

INUIT PERSPECTIVES ON THE 20TH CENTURY

The Transition to Christianity



Victor Tungilik and Rachel Uyarasuk

Edited by Jarich Oosten & Frédéric Laugrand

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Volume 1
**The Transition
to Christianity**



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**Nunavut
Arctic College**

Victor Tungilik and Rachel Uyarasuk

Edited by Jarich Oosten and Frédéric Laugrand

Inuit Perspectives on the 20th Century
Volume 1
The Transition to Christianity

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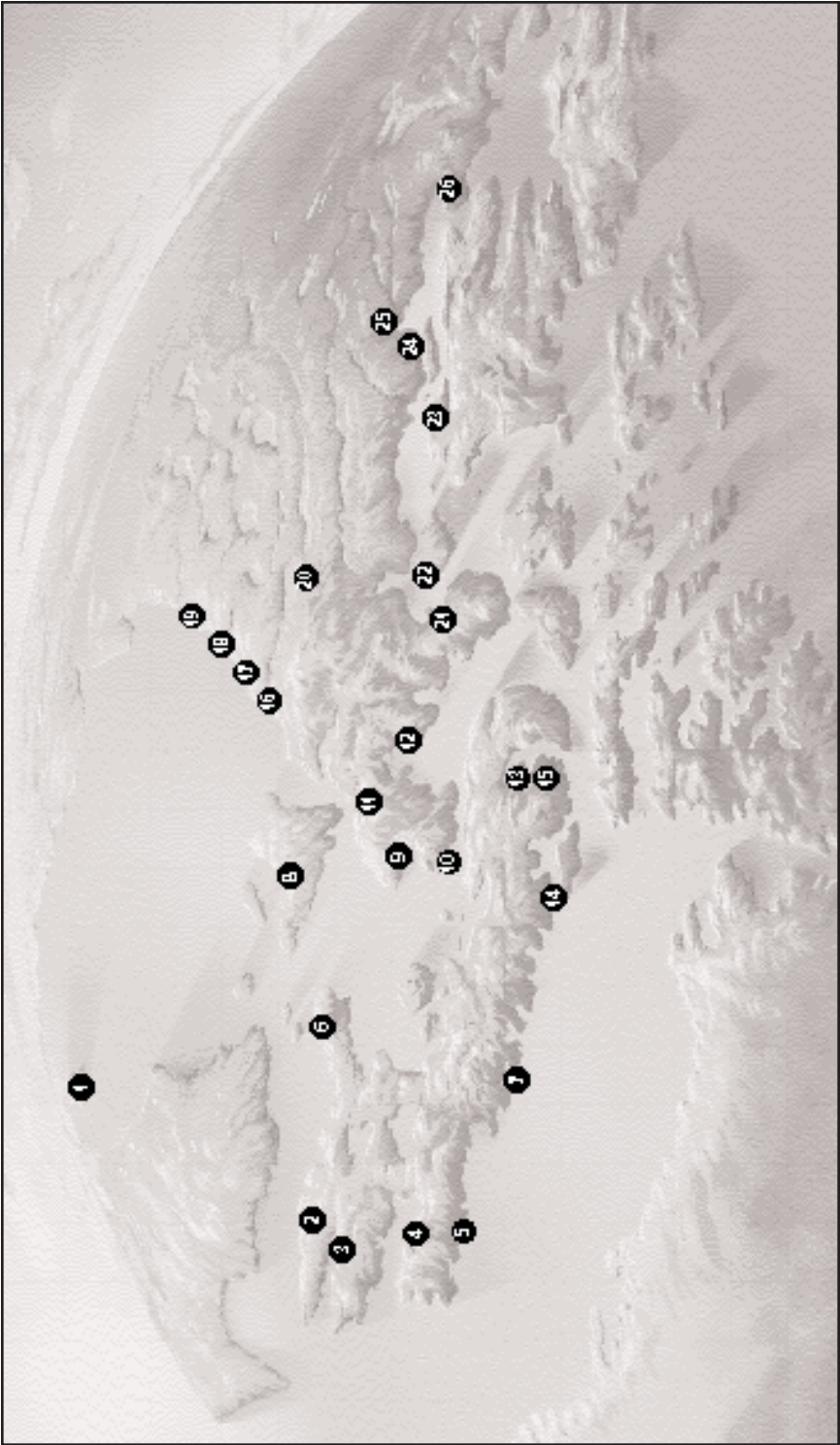


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Preface

In 1999 a course was offered in the Language and Culture Programme at Nunavut Arctic College in Iqaluit to help students gain a better understanding of the role played by Inuit in the transition to Christianity. Victor Tungilik and Rachel Uyarasuk shared their memories of the period of transition with our students. Interviews were conducted by Lavanie Akulukjuk, Vera Arnatsiaq, Matthew Boki, Sheepa Nowyook, Hanna Oolayou, Adamie Paneak, and Susie Shaimajuk. Each day four interview sessions were conducted. The students were divided into teams. The questions were prepared in close co-operation with the instructors. The interviews were then transcribed by the students themselves.

Alexina Kublu took care of the translation in admirable fashion and provided help to instructors and students alike whenever necessary. Susan Sammons, in charge of all operations again, was wonderfully effective. Sally Mikijuk keyboarded the English transcriptions and Eileen Kilabuk keyboarded the Inuktitut. Noel McDermott and Marja Korhonen did an excellent job at proofing the English version as did Alexina Kublu, Nellie Kusugak and Peter Irniq for the Inuktitut. Roberta Roberts and Nortext once again provided much appreciated support to the project. We also wish to thank Aaju Peter for drawing the *amouti* diagram, and Ranbir Hundal for scanning it for us. Mike Gardner, retired Anglican minister, was a big help in the translation of the hymns and scripture texts. Kenn Harper provided us with the English names of the Anglican ministers.

We would also like to thank John Crump of the Nunavut Planning Committee for permission to use their map. Brenda Mowbray and Elise Chandler, the college librarians, also were of great assistance to both the students and instructors. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Nunatta Residence who took good care of us all.

Most of all we thank the two elders, Rachel Uyarasuk and Victor Tungilik, for their patience and willingness to share their recollections with us.

Frédéric Laugrand
Jarich Oosten

The Transition to Christianity

The transition to Christianity in Nunavut occurred in the first half of this century. It was a long and complex process that deeply affected Inuit life. It is usually described from the point of view of the missionaries, who took for granted that they were the ones who brought Christianity to the Inuit. But Inuit were not just passive recipients in the process of Christianization. They played an active role in it and helped to shape Christianity in the North. Today it is becoming clear that in many places Inuit adopted Christianity even before a missionary had arrived in that area. The gospel was often spread by Inuit themselves. They derived their inspiration from the hymns and texts that were spread by the Anglican missionaries as well as from the rituals they observed at the mission posts.

In this book, the Inuit perspective is represented by two Inuit elders, Rachel Uyarasuk from Iglulik and Victor Tungilik from Naujaat. In this introduction we will discuss some aspects of the transition to Christianity following their words. Both elders grew up when missionaries were not yet present in the areas where they lived, even though Christianity was already present. Victor's father travelled to Igluligaarjuk to be baptised.

"We were still living in *igluit* when I was growing up. The priests never came where we were living. We went to Igluligaarjuk once around Easter time. After that we returned to where we were living. This was shortly before our father died. There were four or five priests in Igluligaarjuk. My father was baptised there. There were no *qallunaat* where we were living. We never had any priests or ministers come to us. It was always us who would go where there was a priest."



Group photo of students at the end of the course.

Rachel was brought up in the North Baffin area. Christianity came from the South Baffin area where people had become Christians at the beginning of this century.

“I don’t remember when there was absolutely no religion. I was too young then. I probably was born before there was Christianity, but the *siqqitirniq* ritual seems to be my first recollection. As I grew up, I was only aware of being Christian.”

Inuit were still following shamanism, but under the guidance of some of the leaders who knew about the Bible or had heard about it through others who had visited the southern missions, people began to convert to Christianity. Rachel was already an adult when the missionaries arrived in the area where they were living.

“I can’t tell you the year they arrived. The minister and the priest arrived at the same time right after I had had my second child. The minister and the priest arrived together by ship at Mittimatalik. We heard about this. When the ice had formed and someone went trading at Mittimatalik we learned of their arrival. I am not able to tell you the year.”

Both elders very clearly remember the time before the missionaries when Inuit were beginning to live as Christians. Inuit began to use Christian prayers, hymns and rituals in their camps. First they heard about the new religion by oral communication. Then they began to read the texts. Rachel remembers that, “When the Bibles were brought, our parents would work at learning how to read. That’s when our parents started reading to us children, and we got the desire to learn to write.” Camp leaders and *angakkuit* or shamans played a crucial part in adopting these beliefs and practices that facilitated the transition to Christianity. Even before the missionaries arrived, Sundays were observed. Rachel relates that “Before there was a minister we prayed together only on Sundays. That’s the way it was. Whenever there was sufficient food they were instructed not to do anything on Sundays.” She remembers witnessing the traditional *tivajuut* winter feast as well as participating in the *siqqitirniq* conversion ritual.

“There was a *qaggiq*, a big *iglu*. It was a very large *iglu* made of snow. There was also drum-dancing. There was a very high platform made of snow inside the *qaggiq*. Two people came in through the entrance and jumped over this pillar of snow. One of them had a whip. One of them had a stick. I remember seeing those two. The person who was drumming had really long hair and he wore a band to keep his hair out of the way. The people who were singing were towards the back. Their hoods were over their

heads in front of them. They were sitting on a platform. Those that did not have their hoods over their heads had a mitten placed on their heads.”

In the first interview, the memories of *tivajuut* immediately led Rachel to the memories of the *siqqitirniq* ritual.

“It was when people wanted to turn to Christianity. When they decided they were going to *siqqitiq*, they went to the windbreak. It was nice outside. The sun was shining as it was spring. They brought a seal to the windbreak. They cut the seal open and took out the intestines, the liver, the heart, the eyes, and the tongue and cut them into small pieces. They did not have plates in those days, so they placed the pieces on the seal. They were cut into tiny pieces and mixed together. In the end, people lined up and were given a piece of meat to put into their mouths. People were asked why they wanted to go through this ceremony. Every one of them replied, “We are going through this because we want to become Christian.” My mother told me, if I were asked, to say, “I want to be with Jesus.” When the person giving the meat came to me, he gave me an eye and a piece of intestine. It was cut small enough to chew. I was asked why I wanted to become Christian. Here I was, just a child. I was old enough to speak and I replied as my mother had instructed me, “Because I want to go to Jesus when I die.” Every one of us was given a piece of meat. We did this because all those parts of the seal, the heart, and the intestine were all parts of the *pittailiniq*, the taboos. They were no longer going to be observed. There wouldn’t be any part of the seal that people would have to refrain from eating. This was not just the case for seal, but for all other animals as well. There was not going to be any more abstaining from eating any part of any animal. This is why we were given bits and pieces of everything.”

Thus the two traditions always seem to merge in the recollections of the elders. But at the same time it was often also a struggle to reconcile the different points of view of the two religious traditions.

The missionaries considered Inuit beliefs and practices as they existed before the introduction of Christianity as paganism and superstition. The *angakkuut* were often seen as conjurers who exploited and misled people. Their *tuurngait* were seen as demons. Representatives of the church and the government saw it as part of their mission to root out these superstitions. Christianisation was often seen as an essential step in the development of the Inuit from a primitive and backward people to modern civilisation.

Inuit did not confuse Christian religion with *qallunaat* civilisation. But when they became Christians they were taught to adopt this negative attitude towards their traditional beliefs and practices. For a long time people tended not to discuss them with children or outsiders. As a consequence, much traditional knowledge was lost.

Today a new awareness is developing in which Inuit take pride in their past and their culture. They realise that the beliefs and practices of their ancestors were not without value and interest is growing in the preservation of the traditional knowledge that still is available. It turns out that a lot of elders still have many recollections of the past. They have preserved much knowledge that can help us to understand not only the nature of Inuit beliefs and practices in the past but also the creativity and ingeniousness displayed by the Inuit in adapting to new beliefs and practices while preserving their own cultural traditions. Old and new traditions merged and created modern Inuit culture as it exists today. Christianity has become an integral part of Inuit culture.

The recollections of the elders help us to understand better how Christianity and Inuit culture merged in the first half of this century.



Frédéric Laugrand

Rachel wearing her qaliruaq.

Anglicans and Catholics

Inuit had been in contact with *qallunaat* for hundreds of years. Interaction and trade with the *qallunaat* had deeply affected Inuit communities. *Qallunaat* had brought new materials and new economic opportunities, but also new diseases and social problems. Many Inuit had probably witnessed Christian religious services and celebrations on *qallunaat* ships and these experiences may have influenced some of their own religious beliefs and practices at an early stage, but it was only with the coming of the missionary that Inuit began to be faced with a choice: adhering to their own traditional beliefs and practices or adopting the new religion. In 1894, the first Anglican mission post on Baffin

Island was founded in Umanarjuaq, but it still took many years before the first Inuit converted to Christianity. For a long time the Anglican missionaries doubted whether Inuit would accept the new beliefs at all. But rumours of the religion spread. The missionaries translated books of the New Testament and hymns into Inuktitut: *Hymns, Addresses etc. for the Use of the Eskimo of Hudson's Bay and Baffin's Land* (1900), *Portions of the Book of Common Prayer together with Hymns and Addresses* (1900), *The Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles* (first printed in 1897 and revised in 1903), *The First Book of Moses called Genesis* (1906), *The Epistles and the Book of Revelation* (1908), *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (1912), *The Second Book of Moses called Exodus* (1914), *The Book of Psalms* (1917). These texts were printed in the syllabic writing designed for that purpose by the Anglican missionaries. The syllabic writing rapidly became popular, not only for reading the texts spread by the missionaries, but also for writing letters. Rachel relates that in the beginning Inuit depended mostly on oral communication as few were able to read.

“We read our Bibles. They were available. People didn’t do as much reading then, so they heard about the rules they had to follow and what they shouldn’t do by word of mouth. Even though it turned out that all of this was in the Bible and prayer books, we didn’t use them often. They were used in church, but because we didn’t understand this right away, we listened more to what was said. We seemed to believe more in what was told to us about the things we had to do or not to do.”

