphrased from another publication. The example pertains to a certain theory of disease held by some Eskimos. If the outsiders in the community concerned had known beforehand about this particular theory, much misunderstanding and tension could have been avoided.

During the late winter of 1962, there was a serious epidemic of rabies among the dogs of an eastern Arctic settlement with a population of about 500 Eskimos and 30 whites. The settlement was only about 6 years old and, like so many other settlements, was inhabited by people who had formerly lived in small land camps. There was no clear policy about chaining dogs, and some Eskimos new to settlement living refused to chain their dogs, or refused to take precipitate action when a dog broke loose; they had not chained them in the small camps in which they formerly lived. No less than 600 dogs were distributed over an area of just more than a square mile. The spread of the rabid virus among the dogs was speeded by the many loose dogs, and within three weeks of the outbreak, more than 100 had to be destroyed because they were rabid.

The white element in the community and some of the more acculturated Eskimos made passionate appeals to the people to keep their dogs tied. Most responded by making special efforts to do so, but several were indifferent to the pleas and threats. The whites accounted for this indifference in terms of stupidity, hostility, or their own failure to communicate their passion on the issue. Much tension was generated in the community.

Six weeks after the outbreak the epidemic was over, with a high casualty rate among the dogs; but no people had died. As soon as the rabies epidemic subsided, an influenza epidemic broke out; ten people died and scores were violently ill.

It was during the influenza epidemic that I learned about the Eskimo theory of disease.

> "Some Eskimos in the community, but not all, believe that there is always a constant amount of disease in the world. This amount of disease is channeled onto certain species at a given time for a given period. For example, if there is an inordinate amount of sickness and death among seals for a period, other species will be relatively free of disease for that period. The reasoning seems to be that if one species is under the disease gun, other species should consider themselves fortunate in being outside the range of that gun."[10]

Applied to the situation I described, this meant that while the dogs were overwhelmed by disease, the people were compartively well-off. The dogs were consuming much of the constant amount of disease in the world. As soon as the rabies epidemic ended, the human species became the biggest consumer of disease--witness the influenza epidemic--and the 'fold theory' was thus confirmed for those Eskimos who believed it.

The attitudes and behavior of some of the Eskimos during the rabies epidemic would have been comprehensible in terms of the logic of their way of thinking if the non-Eskimos had understood that way and had taken it into account in their efforts to combat the epidemic of rabies. We conclude then, that systematic investigation of the thought models of the Eskimos is not just an academic exercise, but has practical value as well.

Certain Eskimo values and character traits can be inferred from behaviour. For instance, many have remarked on the value which Eskimos put on independence and autonomy, as evidenced by their reluctance to coerce or speak for others. Their techniques, which they employ unself-consciously, for inducing conformity made little use of overt punishment and much use of nurturance as a 'reward'. Educators brought up in a society where adults make it obvious who is in-control, where classroom regimentation is viewed as essential, where parents and teachers speak for 'their' children, are often disturbed at what they interpret to be the Eskimo parent's lack of concern for his children.[11] In their opinion the children should not be allowed to stay out so late at night, to accompany parents on just about every kind of event, to stay away from school without a reason acceptable to the teacher, and so on.

In the eyes of the tradition-oriented Eskimo, the Kabloona world

is excessively rigid and concerned with discipline, too much ready to invade an individual's zone of privacy. They view the Kabloona as relately insensitive in the sphere of what we call 'human relations'. For instance much resentment is felt over the policy of taking children away from their families and removing them to a distant hostel-school. Should the children be removed and placed with another family, there is little, if any, resentment as long as it is understood that the youngsters will return.

The question has been asked on many occasions: Why is it that the Eskimos show so little hostility and resentment openly?* As I mentioned earlier, Eskimo silence and show of indifference are often interpreted as positive assent. However, in terms of traditional values it was considered improper to demonstrate overtly strong feelings unless one were extremely frustrated or extremely moved. Eskimos have ways of 'reading' one another's behaviour and feelings, of course, and the cues used to display feelings are usually unobserved or misinterpreted by the Kabloona. Related to this traditional trait is the oft-noted smiling and happy front which Eskimos display for the Kabloona. It has been suggested that this front is an exaggeration of the traditional one, and is used consciously by some and unconsciously by others to conceal strong feelings, both negative and positive, which if expressed might disturb the kind of accommodation which has been developed between Eskimos and Kabloona.