The spread of the texts had some unexpected consequences. Inuit did not just adopt Christianity in its *qallunaat* form, but integrated the new religion into their own culture. This led to conflict at times between the Inuit and the missionaries. In the beginning of this century, the famous camp leader Angmalik proposed his own version of Christianity in Umanarjuaq. It was vigorously opposed by the missionaries and to their great relief the Inuit at Umanarjuaq rejected Angmalik’s version of Christianity and accepted their spiritual authority in this respect. But outside the direct influence of the missionaries, many new religious movements flourished for some time. They paved the way for the new religion. Most of them integrated traditional Inuit beliefs and practices with the new religion. A well-known example is the famous movement of Umik in the Iglulik area in the early 1920s. When Knud Rasmussen and his companions visited the Iglulik area in 1922-1923, the whole area was in turmoil because Umik and his son had founded a new religious movement. This is still remembered today by some of the elders in Iglulik. Rasmussen’s main informant, the old *angakkuq* Ava, converted to Christianity in 1922. Because of that he felt free to inform Rasmussen about his shamanic knowledge. Much traditional knowledge was preserved because of his transition to

Christianity. Rasmussen duly recorded Ava's wisdom but he did not pursue the question of Christianity itself. Therefore we know little about his motives to convert to Christianity.

In 1912 a Roman Catholic mission was opened in Igluligaarjuk in the Kivalliq region. In the North Baffin region, although the Roman Catholic priests, the *iksirarjuat*, and the Anglican missionaries, the *ajuriksuijiit* considered each other as rivals, Inuit were often interested in both versions of the new religion.

“Before we knew about denominations, it did not matter whether a person was Anglican or Catholic. They would try to follow the Christian religion, and they would teach each other about it. They were trying to follow things that were good, and they did not take into consideration whether it might be an Anglican or a Catholic thing.”

People exchanged ideas and adopted beliefs and rituals that suited them.

“When people got together, there were people who were following the Anglican religion and those following the Catholic religion. They talked to each other and compared what they were supposed to do to follow the religion. Because we didn't know much, people tried to follow both religions. I remember people talking about the type of religion they were following. Those from the Kivalliq region told us about Catholicism. Those of us who were Anglican talked about that. People would talk and try to follow both. It was quite a while before there was a missionary around there.”

Rachel remembers that Anglican as well as Catholic hymns were sung. The well-known fierce competition between the two churches appears to have started with the coming of the missionaries. Before that time the difference between the denominations did not matter.

“It was back in Mittimatalik. There was a *qallunaaq* living there. There were a priest and a minister who went there at the same time. The priests had their own followers, and they didn't want them to follow the Anglican religion. The Anglican ministers did not want their followers to follow the Catholic religion. It turned out that whenever we would get together we would talk about religion. They didn't want us to follow both at the same time. It seemed that the ministers and priests were trying to separate us people in this way. This seemed to cause a rift between people. Those who

came from the Iglulik area were Catholic, and those from the Kangiq&ugaapik area were Anglican. We seemed to separate into two groups, once we had the ministers.”

The rift in the community affected social relations between people. Rachel remembers: “It was shameful to show any affection for your relatives that were not of the church you belonged to.” She also pointed out that marriages between members of the two churches were no longer possible.

“At first they were told that they couldn’t marry each other. Those who were following the Anglican church could only marry another follower. Also, if anyone was in the Catholic church they could only marry somebody who was a fellow Catholic. This was the way it was in Iglulik. As a result people got married to their relatives.”

The Kivalliq and Natsilik areas became predominantly Catholic whereas Baffin Island became mostly Anglican. The boundary between the churches ran through Iglulik, dividing the community, half being Roman Catholic and half being Anglican.

Victor Tungilik was always on the borderline between the two churches. He explained that his parents were Anglicans, but they wanted him to follow the Catholic religion. Thus his family was represented in both churches. Later he learnt about the Anglican religion.

“When I started hearing about the Anglican religion, I thought maybe it was only those following the Anglican religion that would be saved by Jesus. I thought those of us following the Catholic religion would be left behind. I looked for this in the Bible and I learned that we are all going to be saved.”

Victor came to the conclusion that both religions were essentially the same.

“I was trying to find out more about the Bible from the ministers and the priests. I had both versions. Both Bibles are the same, even though there are two churches. They both use the same Bible. They are the same whether you open one Bible or the other. To this day, I still search for discrepancies between the two. They are both the same. It is possible to understand both of them.”

When he was disappointed by the answers of a Roman Catholic priest, he turned to an Anglican minister.

“I started trying to understand more of the Bible from an Anglican minister. To this day, I am still trying to understand the Bible. After asking the priest and not getting an answer, I felt I could not go further. I stopped asking him questions because I felt I had to start finding the meaning on my own. I felt I wasn’t able to.”

He considered becoming an Anglican, but to his surprise he was discouraged by the Anglican minister.

“I thought of becoming an Anglican. The minister told me that even if I tried to become an Anglican, I would still be the same because I was a Catholic. He said, “Myself, if I were to try to become a Catholic, because I am a minister, I would still be an Anglican. There would be no change.”

Victor remained a Roman Catholic, but he is sceptical of the direction the churches now take. He feels the ministers and priests should take a stronger line with the younger generation. As a child he heard a sermon that impressed him deeply.

“We went to Igluligaarjuk while I was a child, and I heard this sermon about the end of the world. There was going to be thunder and lightning. Every time I heard thunder and lightning afterwards I would be scared that the end of the world had come. I heard this sermon from a priest. I would think to myself, “Maybe it will happen tonight”. When I woke up the next day and everything was alright, I would think maybe it would happen that night. I thought this for a long time. It was only when I learned to read on my own that I learned that it wasn’t like that. I lived in fear for a long time. There was nothing that I was more afraid of. The sermon that I heard caused me to be afraid.”

It had a lasting influence upon him and played an important part in his decision to stop his activities as an *angakkuq*. He thinks it could still inspire the younger generation.

“I have heard that elders used to bring young couples together to counsel them. They would tell them what kinds of things they were supposed to do. I personally think they should be shown the Book of Revelations.” You should talk to them individually. I think this would help them improve. That is what I think. I think that we are going through a very fearful time. If people started fearing what could happen to them, this could really turn a young person’s behaviour around.”

Shamanism

Victor recalled how his father was a Christian and an *angakkuq* at the same time.

“He was a Christian and he prayed, and was answered by God. And, yet, he was an *angakkuq* also. For most of them, it was not possible to be a Christian and an *angakkuq* at the same time. I often wonder if this was not really the way it was supposed to be. Although my father was an *angakkuq*, he did not let go of his *tuurngait*. When he needed to, he prayed to God and he was given what he wanted. He was able to be both a Christian and an *angakkuq* at the same time. I understood this to be possible because of my father. I was not like him even though he was my father. I was afraid to try and remain an *angakkuq*. Therefore I sent my *tuurngait* away. I wasn’t able to be like my father.”



Frédéric Laugrand

Victor and Rachel deep in conversation.

Victor also became an *angakkuq* as a young man. After his father’s death, one of his helping spirits came to him of its own accord. Victor was told by an elder that he might die if he sent it away so he decided to keep it and became an *angakkuq* for several years. He was successful as an *angakkuq* and was able to heal people. He managed to combine a shamanic and a Christian perspective. He felt that his *tuurngaaq*, his helping spirit, came to him because it wanted to help.

“It was because the *tuurngaaq* wanted me to help heal people, that it came to me.” He acquired many *tuurngait*. They had their own language and their own way of doing things. They could be any object or being, even something very small. Each one had its own characteristics. He distinguished between good and evil *tuurngait*:

“A *tuurngaq*, in my dialect, does not mean Satan. Satan works against people and wants people to do bad things. A *tuurngaq* is there to help people. It would help regarding animals, and it would provide help in other ways. This I know for a fact. There are two kinds of *tuurngait*, the evil ones, and the good ones. This is the way it is. There are those with a bad spirit. The ones with good spirits come from God. The other ones with evil spirits come from Satan and don’t want people to live. There are also *tuurngait* who want people to live, who are able to help people, who are able to provide additional life to people. These were the *tuurngait* I knew personally.”

His *tuurngait* did not require him to observe *tirigusuusiiit*. “It seemed like my *tuurngait* were similar to the Christian religion; they did not make me refrain from anything. When I was given an item to help someone, then it was up to me to heal the person. That’s the way it was.” But there was also a dark side to shamanism. Victor emphasised the danger of jealousy between *angakkuuit*.

“As long as someone did not upset them, they [the *angakkuuit*] would not go after him. But if there was anyone who was very skilful or a good hunter or a fast runner, or a good seamstress, or had had the skills to make good tools, then the *angakkuq* would be jealous and would try to kill him.”

Victor did not like this rivalry (*akiraqturniq*). There were evil *angakkuuit* and good *angakkuuit*. Victor commented on the evil *angakkuuit*: “Even though this is not written I feel that the one in the Bible who led Adam and Eve astray is the leader of these *angakkuuit*.” But even good *angakkuuit* might sometimes have to take recourse to harsh measures. Victor recalled that his father had killed one of his rivals because he was trying to trap him.

“My father was known as an *angakkuq* even by people he had never seen before. There was one *angakkuq* who tried to *tirliaq* him. He went down through the earth to observe him because he wanted to best him. My father got tired of this *angakkuq* who was going after him and he eventually killed him. He told me about this more than once because he didn’t want to cause me illness or be a burden for me.”

Victor did not like this rivalry (*akiraqturniq*) and it may have played a part in his conversion. From the interview it emerges that a few times in his career he was confronted with the dangers inherent in his own powers and those experiences played

an important part in his decision to abandon shamanism. His reasons for quitting shamanism were complex. His experiences as an *angakkuq*, his belief in God and his fear of the last judgement all played a part and came to the fore in the interviews.

“If I had not understood that there was someone stronger and more powerful than my *tuurngait*, I would have continued to use them. I found out that there was someone powerful enough to have created people and made the land and the sea and the air. Having read this in the Bible, I wanted to get rid of my *tuurngait*. I was also fearful that I was going to be thrown into the great fire. Because of that, I let go of my *tuurngait*.”

Victor was very much motivated by his Christian beliefs. So it was rather surprising that a priest he told about it did not agree with him.

“I told a priest that I had been an *angakkuq* in my past. I told him that I had sent away my *tuurngait* even though they were there to help me. The priest told me that what I had done was wrong because they were there to help me heal people, and that any way of assisting and healing people was a gift from God. When the priest told me this, I believed him. But, as I had already sent my *tuurngait* away, I was not going to request their return.”

The attitude of the priest did not change Victor’s mind. He made a clean break. He had sent his helping spirits away and he never took to performing as an *angakkuq* again.

Prayer

After Victor had decided to stop being an *angakkuq*, he only tried to help people through prayer. In prayer he could turn to someone who was “even more powerful and even stronger than my helpers”. Prayer was an old tradition. Incantations, *irinaliutit*, had always been important in Inuit culture. Prayer was one of the first Christian traditions adopted in Inuit culture. Victor remembered how his father prayed for food.

“I didn’t know what religion was when I was a child. I remember once we were totally out of food. We had a bit of flour, but there was no more meat at all. We were told that our father wanted to pray. While he was in Iglulik, he had started to follow the Anglican religion. He wanted to pray to be given some food from God. The next day after we prayed, we went down to the floe edge. I was a child back then, and my brother was still alive. There were a lot of seals. He killed a lot of seals. He even got a bearded seal. He came up by dogteam to show us. It was only afterwards that I realised

that his prayer had been answered by God. It was only later that I turned to God, to give me what I needed. Before that time, I didn't think about God at all. I always remember the words that he prayed. They were not written down but I remember them to this day."

Rachel also emphasised the importance of prayer even before the missionaries came.

"Whenever anyone was sick, we would have prayers for them in someone's house. Not for a fatal sickness, but for instance, if somebody had a very bad cold or was not feeling well we would pray for this person. We had different kinds of prayers, so I can't really say what the words of the prayers were. We would pray to be given meat. The hunters would pray to be given game for food in the morning before they went out hunting. Also, whenever people were experiencing difficulty, they would pray in their dwellings. There wasn't a gathering. They would just pray in their dwelling. They would pray for what they would want. It was only on Sundays they gathered to pray and sing hymns. Also, if there was someone who had been sick for awhile, even though there were people in the household, others would come over to pray if this person was not getting better."



Rachel and Victor being interviewed.

Prayer was a daily discipline. Victor recalls: "We prayed every morning before we went out hunting. In the evening we would pray before we went to sleep." He used to ask God to help him get animals when he was out hunting and remembered very clearly

God's help when he was lost in Arviligjuaq. After quitting shamanism he would only pray. He prayed for his little granddaughter when she was ill and she was cured.

Anianniq, disclosure of wrong-doings, confession

The disclosure of hidden things had always been central to the shamanic complex. Victor said that if people would not disclose what they had done, the game might disappear or a person might die.

“Sometimes, if they did not disclose what they had done, and if the *angakkuq* was not shown what they had done, a person would die. Sometimes the *angakkuq* would expose a person's actions even if the person didn't want to disclose them because of embarrassment.”

Victor related how his father had told him about killing another *angakkuq* who was his rival. “He said that if he did not disclose this, that I was the one who would become sick because of it.” Shamanic healing was based on the capacity to reveal the wrong-doings of people. These wrong-doings had to be brought out in the open.

“The most difficult people to heal were the ones who did not want to talk about why they were sick. Not about their pain, but about the kinds of things they had done, the kinds of wrong-doings they had done. The ones who didn't want to disclose anything were the hardest ones to deal with. If a woman or a man had had sex with any kind of an animal, whether it was a dog, a caribou, or a seal, they were unable to disclose this out of embarrassment, or shame. They didn't want to talk about it. Sometimes it was only when they knew that they were going to die that they would finally talk about it. If they were able to talk about it right away, because they didn't want to die, then they would recover. That's the way it was. This was part of what I would do back then. I sometimes think that even today, there are people doing this kind of thing. The doctors are not going to know that that is the cause for their sickness. I think that if there is anyone who is ill because they have done this type of thing, they will die.”

Rachel also pointed out that, “If a person was too ashamed to disclose their wrong-doing, they could die. If they didn't want to die, they had to disclose what they had done. Then they could recover.” The capacity to see wrong-doings that was attributed to the *angakkuq* was also expected from the missionaries. Rachel stated, “Whenever we were about to go to the minister, I would start wracking my brain wondering what kinds of sins I had committed. I thought the minister would be able to see these sins.” Victor expected the same thing of the priest.

“After I was confirmed, I was told I had to go to confession to remove my sins. When I heard this, I went to see the priest. I thought if I tried hiding anything, the priest would know. On one hand, I was ashamed of my sins but on the other hand, I thought he would already know what my sins were. It turned out that the priest did not know this in advance.”

Talking about his shamanic past was a way for Victor to bring things out in the open. He had never told his children about it. “No, I have never told them about it. I don’t want them to hear about it. I don’t want them to hear bad things. It will not be of any use to anyone. It is not going to bring anybody to heaven.” The interview situation provided an opportunity for him to talk about it.

“There were people around who were stronger *angakkuit* than myself who never let on they were *angakkuit*. They were unable to talk about it. They would not say anything. When asked they would say, “I have never been an *angakkuq*. I don’t know anything about it.” There are people who say this now. I don’t want to keep it inside myself as I am not going to be using this anymore. I want to talk about it and get it out of my system. Because you are asking me these questions, I am telling you what I remember. I am thankful to you for asking about this because I need to talk about it.”

Rachel emphasised that prayer and confession continue to be important in healing people.

“Because we are not able to only have one church, there are healing gatherings that go on. Using these healing sessions, people try to get together and heal themselves. This includes prayer. This is the only way we can do it. If we do not let go of our problems, they are going to get worse. That’s what we consider healing. When people are in a healing session they are confessing.”

Continuity and change

The transition to Christianity meant a break with the past. The old *tirigusuusit* and *pittailiniq* no longer had to be observed. This was the purpose of the *siqqitirniq* ritual practised in the North Baffin region. Rachel recalled that at *siqqitirniq*, people ate prohibited food such as intestines, heart, and liver which they could not eat when they were *kilingajuq*, and in so doing turned to the new religion and to the new rules it implied.

“Because animals were made by God to be food for humans, people were going to be able to eat whatever part of the animal they wanted to. When they started following religion, the *angakkuit* let go of their powers, and people let go of their *pittailiniq*. That’s what we did when we chose the Christian religion. I was old enough to remember what was going on.”



Frédéric Laugrand

Students and elders hard at work.

People were happy that they no longer had to observe the old rules. Rachel said it was a great change, particularly for women.

“People would talk about the things that they weren’t supposed to do. They would reminisce about them. If for instance a woman was pregnant and the baby was born early, they would discuss what had to be observed back then that they didn’t have to do any more. They would be happy that they didn’t need to refrain from certain things any more. They knew that they would have endured a lot of hardship. I often heard people expressing gratitude that they no longer had to follow the *pittailiniq*. The situations where *pittailiniq* had to be observed most often were menstruation and miscarriage.”

She said new practices were introduced to mark the change, such as the shaking of hands and the use of new forms of prayer and confession.

“People who accepted religion shook hands. They started to pray. What they wanted to do was rid themselves of all that was from the past, whether

it be the *angakkuit* or other ways of living. They were all brought together into the largest *iglu*. This was another part of getting rid of the past life. They didn't do this every day. They would come together and get rid of the wrong-doings they had done, by confessing them. After they went through this, there would be a prayer."

The new rituals such as respecting Sunday and Communion were taken very seriously. Victor recalled, "This is what we did. Also, whenever there was plenty of meat for food we never went out hunting on Sunday. It was only when we needed food that we would hunt on Sundays. We would try to observe this day. We were not to do anything because this was written in the prayer books." Rachel also emphasised the importance of respecting Sunday.

"We were told that we were not to gather plants on Sundays. Hunters were not to go hunting unless we were hungry. If we were hungry, then we were told that we could go hunting if we were in a time of need. But if we were not hungry, we were not to go hunting. We stayed in one place on Sunday. We prayed and sang hymns. We did our morning prayer and prayed throughout the day. Those of us who were children would be told that we were not to collect plants."

She also recalled, "If there was an animal hunted on Sunday, it was obligatory to finish whatever was caught on that day. As there were only a few of us in an entire camp, it was not always possible to eat it all. If you were not hungry and you were not in need, you did not go hunting as you could always hunt the next day."

The symbolism of Communion made a deep impression. Rachel remembered it very well. "We would be told to say: 'I am going to eat the body of Jesus', and whenever we would drink water, we would be told to say 'I am going to drink the blood of Jesus'. We were to remember that. "

In becoming Christians, Inuit did not discard all the ideas and values of their own society. The respect for game and the sharing of food were values that continued to play a central part in Inuit culture. The life stories of Victor and Rachel show that when Inuit accepted the new religion, they continued to celebrate first catches and to share game. As expressed by Victor, the old value of sharing was now given a Biblical foundation.

"When my parents started following the Anglican faith, they told me that I was going to follow the Catholic religion. I was told that when they accepted religion. They told me I was to let go of the ways of the *angakkuq*, because the ways of the *angakkuq* were not compatible with religion. I was

often told to be good to people so people in turn would be good to me. If I was not good to other people, they, in turn, would not be good to me. If there were any of my neighbours who were lacking something I was to give them whatever I had, no matter how small. If I gave to those in need, then I would gain in return a reward much larger. It turns out that these teachings were from the Bible. I was told there would be gratitude shown to me. Whenever I was in need, I in return would be helped. There would never be a time that I would be without meat or other things. That is what my parents taught me.”

Even though Inuit adopted Christian names, the Inuktitut name, the *atiq*, which was derived from its relations to deceased and living namesakes, continued to be important. In Iglulik, for example, the naming system was preserved in all its complexity. Both life stories show how Inuit integrated Christian ideas into their own culture. The result was a new synthesis in which old practices were transformed and given new meaning, as explained by Rachel.

“Probably it was, because I am alive today. I tried to follow the things I was told. I was told not to lie or steal. Because we lived in small camps we tried to follow what we were told. To this day I have always tried not to lie or steal, to follow the Bible, and not to bear false witness against my neighbour. Those who wanted to follow, followed.”

Frédéric Laugrand
Jarich Oosten

Life Story of Rachel Uyarasuk

Do you want to be called Raigili or do you want to be called Rachel?

Rachel: It doesn't matter, as long as it is clear who you are speaking to.

Do you have any other name besides Raigili?

Rachel: Yes, I have a lot of names.

What are they?

Rachel: There is the one that I got from my mother which was Ikummaq. She named me Ikummaq.

Was this before you were Raigili?

Rachel: Yes. I was adopted. When I was adopted, I was given another name, Pittaaluk.

Which do you consider to be more your name, Ikummaq or Pittaaluk?

Rachel: On paper I am Rachel. On paper, my husband's name is used to identify who I am, Ujarasuk. My real name is Pittaaluk.

Before you were adopted you were Ikummaq then Pittaaluk. Do you have any other names?

Rachel: Yes, through my religion. After I got baptized, my baptismal name Raigili was used more often.

Where were you born?

Rachel: I was born around Iglulik in a place called Iqaluit. People usually go fishing there from Iglulik. That is why they call it Iqaluit.

Why were you adopted?

Rachel: Both my mothers, my natural and my adoptive mothers, had been sick at the same time. After one person became sick, just about everyone else in the community got sick as well. My birth mother had a number of children, many of whom were sick.

Because of this, another woman looked after me. She became fond of me. I was already a year old. Because I was living with this woman, I became accustomed to her. My mother told her to keep me.

What were your parents names?

Rachel: My birth mother was Ilupaalik and my father was Inuaraq.

What were your adoptive parents names?

Rachel: My mother was Saqqinak and my father was Paniluk.

Where were your parents from?

Rachel: My natural parents were Amitturmiut, from the Iglulik area. The people who lived in that area were considered to be Amitturmiut.

How about your adoptive parents?

Rachel: They were from Tununiq. They happened to be in the Iglulik area at an opportune time to adopt me. I was brought past Kangiq&ugaapik, and that is where I grew up. There were no stores back then. There was an Inuk trader. The Inuk trader was from Qivittuuq. They used to trade over there. We lived in that area and used to go trading in Qivittuuq. It was while we were over there to trade, for the summer, that I saw a ship for the first time. Because it was a trading post, ships used to arrive. We happened to be there at that time. We were taken by ship to a place called Niaqurna. My adoptive father was taken there so he could trade with the people in that area. Qivittuuq was the original trading area. Then they tried to establish another trading area closer to Kangiq&ugaapik, in a place called Niaqurna. That was the only summer we were there.

I have never heard of Qivittuuq. Where is that?

Rachel: North of Qikiqtarjuaq. Qivittuuq is near Qikiqtarjuaq. It is between Kangiq&ugaapik and Qikirtarjuaq.

You talked about Niaqurna.

Rachel: I know of Niaqurna. It is near Kangiq&ugaapik. We were brought there by ship. I don't know why they moved us again to Tikiqqat, past Niaqurna. We started living in Tikiqqat. The wooden housing and all the trading goods were taken by dogteams and relocated there.

Did all this happen before you were married?

Rachel: Yes, this happened while I was growing up. Even before I became an adult, people were living in Kangiq&ugaapik.

Is that where you got married?

Rachel: It was while we were living at Tikiqqat. Have you heard that we abandoned a *qallunaaq* there? While we were living in Tikiqqat, we abandoned a *qallunaaq*, a fur trader from Kangiq&ugaapik. We went to Kangiq&ugaapik by dogteam as the ice was forming. We never went back to Tikiqqat. People started trading at Kangiq&ugaapik instead. Adamie's grandfather, Ittuutaq and his family, lived in Kangiq&ualuk. We started living in Kangiq&ualuk then. After we lived there, we moved to Kangaarjuk and I got a husband.

Do you remember who your grandparents were?

Rachel: My adoptive mother's mother was Siqpaapik. My adoptive mother Saqqinak had Pittaaluk as her father. When she adopted me, she named me after her father Pittaaluk.

Where were your adoptive parents and your grandparents from?

Rachel: My adopted grandparents? I think my grandmother Siqpaapik was from the Naujaat area and went back and forth to Iglulik. This was all done by dogteam back then. They never lived in one place. I know that Siqpaapik moved back and forth between Naujaat and Iglulik. She died in Iglulik.

What was your life like living in a place where there were only a few people?

Rachel: We lived in a community that was small and had few people. We never lived in one place. I never knew of anyone dying among the people we lived with. It was only after the ice froze up and people started travelling by dogteam, that we would hear news about people who had died. Since I had very little experience with people being sick or dying, the few times I saw an adult crying it used to scare me. I used to get really scared because we hardly ever experienced people dying back then. There were no radios. There was no way of hearing what was happening. News about a death occurred infrequently. It seemed that there were fewer deaths back then than there are now.

Did people like the way their ancestors lived? Did they try to live like them?

Rachel: Our elders tried to make sure everyone would work together at hunting. Mothers and fathers would talk to their children about behaviour they were not pleased with. The young people would explain why they were behaving the way they were.

People would work at returning to harmony by talking to each other. We women were told by elders that if we felt we were mistreated or intimidated by someone, we were not to tell our husbands or other people. Even if we felt intimidated by our own family members, we were not to tell our husbands. They would say that whoever would complain to their husbands would cause disharmony in the community. The husbands would become displeased with the others and taking sides would cause discontent in the community. Because we did not want to live like that, we listened to their words.

Today, if a husband is mistreating his spouse, is it all right for the woman to tell someone?

Rachel: We don't mind it at all. We elders should be there to counsel the young people based on what we were told by elders back then. We are here to tell young people how they are supposed to be living. Even when we try to counsel them, they access other services such as the R.C.M.P. and Social Services that they feel are more effective. We elders feel we are not being used. This is because the police have more control than we do.

Is the community becoming too large?

Rachel: There are a lot of distractions such as alcohol. There seem to be more reasons for people not to work together well. That's the way I see it.

You said where you got your husband. When was it?

Rachel: Near Kangiq&ugaapik, when we were living in Kangiq&ualuk. We moved from Kangiq&ualuk to Kangarjuk. A family came from Mittimatalik, looking for a wife for their son. That is how I got my husband.

Was this marriage not pre-arranged by the parents?

Rachel: The parents of the woman getting married had to agree. A single woman would be taken as a wife if the parents agreed, even if the girl did not. If the girl wanted to marry a man and the parents did not agree, the marriage did not take place. Because my parents agreed, that's how I became this man's wife.

How old were you?

Rachel: I think I was twenty-five years old.

Was this against your wishes?

Rachel: We would not want to get married back then, because we hardly saw men and we did not deal with them. We were scared to be around men. All sexual advances were scary. I was scared but I ended up with a husband.

Can you tell us more about your first husband?

Rachel: In the beginning I was scared of my first husband. When I stopped being scared of him, I became very attached to him. I listened to what he told me to do, even if I had other ideas about what I wanted to do. If my husband told me to do something, then I would listen to what he'd tell me. If a woman was like this, she would not be mistreated. The way I see it, if a woman does not listen to what her husband is saying, and follows her own mind, then she starts being mistreated. Alcohol also causes mistreatment. When you listen to your husband and you do what he wants you to do, then he will love you and treat you properly. But if a woman wants to follow her own mind and not listen to her husband, then he will start beating her. There is also verbal abuse. If a woman is told something that she doesn't like and starts answering back, then her husband will be upset with her. If I did something that I was not supposed to do, or did something that I wanted to do that my husband didn't like and he told me that, I would not know how to reply, because I wasn't in the habit of talking back. It was only afterwards that I would start thinking "Oh, this is what I should have said." But it was too late so I could not say anything.

Who was your husband?

Rachel: I don't know his name [laughing]. He had more than one name. He was called Qaaksaattiaq. He was also called Mala. His baptismal name was Noah.

What year were you born?

Rachel: 1914.

How old were you when you were baptized?

Rachel: I was an adult. It is written somewhere, but I can't remember. I already had a number of children by then.

Was it by the Anglican priest?

Rachel: It was by a minister called Mikiniqsaq [Arthur Turner]. He shot himself. He was the first minister. There were two ministers in Mittimatalik. One was Anginiqsaq, the other Mikiniqsaq. He was living in Siuralik, near Ikpiarjuk when he baptized me. My husband and I were baptized, but not our children. The minister, Mikiniqsaq, shot himself accidentally, in the year that we were baptized.

Where was your husband from?

Rachel: He was from the Mittimatalik area. His parents were from there. He had had another wife who had died. He came over in search of a new wife. There were two men. Both came searching for a wife in the Kangiq&tugaapik area. He had had a wife before, and he had two children when he became my husband.