What is perhaps best regarded as another aspect of the trait of repressing displays of strong feeling, is the stoicism which has frequently been described as an outstanding Eskimo characteristic. This stoicism is inferred from the apparently resigned way with which the Eskimos have accepted terrific hardships and crises. The tendency is to accept things as they are and, to use the English vernacular, to 'look for the silver lining', or to be more precise, to give the impression that one accepts things as they are.

Accommodation and compliance with Kabloona rules of the game are widespread, but this does not imply that there has been a wholesale identification with the values which underlie these rules. In fact, Eskimos who comply with the Kabloona rules at work, in meetings, in school, or in the administrator's office are given to acting out, in the privacy of their homes with their friends, hilarious imitations of what the Kabloona regard as normal behaviour. [12]

This brings up the question, which we cannot answer conclusively, of the extent to which Eskimos do indeed nourish the values attributed to them. If we based our conclusions on actual behaviour, then we would have to say that because so many Eskimos in the larger settlements behave in most ways like the Kabloona, they have abandoned their cultural values. Many observers have expressed the opinion

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* At times hostility and resentment are expressed openly, a matter which is touched upon in the concluding part of this paper.

that those Eskimos who have had the most contact with the outsiders identify with the Eskimo social groupings but not with the Eskimo culture in the sense used here. They argue that it is only among those families which have only recently moved into settlements and among those who live mostly in isolated camps and small settlements that anything like the traditional cultural values survive. In the absence of systematically gathered data on the subject of values in the Canadian Arctic, one can only guess as to their distribution and viability.

Many more examples could be given of the hardly visible, intangible, subjective values which we infer from behaviour. However, I think that enough has been presented to conclude that in Arctic communities account must be taken of more than meets the eye if productive relationships among the different sub-cultures are to be developed. Individuals have expressed admiration for traditional Eskimo values and have observed that non-Eskimos would be wise to adopt them in their own lives. However, many of the currents running through the mass society in which the Eskimos are moving go in the opposite direction and favour centralization, impersonality, regimentation. The pressure is on the Eskimos to abandon their customary ways of viewing the world. This pressure is deliberately applied in the schools and work places. It is unwittingly or unintentionally applied in most spheres of life and disseminated through the mass media.

PART V

IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

Much of the foregoing discussion on social and cultural matters seems remote from problems of education. Nevertheless these matters are pertinent to such problems for a number of reasons some of which have already been brought out. The overall theme in the paper has been that of tendencies to social and cultural alienation of the minority Eskimo grouping. In this concluding section I bring out some social-psychological correlates of this alienation and minority status.

First, where a segment of the population feels alienated and without a clear stake in the society, it is rather much to expect them to embrace or even to understand the goals of formal education except for the very limited ones of an instrumental nature, such as reading, writing, arithmetic and vocational training. There is no questioning the enthusiasm of Eskimo parents for these instrumental features of education. However, beyond this there is little enthusiasm for and understanding of the content and process of formal education. Control over the content and process is overwhelmingly in the hands of the Kabloona, the Eskimos having no voice at all. Until they do get such a voice, especially at the community level, formal education will remain an alien thing.

Second, the position people occupy in the social system has much to do with their sense of identity and self-esteem. The family is the key grouping here, for it is in ebb and flow of everyday life that people get to know who they are and what they can do. The social, and in particular, ethnic is only one of the components which comprise a person's identity, but in cross-cultural situations it is a crucial component. Eskimos with a firm sense of identity probably do not fret over what outsiders think of them. But those who grow up in a world of cultural discontinuity - the majority of the contemporary school population - are not so firmly anchored in self-identity and self-esteem because explicitly or implicitly the parents and their generation tend to be devalued by those who control the system. As I pointed out almost ten years ago,

> "although the Kabloona make a favourable, if romantic, judgment on the Eskimo past, this does not prevent them from showing contempt for the living Eskimos they meet, either openly or by implication. Consider what is implied where one learns that untidiness is sinful, and one's parents are untidy; that receiving handouts is a mark of inferior status while one's parents are forced to accept handouts to keep the household going; that self-respecting men are capable of protecting their womenfolk from human predators while one's sisters