Was he quite a lot older than you?

Rachel: Yes.

You're not sure how much older than you?

Rachel: I am not sure. I'd never seen him before, so I didn't know how old he was. Some people were like that. They would get married to someone who they had never seen before. Once the parents of both parties agreed, even though they had never seen each other before, and even though the children did not want to get married, if that was the parents' wishes, that was what happened.

Did you have to look after his children?

Rachel: No. He did not bring his surviving child. The other had died at the same time as the mother. The child was looked after by its grandmother.

Women would get married to men they didn't want. Was it the same with men? Did they have to marry women they didn't want?

Rachel: Men usually married who they wanted to, because they were men. It is only recently that I have heard that a man and a woman sometimes were together only because the parents wanted them to get married even though the man didn't really like his wife and did not want to marry her. I have heard of some men who ended up with a wife they didn't want, and never really became that close to her. If the parents chose spouses for their children, they would give their child to a family that they knew. Some people got married to someone that they had never seen before. Sometimes people heard there was an eligible person of marriageable age and they would go and get them. But in all cases the parents had to be informed about what was going on and agree to the marriage. If the parents did not agree with the marriage, the man would go home without a wife. There would also be cases where marriages were arranged from childhood.

How many children do you have from your first husband Qaaksaattiaq?

Rachel: All my children are from him. There are ten of them.

Are all your children alive?

Rachel: No, a number of them have died. My second husband also had a wife before me, but he did not have children of his own. Since he really liked children, we started adopting some. I have raised five grandchildren since being married to him.

Can you tell us the names of your children?

Rachel: Yes. The oldest was a month old when we woke up and found the baby dead. That was the first child that I gave birth to. The next child was Tapaattiaq, the third was Atuat. My first child had the name Tapaattiaq. When my next child was born he also had the name Tapaattiaq. Then Makpa, Qulittalik and Alasuaq. He is called Alasuaq, but his name is Angutirjuaq. Then I had my daughter who died recently, Kunuk. Then Qanaattiaq, Louise Saqqinaq and Apajata Kuuttiq. The first Tapaattiaq, was the only one who didn't grow to adulthood.

How many siblings do you have?

Rachel: I have only one brother left alive. His name is Eli Amaaq.

Is he the only one left?

Rachel: He is younger than me, but we are the only ones left alive. The ones before us who I remember are dead.

How many were there?

Rachel: Of the ones that I know about, the oldest one was Utuuvaarjuk, our sister. Noah Piugaatuk was next, then Alariaq Elisabeth. There were a number of children who died. Then there is myself, and there is also Amaaq. I'm not sure about the ones that didn't survive. I know that there were a number who died as children.

Where does Amaaq live? Does he live in Iglulik?

Rachel: Yes, he does.

Are there any other family members who live elsewhere?

Rachel: Makpa, one of my children, lives in Ikpiarjuk.

Sometimes it seems difficult for me to be in one place and have family members living elsewhere. Is it difficult for you too?

Rachel: No, it's not difficult for me. But I often want to know how they are doing. I want to know what is happening with them. Whenever my daughters got married, their husbands would take them elsewhere. I didn't worry about them. I would seem to love their husbands more because I was so grateful that they were looking after my daughters. Because of that, I really got to love my sons-in-law. When a couple doesn't want to be together anymore, even though I love them, it's very hard for me.

We have often heard that women got a husband as soon as they were able to sew. Is that true?

Rachel: Even when we were still children, when we were able to sew, even before we were able to make clothing, we would be taken as a wife. After we had a husband, and our husband had taken us home and we had a mother-in-law, we learned to make clothing. Our mothers-in-law were helpful to us. Women used to love their daughters-in-law. It was customary to love your daughter-in-law and to teach her about making clothing. We learned how to make mitts and socks, before we were married, but our mothers-in-law were the ones that really taught us how to sew. They looked after us as if we were their own children. We lived in the same household as they did. Today, everyone is living on their own and it doesn't seem that people are looking after each other. Women do not think of their mothers-in-law like their mothers anymore. They are looked after by *qallunaat* teachers. That is a great change from back then. Mothers-in-law used to be teachers. Once you had a mother-in-law, even if you were uncomfortable with her at first, you got used to her. They were very much like your mother and helped you out a lot. If they were displeased with you, they would *ijuri*. I know that in some dialects *ijuri* means laughing. In our dialect, when you say *ijuri*, it means trying to correct somebody whose actions are not appropriate. If you don't say something to them, you will just not have expressed your thoughts. If you found your daughter-in-law's actions inappropriate, then you told her. Daughters-in-law did not consider this as being scolded, they considered it as being shown the correct way. If they got angry and thought that they were being scolded, then you wondered how you could tell them in a better way. That is the way of elders. That's the way I am personally. Maybe others are like me as well. When we Inuit have someone we love, and we find their actions inappropriate, we need to tell them this. If we don't say something to them, that's not really love. Do you find it that way, Victor?

Victor: Yes, I find it that way too.

*Did you prefer the life you had back then or the life you have now?
Which did you find easier?*

Rachel: I enjoyed my past way of life because I was born into it and I was happy. I didn't have anything to worry about. I followed the life my parents led. I did not think about what I wanted to do. It was the way I lived. I followed the wishes of my parents. Today, people have Bibles to read. I prefer to follow the life I am living now.

You are a woman but I want to ask you if you went hunting?

Rachel: Yes, I did go hunting. I too have killed animals. I was at the *aglu* in the winter and it was covered with snow. In the winter they would *mauliqtuq*. That's how they used to hunt seal. I harpooned a seal. I was shown where to aim and I followed what I was told to do. I caught a big seal. That was my first large animal. Before that, I had caught rabbits and ptarmigans. When I was still a girl, I was able to get them if I tried. The other animal I caught was a caribou. Whenever somebody would help me kill an animal I would do so. But I have never gone hunting alone.

What was done with the seal that you caught? Was there a celebration?

Rachel: Whenever a seal was caught, people would come and share the meat. The meat was cut up into pieces and so was the blubber. People would yell "*niqaisuuq*." People came and got meat. That was a tradition. The seal I caught was brought home and it was cooked and people yelled "*uujuuuq*." The blubber was cut up into pieces, and people celebrated until all the blubber was gone. In those days, people did not have many things. We did *nugluktaq*, celebrate my catch. The way we celebrated was everybody brought something as a prize.

Did you ever experience times of hunger?

Rachel: Yes, most people experienced times of hunger and times of plenty. That's the way we lived. I do not have any memories of a time of hunger while I was growing up. It was only after I became an adult that I remember not having enough oil for the *qulliq* and not having meat. When I was growing up, I never really experienced a time of hunger, or not having oil for the *qulliq*. We never lived where there were a lot of people. We did not live in a community. There was only our family. We would go to large communities to trade, but we spent most of our time where there were animals. That's the way the hunters lived. People that lived in the communities seemed to have more difficulties. If there were people without meat, others who had meat would give some to them, especially the elders. I don't really have any memories of hunger. I mentioned we left behind a *qallunaaq*. It was that winter that we experienced a bit of hunger. We had

left behind cached meat, but the area that we moved into had no cached meat. They did not go back for the meat that had been cached, because they were scared to go back there. That was the winter when we experienced a bit of hunger. I can't remember what year it was. I regret that I can't, but I didn't know what years were back then.

Were you aware of what was the cause of the hunger? Was it because somebody had broken a pittailiniq? What was the reason?

Rachel: I don't know what the reason was, but the *angakkuq* said that it was because somebody had committed a wrong-doing. For example, if a woman was pregnant and lost the baby, and was too scared to tell about it, this was called *anngiaqarniq*. This was the cause for the lack of game. When they became hungry and there was no food, people experienced hardship. I only know this from what I have heard.

Did you experience this personally?

Rachel: No, I never went through this. I only heard about it.

What seemed to be the most joyful time in your life?

Rachel: When I was growing up I was taken seal hunting on fresh frozen ice. When seal holes were found you waited at the seal hole. I would leave behind the person who was at the seal hole and walk away a bit. Then there would be a shot. That was so enjoyable. I'd run back. Because of that I would want to go along when it was not deep winter and not too cold. I also really enjoyed polar bear hunting. I was a bit afraid of polar bears. People would get ready to go hunting. Everything was done in a hurry. The dogs would be harnessed. We would hurry out. I would help with the harnessing, and then we would go towards the polar bear. I would be scared and happy at the same time. They would use the dogs to hunt the polar bear. The dogs would be let loose and the *qamutiik* would stop. Our father would start running after the dogs, and then the dogs would approach the polar bear and surround it. We would follow behind our father with our mother. I was quite young. My mother held my hand when we went on these hunts. People didn't have that many children then. Those were things I enjoyed, hunting polar bear and walking away from a person waiting at a seal hole and then a seal being caught. I really enjoyed that. I also enjoyed being out in the spring and coming into the camp and seeing friends my own age. There would be times of playing outside and playing together. This I also really enjoyed. There probably were others, but those were the ones I enjoyed the most.

How did they deal with adopted children before there was canned milk?

Rachel: I was adopted, but I was already a year old and able to eat. I was no longer dependent on milk. We ate meat. I think we were raised on meat, not on milk. We never saw store-bought milk. They would buy tea and sugar. I recall those. I think I was raised only on meat. My brother who was also adopted, didn't have milk. He would be given broth through his mouth. I remember because he was adopted when he was quite young and there was no milk. He was given broth. That's how we were fed.

This is what you experienced?

Rachel: Yes, I have heard that newborn babies feed on anything that is put in their mouths. As long as they are able to swallow it, babies take anything in the mouth. As long as the taste is not bad, the babies don't seem to mind.

You talked about what you enjoyed while growing up. What was your worst memory?

Rachel: There were probably things I did not enjoy, but I don't remember them.

You don't have any bad memories?

Rachel: There were probably a number of things I didn't like, but I don't remember them. One time in the spring when I wanted to stay awake with everyone else, my parents wanted me to go to sleep because we were travelling the next day. I didn't enjoy being told to go to sleep when I wanted to be awake with everyone else. Here I was wide awake, and here my friends were, and my parents wanted me to go to sleep. I didn't enjoy being told to go to sleep, but I had no choice but to listen to my parents. I wanted to stay awake, but sleep came. There are probably other incidents, but I don't remember them.

What do you think about young people today?

Rachel: I talked about being unhappy, about being made to go to sleep. The same thing happened with my own children. I knew that the child in my care wanted to be awake. I knew the child had to go to sleep because he had to go to school the next day. Based on my own experience, I knew he wanted to stay awake.

What you do think of young people today? Are children today different from children back then?

Rachel: Since children started going to school, their childhood was different from what we experienced. I have noticed this. We try to tell them to go to sleep early because we don't want them staying up late. They say, "Yes," but they don't always listen to what

we say. This is different from before. Also, if a mother wants a child to do something, and the teacher wants them to do something else, they will listen to the teacher before they will listen to the mother. I have noticed that with my children. I don't know how to handle this because I never went to school. I envied those who could speak *qallunaatitut*. Because I wanted my children to speak *qallunaatitut* I let them do what the teacher wanted.

Was providing meat a great part of your life?

Rachel: Yes, it has always been a great part of my life. It was something I was given a lot of advice about. On that basis I know about it. During times of hunger and hardship, you didn't have much fuel for the *qulliq* and there was not much meat for food. Whenever anyone got a bit, you were never to be stingy. You had to share it equally. Everyone had to have a piece. We were told that only through sharing would things become easier for us. If there were hunters who were not sharing with others, if they only gave a little bit and did not give freely, they were apt to start having difficulty. We were always told that if an animal was caught, even if there was only one, we had to share it equally. We were not to keep it only for ourselves. As long as we had some we were to share it with our neighbours, especially at a time of need. Even at a time of plenty, if you received meat that was out of the ordinary, the older people would call in their neighbours and they would want to share it with them. If it was brought in by dogteam, everyone would eat it. They tried to make sure no one was left out. When we were children and we knew of someone who was without meat, we were told to tell our mothers. Anybody who didn't share meat during a time of hunger would always be remembered. Even when we returned to times of plenty, the time they did not share would always be remembered. If there was a camp that had more meat and food than another camp nearby that was without, the people were brought into the camp so they could share meat with those who had more. They didn't want anyone to go without meat. There probably were some who did not share.

People were supposed to help each other?

Rachel: Yes. We were always supposed to help each other.

In the days before you heard about religion, what were the reasons for people gathering together?

Rachel: Family groups got together before they knew about religion. I was too young to remember the times before there was religion. I was told that before religion started, people didn't get together as much. People lived in their own camps. Families lived

together. If they didn't live together, they would get together by dogteam. When they would get together with other family members, they would try to make sure to bring meat that was not common for the people they were going to visit. Everybody in the camp would get together and feast and have an enjoyable time. They lived only on meat. I don't even think they drank much tea back then. When people started going to trading posts, they started buying a little bit of tea and a little bit of sugar. They also bought molasses as a sweetener for their tea. They had biscuits and flour. That was all that they would buy. They only bought enough to last for a little while. They purchased these with polar bear and fox furs, and the tusks of narwhal. They also bought rifles and bullets. Those were the more important purchases. Food was bought, but they didn't buy that much, because they weren't going to stay at the trading post. Nobody got rid of cartridge shells. They would also buy gun powder, bullet heads and primers. They would buy around twenty bullets. Twenty bullets was the price of a *qipitat* (one hundred pelts). The powder and the primers would be bought at the same time. The store-bought bullets were used for big game only. They would never throw away a cartridge. They would make another bullet out of it. When I became old enough to start cooking with heather, I would take a container and put the lead in it. It was my job to melt the lead. I would have to check to make sure that the lead was melting. Then I would pour it into bullet molds that had been drilled into a piece of soapstone. It would harden quickly. As the lead hardened, I would heat it up again, and once the lead set, I'd dump it out and start melting another batch. Later, my father would use the lead and the cartridge to make another bullet. He would put in the primer and the gun powder and he would put in caribou hair and *tiraujait* and anything else that ignited quickly. He would put them into the cartridge and then he would put in the lead that I had made. I would be told that what they bought with the *qipitat* was enough for the summer. These homemade bullets were called *aaqqigait*. These *aaqqigait* were used for smaller game. The store-bought bullets were used for big game only.

In the summer, we went out hunting on foot to get caribou for clothing for the winter. We took all our provisions on our backs. We wore nothing but caribou clothing. The dogs also had packs. We would go caribou hunting inland. We would travel and set up our tents, and when a caribou was killed we would eat the meat and feed the dogs. Whatever was left over would be cached. When fall came and the snow was on the ground, they started hunting for meat to take back down to the coast. The caribou fur started getting thicker. Our parents would be getting meat for other family members such as our grandparents, and those people would be waiting down by the coast. The caribou fat, the *tunnuq*, would be collected and saved so that it wouldn't spoil. All the sinew from the back and the leg would be dried. The meat would be dried as well. The dogs would be given packs. In addition to carrying meat, they also carried the seal skin tent. The people carried their own personal effects such as caribou skin bedding. When

they were caribou hunting inland, they would try to dry the meat as much as they could, and the caribou fat would be made into tallow. They would also dry the *tunnuq* so it wouldn't spoil. One time when we headed home, snow had started falling as it was fall. Once we were inland, the ground became snow covered. We were trying to get down to the coast. There was so much snow we had to start living in *igluit*. They would stomp on the snow to make it firm enough to make snow blocks. When we got down to the coast, one of the bays already had ice though the sea was still not frozen yet. You could see the ice that was forming. It was a wonderful sight. We were homesick for our grandparents. This was when I was a child. When we got down to the coast, it was an enjoyable time. When the people who were in the camps realized we were coming, they all went outside, and they welcomed us. All those who had family coming would start preparing meat. They would make *uujuq* and people would eat. People feasted until the meat was gone. I can't really explain why or how people would get together, so this is why I told you this.

Was this when you were a teenager or when you were an adult?

Rachel: We went inland when I was still a young girl. I would go along with my parents when they would go caribou hunting in the summer. When they became too old, they too stayed down at the coast. When the ice started forming, the men would walk down to the ice. This was before the ice was thick enough to go by dogteam. They would walk down to the ice and go seal hunting on foot. People never just sat around doing nothing. They would wake up in the early hours to go out hunting. We children would be woken up when we were still quite sleepy. Whenever anyone would go out hunting, we would be woken up and told to go out and get ready to travel. It would be in the early morning. We never stayed up late at night. There was no staying up until twelve at night because we would have to wake up early in the morning. People didn't sit around doing nothing. Even little children who were not in the *amauti* anymore would be woken up, dressed and made ready for travel during the day. The men would wake up as the daylight came. They would go up a hill and look out on the land using their telescopes. It would be the same as someone getting ready for work today.

Did you play games in the qarmaq or outside?

Rachel: We would play in the *qarmaq* and even in the *iglu*.

What kind of games did you play?

Rachel: We would play *ua tamannaq* [Blind Man's Bluff]. We would say *ua tamanna*. The person who was blindfolded would cover his ears and cover his eyes and point and say, "That part of the *iglu* is called *uati*, and this is *aki*, this is *igliq* and that is *qariaq*, m m m

m.” The person who was trying to touch the others would be in the middle of the floor. The rest of us would be sitting down. Then the person would turn around. After he had turned for some time he would try to touch someone. Everyone would try to move very stealthily out of his way. Sometimes when the person who was blindfolded would start going toward the *qulliq* an adult would turn him aside out of harm’s way. Whoever got touched would then be the one to be blindfolded.

There was also a game called *tattaujaq*. It was only played by young people and young adults. It was played outside in an area that had a windbreak, in the spring. In this game we didn’t just touch each other. Whoever was blindfolded would hit, so there was much more running away. We children would also play *aaqsiiq* indoors. The object of this game was to not make any noise at all or not to smile. We would be in teams. One team would try to make the other team smile. They would perform all kinds of antics that would be considered funny. They were trying to make the other team laugh. If anyone started to laugh then it was the other team’s turn to make the first team laugh. This game would start by someone saying

Aaqsi nipangiaqsi,

Becoming quiet,

Avatingiktikkut umiqannguqtuq.

On each side he’s fed up with having beard hair.

Aaqsiruluttiaq kujjiangagut

On the bottom (of)

Taqtuarlak kia kippingmatit kippasuuvit?

Taqtuallak, who is it that gave you a hair cut?

Kiinaksaraattiap kipingmanga kippasuuvunga.

It is because Kiinnaksaraattiaq gave me a hair cut that I have a hair cut.

Kippasuk kippasuk kippasuk.

One with a hair cut, one with a hair cut, one with a hair cut.

Once they finished it, they tried to make the other team smile.

I’d like to find out if spousal assault occurred in the past. Has it always happened?

Rachel: Yes. Even before people became Christian, there was spousal assault. Even before there was alcohol. They would get angry at their spouse out of jealousy. This is what I have heard. There didn’t seem to be as many reasons for spousal assault as there are today. Jealousy was the main cause for anger.

Did you ever hear of a person beating someone to death?

Rachel: I never saw the couple I grew up with beating each other. I was not intimidated by being hit or spanked. I never experienced anyone being bad to anybody else. I used to think that adults were incapable of crying when I was a child. I thought that when I became an adult, I would no longer be able to cry, and I would no longer have *kumait*. I am now an adult and I still cry.

Didn't people mind about ningarniq, spousal assault?

Rachel: We rarely heard about it, even in other camps, because it happened so rarely.

Was singnaniq, jealousy, the only cause?

Rachel: I saw it as the only cause. Maybe there were other reasons. We never lived in camps with a lot of people. Because there were only a few of us, we didn't experience that type of thing.

Did you always follow the Bible?

Rachel: Yes. People followed what they understood. They used to tell us young people what we were to do or not to do. In the Bible it is written, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." [Exodus 20:12] This we were told as children, before we became adults. Those were the kinds of things we would be told. We weren't told this daily, but we would be told about this.

Do you remember the first dream you ever had?

Rachel: There was one dream that seemed to be my very first dream. In the dream we lived in an *iglu* that didn't have a *katak*, an entrance. There was a porch beyond it, and the porch was not covered. It was very dark. There was no light at all. It seems that this was the very first dream I ever had. There were snakes and caterpillars coming in through the entrance. They came in without touching the floor. They came in and they headed straight towards me. I was so scared that I started crying. That woke me up. I told my mother that when this thing opened its mouth there were teeth. I woke myself up crying out of fear. My mother said it was because I didn't listen to her words anymore that I had that kind of a dream. I should listen to what I was told. This was a reminder to me to listen to her in the future. We would quite often be told what we had to follow, what to do or not do according to the Bible. We would be told that we were not to sew on Sunday. Nobody should do any kind of work on Sunday. It was written in the Bible. People did not go out hunting if they had meat. If we were in need of food, people would go hunting

even on Sunday, but if an animal was killed, we were to finish it right away. Because not all of us were present, we were unable to finish the whole animal. We only ate part of it. These days when a person kills an animal on Sunday they don't try to finish it.

This practice isn't being followed any more, is it?

Rachel: No, they don't seem to do that anymore. Maybe we have become so complacent about what we have been told that we don't really follow what is written in the Bible anymore.

I was trying to ask about ningarniq, and about isumasiuriniq. Is isumasiuriniq when someone loves you but never tells you how to improve yourself?

Rachel: The way I understand it, *isumasiuriniq* is allowing a child to do what he wants so the child doesn't become upset or angry.

From birth to the time when children start thinking on their own, were we to let them do what they wanted?

Rachel: As long as they did not do things that were dangerous. When a child is not crying, or not angry, then it's okay to let them do what they want. But if they're getting angry because they're not getting their way, then letting them do what they want is not good. Even children born from the same mother have different temperaments. There are some children who want to have their actions and their thoughts shaped, there are others who are calm and there are those who are always running around. Even though they have the same parents, they can vary. We would be told that if a child was angry, and was crying because they wanted something, and didn't get their way, we were to let them know that we were displeased once they had calmed down. Children who were having a temper tantrum were spanked right away.

Were you supposed to spank the child right away?

Rachel: Only if they were having a temper tantrum. You weren't supposed to beat the child, but give the child enough of a slap that they would feel it. Also when children started to cry you weren't supposed to coddle them to make them stop crying. If you hit a child when they were having a tantrum you should let them calm down and then, and only then, explain to them why you did what you did.

Children who are siblings can be different from one another. Should you raise them in different ways?

Rachel: They say a child that is calm doesn't need to be told how to improve. That child might have a sibling who is always getting into things and is in need of being reprimanded. They say that this child is shaping its own character. Children that need disciplining tend to become much better adults. Even though the other child was a good child, that child needed more looking after and therefore was *asanaqtuq*. *Asanaqtuq* is someone who angers easily and needs to be appeased. The child that had been disciplined tended to be a better person. They have been working on their character since childhood, as people didn't refrain from disciplining them.

Did you know what kind of person the child would be? I am not talking about the sex, but about the character. Would you know beforehand?

Rachel: I didn't know about this. I don't think this was known. You tended to know whether it would be a boy or a girl. The elders quite often knew whether the baby would be a boy or a girl. We would sometimes be told, "The baby you are carrying is going to be a boy," or "It's going to be a girl." But we had no way of knowing what their character was going to be like.

Did they say some babies were sipiniq?

Rachel: If there was a difficult birth, a very long labour, then the baby would *sipisajuq*. The child would start off as a boy. By the time the baby was finally born as a girl, you could tell it had been a little boy.

If the baby was a sipiniq, would the child grow up as a female?

Rachel: Even though a child was a *sipiniq* she would have no difficulties growing up as a girl. If someone only gave birth to sons and finally had a daughter, the daughter would usually be raised as a girl. Because she was raised with boys though, she tended to find it easier to deal with male things.

Did a baby ever start out as a girl and become a boy?

Rachel: I've never heard of a girl becoming a boy. I have never known that to happen.

Did you know that you were going to be pregnant for nine months?

Rachel: When you were young, you didn't know it right away. The elders would know when you would give birth. They would have an idea of the month you would give birth.

Were sipiniq raised differently?

Rachel: I don't think they were. They were raised the same as other people.

What meaning was given to babies born feet first?

Rachel: The term for that is *kinguppigajujq*. This would happen occasionally. If a person was sick and the pain or sickness travelled upwards in the body, then the sickness could be fatal. In someone who was born feet first, it was not fatal if the pain travelled upwards. If a person's pain travelled downwards in the body this was not fatal unless they had been born feet first.

What would happen to those who came out head first?

Rachel: Someone whose sickness travelled upwards, was said to *majuraijuq*. They would pray for those who were in this kind of pain. Family members would pray for them. If they were not getting better, then the rest of the camp members would pray for them as well. Because the camp members were Christians, they would come and pray with the family, as that type of sickness was fatal. When only family members from the dwelling were praying and the person was not getting better, then they would ask their fellow camp members to pray.

What was done to help women who lost a lot blood after giving birth?

Rachel: I heard about women who became weak from losing too much blood. I heard they would be given sips of lukewarm water as they didn't know how to stop the flow of blood. After the baby had been born, people were fearful if the placenta did not come out. They thought it would cause death if the placenta didn't come out. Whenever the placenta didn't come out, you slid your hand along the umbilical cord and you put your hand into the uterus on the other side of the placenta, and the woman was told to push, while you pulled. That's how they would get the placenta out.

Is this what they would consider nipinngajujq, the placenta being stuck?

Rachel: Yes, some would be stuck and some would just take a long time to come out. If they thought it was taking too long, that's what they did.

Was there ever a time when people didn't want to be baptized?

Rachel: People would only be asked if they wanted to be baptized. They would be baptized only when they wanted to do so. We would tell the minister that we wanted to be baptized. Children had no choice as they had to listen to their parents. When the parents wanted them baptized, they would be baptized.

Did you put any aarnguat, amulets, on your amauti to help the baby?

Rachel: I have never seen *aarnguat*. I don't even know what *aarnguat* are. Babies did not have diapers. We would put the baby in the *amauti* and we would put in a piece of caribou fur in case the baby started to urinate while still on our back. We would be busy while the baby was in the *amauti*.

Did the new baby have any clothing?

Rachel: It had clothing made out of the skin of a caribou foetus. They were made out of caribou *illauq*, after it had fur. The fur of newborn calves was also kept for the baby. Sometimes after women gave birth, they wrapped their babies in rabbit skin because we lived in a cold land. We didn't have anything made of cloth or fabric. After we gave birth, the newborn baby was cleaned with a rabbit skin. The baby was wrapped in a caribou skin before it had clothing. The word we use for removing the mucous from the baby's nose was *miluktui* because it was sucked out with the mouth. You would also put your finger in the baby's mouth and clean it out.

Why did they have to go through labour alone in the past?

Rachel: In the days of *pittailiniq* they gave birth alone. I went into labour alone because we were travelling. We did a lot of travelling then, and sometimes there would not be other camp members with us. My husband would be the only one with me. One time, I was all alone. Sometimes when we were travelling, we would suddenly stop so I could give birth. An *iglu* was quickly built, so I could give birth in it. This is what I'm talking about, about giving birth alone.

Did the way people gave birth change after there were ministers?

Rachel: I have only heard about the way people gave birth before there were ministers. I never experienced it. Before there were ministers, women gave birth alone. Once they became Christian, they started attending and assisting women in labour. They would assist the woman by having her lean her back on them. In the past when they gave birth, even for the first time, they were alone when they went into labour. They would be given a separate *iglu* when they went into labour. I have only heard about this, I never saw it myself.

Why did they have to be alone when they were in labour?

Rachel: It was because there was so many *pittailiniit* back then. It was all part of *pittailiniit*.

When did the angusiaq and arnaliaq practice start?

Rachel: I heard about this for the first time from people from the Pangniqtuuq area. In the Iglulik area, those who were in attendance at a birth did not *kisuliaq*. That's the way we were. Naming the baby was the only ritual that we followed.

Did the woman in attendance at the birth bestow the name?

Rachel: The baby would be given the name of one of the mother's recently deceased relatives. We would name the baby after someone who had died. That's all we did. After Christianity arrived we also received baptismal names. We only gave babies the names of relatives that had died. We adults received our baptismal names after we were baptized.

When a woman went into labour was there a minister present?

Rachel: We did not live where there were *qallunaat*, so there was not a minister present. I never heard of a minister being present. When we would go trading, we would see ministers and traders.

Did the minister give the name to the person being baptized or did the person being baptized choose the name?

Rachel: The minister would ask the person he was baptizing what name he wanted and he would baptize him with the name he chose. They would ask people what name they wanted before baptizing them.

Did the ministers tell you how you had to raise your children?