> and mother have to be protected behind a social wall of non-fraternization, erected by the guardians of the predators. Under such conditions it is not unlikely that children will devalue their parents.
>
> The devaluation of parents by offspring who accept, perhaps unconsciously, the Kabloona evaluations of what is desirable and what is reprehensible implies a weakening in the control which parents normally exercise over their offspring. Plausible explanations of the factors which pre-dispose the children of foreign-born in America to delinquency usually include the point that the children, accepting the dominant society's view that the immigrant parent is strange and perhaps uncouth, do not look up to the parents as role-models." 13

A third point has to do with incongruence and its consequences. By incongruence we mean lack of fit between parts of something. In the Arctic situation there are many examples of lack of fit, some of which are listed here: between the goals youngsters are encouraged to entertain and the lack of means to achieve these goals; between role demands from the Kabloona system and conflicting demands from the Eskimo one; between one status identity and another that a person is expected to adopt. These and other examples of incongruence arising from the rapid changes discussed earlier are described and analyzed in the literature.[14] Associated with incongruence is the phenomenon of marginality. Personal marginality refers to the condition of belonging partly to one and partly to another group, without being fully engaged in either, and is generally regarded as a condition of considerable strain. Group marginality refers to the position of a whole category of persons, a category which is usually in a kind of middleman position between two distinct groups. A good example from Canadian history is the Metis of the Prairies, who mediated between the Whites and the Indians, and who were in the process of developing a solidarity and unity when they were overwhelmed by the westward moving Whites. Because a person can identify with a marginal group he is not necessarily in a position of strain, unlike the marginal <u>person</u> whose identity problems are serious precisely because there is no marginal group to identify with.

Recent studies show that there is an incipient marginal grouping in certain Western Arctic communities, but that over most of the Arctic one is pressured to identify with <u>either</u> Kabloona or Eskimo. In its relevance to the educational process among the Eskimos the problem of marginality is not serious until about the age of adolescence when the young person comes to see the world as represented at least in his community, not so much as it had been presented in childhood, but as it is.

It follows that a key factor determining what happens in the process of developing identification and esteem is the character of the community in which the young person grows up. The ideal situation is found in those few communities where the Eskimos have a genuine voice, are involved in making decisions which are important in their eyes, and where the people can choose to follow more than one line of work, combining traditional occupations pursued with the means of modern technology and new occupations associated with the outside world.

The history of one of these communities, Povungnetuk in Arctic Quebec, I have described in a recent publication.[15] The outstanding integrative piece of social machinery in that community is a multi-functional cooperative, in the running of which the Eskimos have a genuine voice. Many have noticed the feeling of pride and worth which has been engendered among people in places like Povungnetuk, few as they are. This feeling permeates the community and is evidenced by many of the young people who, in other places, are frequently ashamed of their origins.

It is in communities like this that Eskimos do speak out, occasionally expressing hostility and resentment, but pleading their case in terms of constructive development. They have learned about the power of organization and of 'politics' in the broad sense, and do not hesitate to play off side against side, the provincial against the federal, the Hudson's Bay Company against the Cooperative. Acculturated young people, especially in the Western Arctic, have publicly voiced hostility and resentment against "the system", but little of what they have to say is directly meaningful at the local community level. In that area hostility and resentment is sometimes acted out in spurts of vandalism.

I do not have the data to test it, but I suggest that the following hypothesis would be supported by the data: compared with youngsters from other communities of the same size and situation with reference to resources but lacking the integrative machinery to be found in Povungnetuk, the youngsters from the latter make a better adaptation educationally, occupationally and psychologically.

Looking at the Arctic social and cultural situation in general, I conclude that there is a far from close fit between the policies required by long-term, large-scale economic development, on the one hand, and the policies required to prevent individual and group deterioration, on the other.

Those whose chief concern is with large-scale development of resources tend to favour cultural replacement; those whose chief concern is with human relations problems tend to favour cultural continuity. The former see the salvation of the Eskimo people in

terms of a massive educational program aimed at fitting the younger generation into the modern, industrial society and pay little more than lip service to the needs of community development and adult education. In this 'Big-Picture' perspective, the adult generations are by-passed. The costs of such a policy have been the chief topic of this paper.

In the perspective of those whose chief concern is with people 'here and now', there is a tendency to underplay the issues of long-term and large-scale development and to overplay the issues of local compass. Somehow the two perspectives must be brought together into one focus, so that programs of community development which take into account the social, cultural and psychological needs of all generations are not viewed as competing with or conflicting with programs of formal education designed to prepare people for life in a modern, industrial society.

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