Rachel: When we had our children baptized, we were told what kind of things they had to do because they were too young to be instructed. We had to help them understand what it meant to be baptized. We had to tell them about what to do as a Christian. As people who were baptized, we would teach them the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. We had to teach them those. This is what the minister told us when we had them baptized. Some people did not want their babies baptized as newborns. They preferred them to be baptized when they were able to choose their baptismal names on their own.

What position would women be in when they gave birth?

Rachel: Some women would bend their knees and squat on their feet. They would have a person behind them. Also they would have hard objects on either side of them. It might be the box that they kept their personal effects in. They would lean on that. When I gave birth I was too *nangiaq* to do that. I would be on my side.

You were on your side?

Rachel: Yes, I was on my side. I was not on my back.

Was it easier that way?

Rachel: I thought that everybody gave birth like that. It was only after we started coming to Iqaluit to give birth and were assisted by doctors that we began to give birth on our backs. Babies are different. There are some babies who do not want their mothers on their side so the mother would give birth in an upright position. If the baby did not want the mother to give birth in an upright position then the mother would give birth lying down. What I mean by an upright position is giving birth while squatting. Even if you gave birth while lying on your side we would still have a person supporting our back. I usually gave birth alone. I only had people assisting me a few times. I was able to give birth without assistance.

After you became Christian, did birthing practices change? Did you only have one person with you?

Rachel: Whoever wanted to be in attendance could be there. The more elderly would come to give instructions, especially if there was someone giving birth for the first time. The new mother would be instructed about what to do.

They used to be alone giving birth. Were there times when a birth was difficult?

Rachel: I have never heard of someone not being able to give birth. I have only heard about women having to give birth alone. There would be a hole in the top of the *iglu*, and the mother or mother-in-law would talk through the hole to the woman in labour. She would give her instructions about what she had to do through this hole, as they were not allowed to enter the *iglu*. This was during the time of *pittailiniq*.

How did you know when to push? Today, we are told when to push, so we don't end up with a tear.

Rachel: When you are in labour you don't need to be told. You know when to push. I was told not to push when I didn't need to because it would cause swelling. If you became swollen then the passage would become too narrow. I knew when I needed to push, because everytime I was trying to talk, my breathing would change.

After you had given birth did people come?

Rachel: People would come because they were happy about the event. They would come and see you. Even men would come and see you. These would be our family members.

After you gave birth did you have to cut the umbilical cord?

Rachel: The umbilical cord would have to be cut. Before we had thread and scissors, we used braided sinew. The umbilical cord was cut with an *ulu*.

What was done with the arraaq?

Rachel: Because they didn't want it eaten by dogs, it was buried under a rock outside the camp.

Why didn't they want the dogs eating the arraaq?

Rachel: I don't know why. I don't understand why this was done.

Perhaps it was toxic?

Rachel: Maybe they thought the dog would die.

Why wasn't a new mother allowed to eat alone?

Rachel: During the time of *pittailiniq* when there were *tuurngait* they did not want the newborn baby taken away from the mother by the *tuurngait*.

Why did you get qallunaatitut names? Where did they come from?

Rachel: It was only after we were baptized that we got our baptismal names. We already had our own names. After we chose the name we wanted to be baptized with, it did not become our real name. Our baptismal name was only a baptismal name. We were given the baptismal name that we chose. The name we gave to our newborns were the names of our deceased relatives.

Where did you get your qallunaatitut name?

Rachel: From the Bible. They were written in the Bible and we would search through the Bible for names that we wanted.

What name did you use more often, your Inuktitut names or your qallunaatit name?

Rachel: Inuktitut names were given to a newborn after a relative had died. We were told the child would have the name of that person. Sometimes a person who had died desired to have his name passed on even though the child was no longer a newborn.

How did you know that a child who had already been born wanted the name of a person who had died?

Rachel: They said that when a child cried too often or too much, that the person wanted to have his name given to the child.

Once the name was given to the child, the child didn't cry anymore?

Rachel: I never did this with my children, but I've known other mothers who did. There was one child whose grandfather had died after the child was born. The baby became sick. When I went there, I was told that I was to bestow the name on the child. I didn't know what to do. I started worrying about what to do. I was thinking how am I doing to give this child its name? Night came and I worried throughout the next day. The baby was sick. I tried to go over before it was too late. It was late afternoon when I went over to the family. The person that the baby was to be named after had had difficulty walking. So I said to the sick child that I wanted the child to be that person and that the child would have no difficulty running after things. I told the child that he was going to get better, and that after he learned to walk, when he became able to, he was to run. I did this because I thought that was what I had to say. The child became better and never got sick like that again. That's what the parents told me. I thought that maybe it was true that people who died desired to have their name carried on. They used to say that people who had been dead a while would want their name carried on in a child.

When a child was named after a dead relative, was he just given the Inuktitut name, or was that person's qallunaatit name also passed on?

Rachel: I never knew of this happening. The only qallunaatit names I know about were received through baptism.

When a woman was in labour, did she have to follow pittailiniq?

Rachel: Before we became Christian there used to be *pittailiniq*, but after that we no longer followed this. Before that, women who had just given birth had an *iglu* of their own. They were never supposed to eat alone. They always had to have someone present. Whenever the woman was going to eat, there would be another person at the entrance of the *iglu*. The

woman had an *iglu* that was big enough to hold one person. She was never to eat or drink without someone else being present. When she finished eating, the person at the entrance would go home. It was because of the *pittailiniq* that she had to give birth alone.

Was the iglu made just for the purpose of the woman giving birth?

Rachel: Yes, the *iglu* was made shortly before the delivery date. A little tent would be set up in the summer.

Did they dismantle the iglu when it was no longer used?

Rachel: Yes. The woman had to stay in this *iglu* and could only join her family when she stopped bleeding after the birth. She was given new clean clothing and she was allowed to return to her *iglu*.

Was she in the iglu for a number of days?

Rachel: Yes.

Why was the iglu broken after it was no longer used?

Rachel: Because it was no longer going to be used as an *iglu*. Just the same way that an *iglu* would be built and then broken by children today. If a tent was set up and not going to be used anymore, it would be taken down.

When you were children, was there a celebration after a baptism?

Rachel: I was not baptized as a child. I told you about when I went through the *siqqitiq* ritual. I was baptized after I was an adult. This was long after I went through *siqqitirniq*. We tried to follow what we knew about Christianity and we tried to observe important religious holidays. Also when someone was in labour we would pray in our home before we went over to their place. When the older people were going to be in attendance at a birth they would pray first. If the delivery was taking a long time, they would also pray for assistance. They would pray again after whatever had to be done was done.

If we were going through a time of hunger and someone brought home seal or caribou, we would pray before eating. We would try to pray for we felt that was what we were supposed to do.

Did the priests ask parents if they wanted their children to be taught catechism?

Rachel: When we had our children baptized they weren't baptized by a priest. We knew when they got older we would have to teach them about religion, and that we would have to read to them about being Christian. As our children grew older we would have to tell them about their baptismal vows that we accepted on their behalf. We also taught them the Lord's Prayer and we would pray with them.

I already asked you about breeched babies, kinguppingajuuq. Since then I have heard that if a baby was born breeched it was called an inullarik. I heard that if the child stuck out its bum when it was foggy, then the fog would clear up.

Rachel: We have all kinds of customs depending on where we live. I have never heard that.

You never heard about that?

Rachel: No I've never heard that saying. The only thing that I have heard about breeched babies is that if they got sick and the sickness went upwards then they would recover. For those who were not born breeched, if their sickness went upwards then it was very bad. The term for this is *majurajuuq*. There would be people who did not recover from their sickness.

Did pregnant women have to go out early in the day?

Rachel: Yes, I have heard of this. As soon as they woke up they had to get up and go out right away. We used to go pee outside when we woke up and before going to bed. Especially those who were pregnant would be told to go out right away so that when they would deliver, it would not be a long labour.

Were pregnant women told not to sleep during the day?

Rachel: They were told to sleep when they were sleepy. If they did not sleep enough while they were pregnant, they were going to be in labour for a long time. When I was in labour for the first time, that happened to me. I was very sleepy. When it was most painful then I would wake up. Then I would fall back asleep. It was only when I was about to deliver that I woke up. They told me that was because I didn't sleep enough. This is what my in-laws told me. They told me that it was because I hadn't been sleeping enough during the day. We would be told that any time we felt sleepy, we were to sleep. But, when I was young, I was not able to sleep during the day. When I fell asleep at night, I would always be in deep sleep.

From what I have been told, you weren't supposed to sleep during the day.

Rachel: We were told that we should move the baby around whenever the baby moved so that the *aarraq* would not get stuck.

If you wanted the baby that was in the womb to be a good hunter or seamstress, what did the pregnant woman have to do?

Rachel: I never heard of that. Nobody told me what I should do in order to have a child with certain characteristics. Even pregnant women would go out hunting for they did not consider us as fragile. Even just after we had given birth, we were able to travel. This is the way we were. Even if we were pregnant we would go out hunting, because we knew this was alright. We were told to be careful not to fall on our back during the early stages of pregnancy. When you were in the later stages of pregnancy, even if you fell, the baby would be alright.

Did women have premature babies very often?

Rachel: It happened, but not frequently.

Why would this happen?

Rachel: They say that if a woman was too active they would give birth before the baby was due. This would also happen when the baby was no longer fragile.

Was the baby alright?

Rachel: Yes, the baby would be alright. Occasionally, babies would come out feet first, or sometimes even with their hands first, perhaps because the mother had been too active. I'm not exactly sure why.

Did you ever know anyone who had a miscarriage?

Rachel: Yes, I've known many women that miscarried, even sometimes in early pregnancy when there were only blood clots, before the baby was formed. But also some foetuses would come out later after they had formed as a baby. When these would come out, it was as though the mother was in labour. You had the same kind of feelings as with a regular birth. I've had miscarriages, but they were always early in my pregnancy, before the baby had formed.

Why would women miscarry?

Rachel: Perhaps from being overactive.

Did pregnant women have piquajait to follow?

Rachel: Yes, at the beginning of the pregnancy. Once the foetus was further developed, then you were free to be as active as you wanted. Some of us would be too active so we would give birth early.

We have always been told not to be lazy while we were pregnant, so we weren't in labour for a long time. Is this true?

Rachel: Yes. It was all part of going out early in the day. You would be told not to *tatitusaaq*, we were to do things right away and not to delay. When someone was told to do something and they took a long time, we would say that person was *tatitusaaqtuq*. We were told not to *tatitusaaq* when we were pregnant.

What happened to women who were too inactive when they were pregnant?

Rachel: Women vary. Some women went out early and followed what they were told. Women were told not to *tatitusaaq*. Women who were *sailliqtujuq* took a long time giving birth. These were women who lay about doing nothing during their pregnancy.

Personally, my later deliveries took longer, whereas my earlier deliveries were a lot easier. I don't know why this happened.

Maybe this happened because you gave birth so many times?

Rachel: Maybe that's the case.

Did you ever hear about newborns being left to die? Did you ever hear of this happening?

Rachel: I heard of it happening. If a couple had too many girls, then the father would feel that he had too many daughters, so they would leave a girl behind. I have never seen this happen. When they gave birth by themselves, if it was a girl and the mother knew the father wouldn't want the child, there would not be any joy over the birth for they had no way of changing the sex. So the mother would sometimes smother the newborn with the placenta, as she knew that the father would not be pleased with the birth of another daughter. In the old days when they went hunting a lot more, they were very happy over the birth of a son. The father would be very happy that he would have a fellow hunter, who would be there to help the father. But for me, my husband did not mind whether my children were male or female. In the past, they seemed happier about having sons, for the child would become a hunter and would be his father's helper.

Did men have to assist during delivery?

Rachel: The men used to be scared to do so. I have given birth with only my husband in attendance. He was there, but he did not really help. Also, the reason why I said men were scared is once I had some people staying in my house. They had arrived shortly before she went into labour. Her husband had taken his parka off because our house was warm. When it became apparent that the woman was in labour, the man looked for his parka because he wanted to go out quickly. This was while the woman was in labour.

It was probably because he was scared.

Rachel: I think he felt he was unable to be present.

Was it sometimes joyful to be present at a birth?

Rachel: Not for me. When I was there, I thought that I could be of assistance while the woman was in labour. Also, when you are in attendance at a delivery, you start empathizing with the woman's pain.

*What was done with the children when a woman was in labour?
Were they allowed to be present?*

Rachel: They would tell the children to stop coming in and out, when the woman was in labour for too long. Women in labour are very aware of things around them, especially when there is too much activity. I saw this happen. When your delivery is quick, the birth happens quite fast and there seem to be no distractions. But when you are in a long labour anything can be a distraction and you don't want people to be too active, not the women who are in attendance, but the ones who are just present.

I would like to ask you what the best position is when you are in labour?

Rachel: I said that some women would be upright and some would be on their side. When a woman was in labour, she would be checked by the elders and made to lie down, so she would be more comfortable. If she was upright, and her contractions were stronger, they would say that the child wanted the mother to be positioned upright. When they had her lie down and her contractions became stronger, they said that the baby wanted to be born with the mother on her side. They would have the mother-to-be in the position in which the contractions were the strongest because they didn't want the birth to be any longer than necessary.

Is what you are wearing called an amauti?

Rachel: Yes, an *amauti* with an *akuq*.

Did it take you a long time to sew it?

Rachel: Yes. It takes me a long time to sew anything. That's the way I am. It took almost a month for me to make it.

Did you make it alone?

Rachel: Yes.

Did you create the design?

Rachel: Yes. This is called a *qaliruaq*. The ones that have thicker fur are called *qulittaaq*. The ones with thin fur are called *qaliruaq*.

Can you tell us more about this?

Rachel: Yes. When women had enough skins for clothing they would have both *qulittaaq* and *qaliruaq*. When the weather started warming up, that was when the *qaliruaq* would be worn. The ones with thicker fur would be worn in the winter. This is also worn indoors and outdoors at this time of the year. The *qulittaaq* with the thicker fur was never worn indoors, only when you were travelling.

It's also an amauti but called a qulittaaq?

Rachel: Yes. When we have a baby in the *amauti*, we would be able to take the baby from our back to our front to nurse it, and we could put the baby back without having to take it out.

The ones with the pouches on the sleeves are called tuilit?

Rachel: Yes. They are called *tuilit*. In the past, they used to be called *aanngarnisaq*.

What does that mean?

Rachel: If the pants were short, they were called *qarlikallaak*. The leg warmers were called *qukturautiik*. The *Tununirmiut* and the *Amitturmiut* both used *aanngarnisaq*.

The pants were called qarlikallaak? Were they attached?

Rachel: Yes.

Was that the style they had back then?

Rachel: The *qulittaaq* did not have much of a design. It didn't have a design on the front. The *qaliruaq* had more of a design. The *qulittaaq* just had white on the trim.

Was there any reason for this design?

Rachel: It was only to make it look nice. I have not heard of any other reason.

What are these parts called?

Rachel: They are called the *nigjait*. When we would see something made without a fringe, we would not consider it as a completed garment. We preferred to see ones with a fringe. Because we weren't accustomed to seeing them without fringe, they seemed incomplete.

This is thin. Is it summer caribou?

Rachel: Yes. It is called *saggaq*, because the caribou has thin fur. The winter caribou fur, which is called the *karngalaq*, has totally fallen off. This is what is left. When the caribou are caught in the spring, they still have the old fur. When the new fur is growing and the old fur is gone, then it is called *saggaq*. And when it becomes a little bit thicker it is considered *akulliarjuq*. When it becomes thicker again, it is thick enough to be a *qulittaq* for a man.

Why doesn't your amauti have a pouch?

Rachel: It did have. Originally, it had a pouch. It was becoming too tight, so I let it out and it ended up without a pouch. When the waist became too small for me, I added to it and therefore it ended up without a pouch.

Is it more comfortable now?

Rachel: Yes. Usually the *amauti* will have a *qaksungauti*, a tie to help the pouch retain it's shape.

Do all parts of the amauti have a name?

Rachel: Yes, I think so. This upper part of the sleeve is called the *iqquqtaq*. The lower part of the sleeve is called the *kikpattuaqquti*. The white part around the hood is the *atiriatq*. The black trim is the *qirniqtuq*. The edge of the hood is the *nuila*. Those are the parts. Before the skin has been cut, the back part is called the *iqquruti*. That is where the tail is. And that's why it is white. The hood has a *kukukpaaq*, a point. Part of the *itinniq*, the pouch, is gathered. The back flap is called the *akuq*. The front flap is the *kiniq*.

The hood is just called a nasaq?

Rachel: Yes. It is just called a *nasaq*, but there are names for the different parts. You have the *iqquruti* and the *atiriatq*.

What part of the skin does the white part come from?

Rachel: The white part of the caribou is the *pukiq*. When the caribou is still alive, the white is called the *qujuuuniq*.

Does your design have a name?

Rachel: No. It doesn't have a name. I think it is just a design.

You mentioned that before it had fringe, you considered it as being incomplete. Did people also make them like that?

Rachel: Yes. Some people had the design shorter than the one on this *amauti*. *Qulittait* never had this kind of a design. Some people would have the design on their *qaliruaq* shorter than this. Some people would have a design like mine, all the way down. I think it is just a design. I don't think it has a name.

When did you make this?

Rachel: Quite a while ago.

Was it when you still had a baby?

Rachel: It was long after I had finished having babies. If it had been a real *amauti*, it would have been a lot wider than this.

What is this part of the pouch called?

Rachel: It is called the *tukirniq*.

Why is it called the tukirniq? Is this because the baby is in there?

Rachel: Because the baby stands on it, it is called the *tukirniq*. When it was cold out and we were travelling we did not diaper our babies. Sometimes we would open up the flap and the baby would pee on the ground. We tried to prevent them from peeing on our back. Whenever we were going to nurse them we would be able to take them from the back to the front and then we would be able to push them back in again.

You never took the baby out?

Rachel: The baby would never be exposed to the outside because it was cold. You tried to keep the baby warm. That's why you kept the baby inside, because you did not want the baby to get cold.

This amauti that you are wearing, how many skins did it take?

Rachel: It took two, one fur is the back and one fur is the front. There are two skins here. If you cut the skins properly all the pieces can be made from two skins.

Would they make different kinds of amautiit?

Rachel: The *tuilit*, which I call *aanngarnisat*, were quite often the *amautiit* that were used.

Were they the ones most often worn?

Rachel: Among the people that I saw, they were. It was only recently, that we finally saw *kaliku*. When I was young, we only saw *aanngarnisat*. Here in Iqaluit women would either have an *akulik* or an *angajuqtaujaq*. The *aanngarnisat* always had an *akuq* and a *kini*.

I did not understand what you meant by kaliku. (Translator: it comes from calico, a cloth they were using in the Western Arctic).

Rachel: The *amautiit* that were made in the Iqaluktuuttiaq area. We call them *kaliku* like they do.

Which is more difficult to make an angajuqtaujaq or an akulik?

Rachel: An *angajuqtaujaq* is much easier to make because it doesn't have much of a design. It could have one if you wanted it to, but it doesn't usually have much of a design. When you make a *qaliruaq*, it is much more time consuming because there is a lot more black trim that has to be sewn. When an *angajuqtaujaq* is not made into *qaliruaq*, you put one strip of black skin and that's it.

Do you also put nigjait on an angajuqtaujaq?

Rachel: Yes. You put fringe on them as well. Some of us quite often put fringe on our clothing. That's why whenever we would see garments without fringe, they would not seem complete. People from the Iqaluit and Pangniqtuuq area quite often did not have fringe. Different communities had different styles of clothing.

What is an angajuqtaujaq?

Rachel: Those *amautiit* that are circular, without flaps.

Were you able to tell where people came from by their clothing?

Rachel: Yes. Especially women that had a *tuilik*. The people from the Tununiq area had an *aanngarnisat*. The Uqurmiut, the ones from Pangnirtuuq, had an *akulik* and those of us from in between these areas quite often would have an *angajuqtaujaq*.

Is it angajuqtaujaq or angijuqtaujaq?

Rachel: It depends on the dialect. Some people say *angajuqtaujaq*, some people say *angijuqtaujaq*.

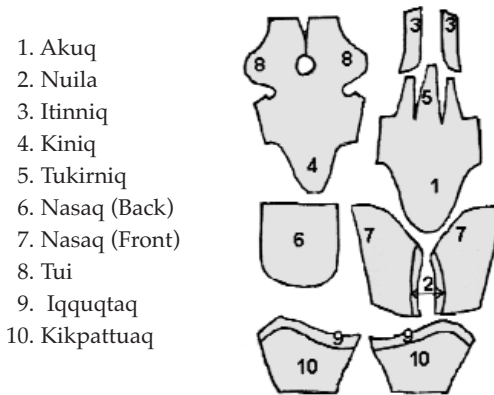
How about the pants?

Rachel: This part I call the *qukturautiik*. The top portion is the *qarlikallaak*. The *qarlik* end below the knee and it has a black trim down the side.

Is the white part of the trim also called qujjuit?

Rachel: *Pukiq* and *qujjuituniq* are one and the same.

Diagram 1
Aangarnisaq, Tuilik



Life Story of Victor Tungilik

When and where were you born?

Victor: They say that I was born in the Iglulik area. I wasn't conscious of calendars, dates and years and so I don't know what year I was born. I never thought of years, so I can't talk about this. They say I was born in Iglulik, down where they went to the flow edge, in a place called Nunngiq. It was a good area to go seal hunting in the winter, because it froze early and it was close to the floe edge. I was born on the sea ice, in the early spring at the time of year when the *igluit* started melting. That is when they say I was born.

Who gave you your name?

Victor: My father and mother gave me my name. They named me after my youngest uncle, my father's brother. They gave me the name Tungilik after him.

Where does the name Victor come from?

Victor: From the priests.

Who were your grandparents? What was your grandmother's name?

Victor: My grandmother's name? I have never even heard what my grandmothers' names were. I know what my father's sister and my mother's older sister's names are. They are the only ones I have heard. I have never heard who my grandparents were. I didn't hear anything from my parents because whenever I tried to listen, I would be told, "Get out, you're a child, you are not to listen." Because that is what we were told, I never heard who my grandparents were. Quite often, I would be told to go and play outside. That's what they would do whenever we would try to listen to adults talking amongst each other. That's why a lot of us are missing some information.

Did you say you were born in the spring?

Victor: Yes, I was born in the early spring, when it was no longer the season to be in *igluit*. Our mother and Iqallijuq told me this. Iqallijuq, from Iglulik, knows me well. I know this based on what she told me. I don't know this for a fact myself, but I am telling you this based on what she told me.

Who were your parents?

Victor: My mother's name was Nuluq and my father's name was Sururniq.

Who gave your parents their names?

Victor: They were also given their names by their parents.

Where were they from?

Victor: I'm not sure. This winter while I was down in Winnipeg, I asked the person who was younger than myself who our ancestors were and where they were from. I was told that our mother was from the Utkusiksalik area, and our father was a Nattilingmiut. That I know for a fact.

Do you know how your parents got together?

Victor: No, I do not know how my parents got together. But I heard that my father had lived with another woman. He was not married to her. He lived with her while he was waiting for the woman who was to be his wife to become old enough to reach the age of marriage. He had lived with a woman named Tullik. When the woman he was supposed to marry became old enough, because he had to listen to what his parents said, he left the woman he was living with and he married the woman he had an arranged marriage with.

Were your parents married in church? Who were they married by?

Victor: I don't know if they were ever married.

What would you like to say about yourself?

Victor: I want to be asked questions. I won't know what to say if I am not asked questions.

What did your father teach you?

Victor: My father never taught me anything because he died while I was still young.

How about your mother?

Victor: My mother also never taught me anything because she too died while I was still very young.

Did you have a lot of relatives?

Victor: I have a lot of *ujuruit* and *irngutait* and *qangiat*. I no longer have an older sister or an older brother.

Where did you and your parents live?

Victor: From what I have heard, my parents lived in the Nattilik region among the Nattilingmiut, in the Iglulik area, and down in the Kivalliq area. They lived in many places. My only older brother went to Mittimatalik to get dogs and *qamutiik*. He went all the way to Mittimatalik.

After your parents died, who looked after you?

Victor: My sister. My sister was the oldest in the family and I lived with her.

You said you had an older sister and an older brother. How many sisters and how many brothers did you have?

Victor: I had one *angaju* named Ikpanaaq. My oldest sister was Tuutalik. My middle sister was called Irrut. My youngest sister was adopted. Her name was Sivviaq. That was my family, my brothers and sisters.

What kind of lifestyle did you lead when you lived in a camp?

Victor: When I was growing up with my parents, we lived on fish, caribou and seal. That's all we lived on. That's all we ate. We did not have any store-bought food, none at all. Absolutely no store-bought food. There was no need to worry about store-bought food. It was no worry to me at all. I did not think about it. I did not even have to think about what I was going to eat that was store-bought. My mother made delicious food out of fish that were going up river. She would dry the stomach, the liver and the eggs so we would have it for the winter. She would mix these together. She would take fish fat from the belly and boil it and then store it in a fish skin for winter food. We ate some of it at the time. She would save the fish fat and caribou fat which she had made into tallow. That is called *puinirniq*. It is also called *punnirniq*. The caribou fat would be cooked. It would be boiled, *igititaaq* in our dialect. It is also called *iktitaq*. You poured it into anything that could contain the fat, such as the skin of a duckling. You poured it down through the neck and let it harden. You used anything at all for containers for the caribou tallow. It was prepared in this manner to be food for winter. That is the sort of thing that my mother did. Nowadays, I would like to have some, but nobody makes it anymore.

Where have you lived?

Victor: The place where I became aware was near where my mother was making this food. It was this side of Igluligaarjuk. We lived alone. There was only our family. We lived at a place where there was a river that fish went upstream. Later, they went inland to hunt caribou for making clothing. They used to know the time to go inland was when the

ducklings went into the sea water. Then they knew that the skin and fur of the caribou were thick enough for clothing. It was no longer too thin and was not yet too thick to be made into clothing. We would go inland after we had done our fishing.

Was there sickness when you were young? Was there illness?

Victor: Yes. My eyes used to have something white in them. There were a lot of *kumait* in those days. My father would take a *kumak* and put it into my eye. The *kumak* would remove this white stuff that was stuck to my eye. I remember him doing that.

So the kumait were of use then?

Victor: Yes. The *kumait* were pests, but they were useful as well, as they were able to remove this white stuff from my eyes that was causing my blindness.

Was the kumak alive?

Victor: Yes, the *kumak* was alive. I think this white stuff would get entangled in its legs. That's how I thought of it.

Were there any other kinds of sicknesses?

Victor: What kind of sicknesses?

Such as stomach aches, pain anywhere in the body, headaches.

Victor: Yes, it is the same as it is now, except it seemed less frequent back then. I remember that there was not as much sickness then. It was very infrequent. We would hear of someone being sick, but only infrequently.

Were there any dangerous sicknesses?

Victor: There were some dangerous sicknesses.

What would be done when someone was sick?

Victor: I have to reply based on what I know. When someone was sick, they would perform *qilaniq*. I saw them do this. I saw an *angakkuq* perform *sakaniq* as well.

Can you tell me what you mean by qila?

Victor: A person would be made to lie on his back and a rope would be tied around his head. He would have a hat on. They would cover his face with mitts. Whenever the head became heavy, then the answer to the question was 'yes'. Whenever the head was light, the answer was 'no'. There were no words said. It was only by this action that they found out what the answer was.

What did you do in your daily life back then?

Victor: The main thing that I did was seal hunt at the sea ice in winter. That is the kind of life I had. I would go to the *aglu* in the winter, when it was very cold, in the deep winter. We went hunting for food for people and for the dogs, and for blubber for the *qulliit*. That is what we used as fuel in the *iglu*. It was lit by a *qulliq*. Only when the *qulliq* was lit would the house be warm. It was the kind of life I lived. I hunted from the time I was able to go hunting in winter down at the sea ice, even when it was very cold. Seal hunting was an important part of life.

Was life hard back then?

Victor: Yes, getting food for the dogs and for people and getting fuel for the *qulliit* was very hard. It was very difficult at times. That is what we worked at every day, day in and day out, even in blizzards. If you could see a little bit in the distance, then you went out to the sea ice. We had no choice but to go out hunting, for hunting was what kept us alive. Our dogs were all that we had to transport ourselves. People had to eat and the *qulliit* had to be fueled. Even when we started using Coleman stoves it was not easy to get fuel for the stove. Nowadays, we might think that we have a hard life. We are provided with housing. Back then we had to work hard to survive. That's the way I lived back then. You didn't want your family or your dogs to be hungry and you wanted the *qulliq* to be well fueled by seal blubber. I didn't do a lot of caribou hunting, because I was not able to do so. I was able to go seal hunting at the *aglu*. I wasn't that good at it, but I was able to do it.

Were there other things in your life that were easier?

Victor: Even when there was a blizzard, if you had one dog who knew where to find an *aglu*, you went out. You tried not to get damp. You tried to keep things dry. That was one of the harder things. Even though you couldn't hear the seal, the dog could.

How old were you when you started hunting?

Victor: I did not think about how old anybody was. I did not think of age. I still don't think of age. I have only been told by a *qallunaat* how old I am, and I follow what I have been told. Back then, I never thought about how old I was.

Were you a young person, or were you an adult?

Victor: I did not think of dates. I did not think of calendars, at all.

When did you get married?

Victor: I cannot talk about when I got married, because I don't even know what year it was. That is another thing I am not able to talk about.

In the old days, when people got married, was there a celebration?

Victor: Back then when you got married, there were no celebrations because you had nothing to celebrate with.

How did you get together with the woman who became your wife?

Victor: When I was living with my sister and my brother-in-law, the father of the woman I was to marry knew who I was. Because I did not want to marry this woman I snuck away. I was fetched. The father came and got me before I wanted to have a wife. I did not want to have a wife at the time, but I was made to have a wife.

It must have been difficult to be made to have a wife or husband you didn't want. Was it scary?

Victor: It was scary. The priest and everyone else was wondering why I didn't want a wife. I think I'm going to have to talk about this. I would be told by the man who wanted me for a son-in-law that it didn't matter whether or not I was a good hunter. For he, himself, was a good hunter. As long as I was able to go and get the meat using his dogs, it was alright by him. He would not mind that I was not able to go hunting. That man really wanted me to become his son-in-law. He became my father-in-law even though I didn't want a wife. And now that I am free to follow my own mind, I do not want to have another wife.

You never had another wife?

Victor: Before my arranged marriage I was given another wife, but she died shortly after. I wasn't treated the same way, I wasn't made to marry her. I knew her beforehand. She died shortly after we were married from sickness. When I was still a child, my mother told me before she died, who my in-laws were going to be. She had told the other couple that they had a wonderful daughter. That man wanted me as a son-in-law, because my mother had said that to him.

Were you an adult then, or were you still a young man when you got married?

Victor: I was quite young when I ended up with a wife.

How did parents know when their child was old enough to get a wife or husband?

Victor: I am not sure. Maybe because they knew their child. When they considered him old enough to have a wife, they would get a daughter-in-law for him. That's how I ended up with Peter Irniq's father as my father-in-law.

Did you arrange marriages for any of your children?

Victor: I only have adopted children left living. I had two sons from the woman I didn't want to marry. The first one was adopted by his grandparents. When the second one was old enough to stand up on his own, my father-in-law said to us, "People of your age have children of their own, you two should look after this one." It was in the spring time. It was a beautiful day. There was no wind. We were out, because we were young. Those types of days are wonderful when you are young. My wife put the baby in her *amauti* and we went for a walk. There was a little grave we came upon, and there was a hole in the grave. I looked into it and saw that there was an *uviluq*. It was an old, old grave. We went home and went to sleep. The baby was sleeping between us. When I woke up, it was no longer breathing. I woke my wife up. I went to my father-in-law and he told me that we were no longer to have any more children. That he was going to fix it, so we would not get any more children. I was wondering what was going to happen to us. He only said those words. He didn't do anything. He didn't touch us. He didn't raise his hands or anything. He just said that we were no longer to have children, and we never had any more children after that. Because of that, we only had adopted children, and all the adopted children are alive to this day.

How many adopted children do you have?

Victor: Two of them. They are adults now. They were both girls. I have two grandchildren that live with me. So there are four of them. Two are my grandchildren and two are my daughters. Both of my adopted grandchildren are from my older daughter.

Your father-in-law said you were no longer to have any more children. Did this happen because he said those words?

Victor: Yes, it was only through his words. Nothing was done to us. There was no operation by any doctors. It was based on his words alone that we did not have any children.

Was your father-in-law an angakkuq?

Victor: Yes, he was an *angakkuq*. But he did not do this as an *angakkuq*. It was only through his words as a person.

What exactly did he say?

Victor: I can't remember his exact words. I had to tell the youngest of my grandchildren to go to bed early. I worried that if she got pregnant, they were going to suspect me of making her pregnant. She did get pregnant. After she had the baby, I remembered what my father-in-law had told me. I told her that she was not to have any more children, and ever since then she has not had any more children.

How strong can words be?

Victor: Words can be strong if somebody voices his deep displeasure. If I was displeased about something and I voiced that displeasure and let it out, it could be very strong. I did not scold her. I just told her she was not going to have any more children.

Is Victor your only name?

Victor: It is my baptismal name. The priest told me the name Victor means 'winner'. Is that what it means? The priests told me that Victor means *saalaksaqtuq*, a victor over everything.

Your child that lived with you is no longer alive?

Victor: I told you before that my wife and I woke up and our baby was dead. Because the baby died, my father-in-law told us that we would not have any more babies. Our first child who was adopted by his grandparents became sick when they were out caribou hunting inland. He was quite a bit older than our younger child when he died. The younger one was old enough to start standing on his own.

Where was your wife from?

Victor: She was from Utkusiksalik. She was an Utkusiksalingmiutaq. She was born in the year of the eclipse. It was so dark. You could see the stars. I was a child back then when it became dark. During that time the woman who became my wife was born. It is quite some

time ago now. It was along the Back River in the Kivalliq that it became really dark during the eclipse. I think I was a bit scared then, because I had never seen it become dark during the day. My wife was born during the eclipse. My father told me the story of her birth.

Can you tell us what you remember about Inuit beliefs when you were a child?

Victor: I didn't know what religion was when I was a child. I remember once we were totally out of food. We had a bit of flour, but there was no more meat at all. We were told that our father wanted to pray. While he was in Iglulik, he had started to follow the Anglican religion. He wanted to pray to be given some food from God. The next day after we prayed, we went down to the floe edge. I was a child back then, and my brother was still alive. There were a lot of seals. He killed a lot of seals. He even got a bearded seal. He came up by dogteam to show us. It was only afterwards that I realized that his prayer had been answered by God. It was only later that I turned to God, to give me what I needed. Before that time, I didn't think about God at all. I always remember the words that he prayed. They were not written down but I remember them to this day.

Can you tell us about the time before missionaries?

Victor: I don't recall seeing any Anglican missionaries. I saw Catholic priests before I saw Anglican missionaries.

Can you talk about your angaju's prayer?

Victor: It was not my *angaju* that was praying. It was our father who prayed. Afterwards I understood that his prayer had been heard.

What was your father's prayer? Can you recite it?

Victor: I remember the song. I can't remember the words of the prayer today. I remember the hymn that he sang. He prayed while he sang. I can't remember the prayer, but I remember the hymn. I remember that hymn to this day. Is it alright if I sing it?

Iksivautarjuarmiittuuruuq,

We sit on the highest throne,

Ataatagjjavullu,

With our father,

Nagliktivut, niritivut,

The one who loves us, the one who gives us food,

Pitsiaqtigjavullu.

The one who is good to us.

Guutivut nakurijauli.

Praise our God.

Guutivut nakurijauli.

Praise our God.

Niqiksanik annuraarnik,

Food, clothing,

Pivugut taapsumanngat.

They come from him.

Pivugut taapsumanngat.

They come from him.

Victor: That was the hymn that he sang. His prayer to God was answered. He had requested food, but I didn't understand this right away. It was only afterwards that I came to the realization that his prayer had been answered.

Did they sing ajaajaas as prayers?

Victor: *Ajaajaas* are not used for prayers. They are just used for celebrations. They do not belong to the *tuurngait*. I have a song that celebrates all the different places that I have been. I have eleven *pisiit*. They are my own *pisiit*. That's the way *pisiit* are, the ones that you *ajaajaa*. I know my own personal *pisiit*.

Does anybody else know this hymn that you sang?

Victor: I know that Rachel knows it. It is in the prayer book.

Rachel: Yes, it is an Anglican hymn. Those of us who go to church know it. It is in the hymn book.

Yesterday you mentioned an illness that you had in your eye. Was your eye healed at that time?

Victor: After that white stuff was removed, it healed. All that stuff was removed by the *kumak* and my vision returned to normal. After a while, the film would come back and then the white stuff would be removed by the *kumak*. The *kumak* would have a hair tied around its middle and it would be put in my eye. My father would get the *kumak* to get all the white stuff out, and when it was removed, my vision would clear up.

What kind of things did your parents tell you not to do?

Victor: When my parents started following the Anglican faith, they told me that I was going to follow the Catholic religion. I was told that when they accepted religion. They told me I was to let go of the ways of the *angakkuq*, because the ways of the *angakkuq* were not compatible with religion. I was often told to be good to people so people in turn would be good to me. If I was not good to other people, they, in turn, would not be good to me. If there were any of my neighbours who were lacking something I was to give them whatever I had, no matter how small. If I gave to those in need, then I would gain in return a reward much larger. It turns out that these teachings were from the Bible. I was told there would be gratitude shown to me. Whenever I was in need, I in return would be helped. There would never be a time that I would be without meat or other things. That is what my parents taught me.

What animal was your first kill?

Victor: I had a seal as my *anngutarngauti*, first catch.

What did you get the seal with?

Victor: With a harpoon and a harpoon-head. I also killed a bearded seal with a harpoon and a harpoon-head at an *aglu*.

Was there a celebration after your first catch?

Victor: It was cut up into pieces while we were still down at the ice. I was told that it was a celebration. Not a single piece was brought home. It was cut into tiny pieces and not a single piece of it was left. It was eaten completely. Some of the seal was fed to the dogs.

Why was that?

Victor: Because they were celebrating.

It was only given to the dogs?

Victor: We ate the liver. After we ate the liver, the seal was cut into pieces. I was told that the reason for this was so I would not have difficulties getting other seals. The whole seal had to be eaten right away. That is why it was fed to the dogs. I had wanted to bring something home but it was not my decision and therefore I did not say anything.

Did the people who were waiting at the camp know that you got your first seal?

Victor: All the men were there. The women were told about it when we got home. The men were right there at the time of my first catch because all the men used to go down to the ice. The *agluit* were still covered with snow. All the men knew about it.

Did you kill any other animals?

Victor: Yes. I was able to kill caribou. I was able to kill bearded seal. I was able to kill walrus and *arviq*, bowhead whale. I've only caught one *arviq*. It is difficult to catch them. You had to use a very long harpoon, and you tried to hit it in the heart.

Were there a number of you who went out whale hunting?

Victor: We had not intentionally gone out whale hunting. We were just out in my *qajaq*, and I happened to come upon an *arviq* and I went after it. I wasn't told to kill the *arviq*, I just wanted to try. I had a pretty powerful rifle and I started shooting it in the snout. I started heading it towards our camp. When I brought it closer to camp, other people were able to help me kill it. It was a joyful time I was not thinking of anything else. It was just beyond the point at Naujaat. When I finally looked up, after it was killed, there were a lot of people around. I hadn't even been aware of them because I was only concentrating on the *arviq*. I finally became aware of the people who had come down to see this happening. They came on foot, from the other side of the point, to the bay. There were so many people. There seemed to be a lot of people at that time, even though there were not that many people in Naujaat.

Rachel to Victor: It was not harpooned?

Victor: It was harpooned afterwards. Qipanniq harpooned it. He hadn't fixed the harpoon head properly, so it fell off when he threw the harpoon. He shouted at me that it was too far, so I tried to get closer to it. I didn't touch it. The *maktak* of the bowhead is not slippery at all. Even though we didn't ram into the whale, the boat stopped suddenly, because of the roughness of the skin. I almost fell over. It must have looked funny. It was a very joyous time.

Do you still go hunting?

Victor: No, I don't go hunting now that I no longer have a wife. After my wife died, I brought home a caribou and nobody ate it. Then I thought, "What is the point of going hunting if nobody is going to appreciate the animal I bring home?" So I stopped hunting then because nobody ate it. I was accustomed to bringing home meat, but there is no point

in going hunting if nobody will eat it. I have not been hunting since. I still go along when they go hunting seal pups, but I don't hunt for anything else. I go down to the ice when they go hunting seal pups, because seal pups are delicious when they are cooked. I know they are delicious. Especially if there are a lot of people around, eating together, then they are even more delicious. It's nice meat. I don't hunt anything but seal pups anymore.

*Victor, what was the best thing you had when you were a child?
Do you have anything that belonged to your parents?*

Victor: I don't have anything at all from my childhood. I have nothing at all that belonged to my parents.

When was the first time you saw a rifle?

Victor: From the time I can remember there have always been rifles. When I became aware, when I was growing up, there were always rifles. I really wanted to shoot, but I was told it would be painful, that the gun would be too powerful for me. I was told not to shoot. That is one memory that I have.

Yesterday, you said that you had adopted children. How were your children fed when their mother didn't have milk?

Victor: My adopted children were raised on milk. Both of them were raised on powdered milk.

Were there qallunaat around when you were a child?

Victor: I did not see many *qallunaat* around when I was a child. There was one we saw when we travelled by boat. When we got off the boat there was a little wooden house. When we got to the shore there was an incident that I remember. The first *qallunaaq* I saw picked me up, and I was really scared because I thought he was going to adopt me.

Was that the first qallunaaq that you saw?

Victor: Yes, that was the first *qallunaaq* that I saw. I had not seen any other *qallunaat* before. He seemed very big. He was not that fat. His face seemed very different from the face of an Inuk. I was even more scared because I thought he was going to adopt me. My parents saw what was going on but they didn't seem to care, so I cried. I remembered this incident from time to time for a long time afterwards. I also remember when we were in Utkusiksalik. There was a trading post there. I saw a big boat with smoke coming out of it. I was told it was an *umiarjuaq*. I had never seen one before. I never saw any *qallunaat* at that time, I only saw the ship and I was scared of that as well. I remember the time I saw a plane. There were two of them. We were inland and we saw the planes landing down on the sea. The noise

of the airplanes scared me, so I cried. When they took off again they went right over our tent. I was so scared I went into the tent and hid my face on the bed.

Some Inuit had gone to the planes and they brought back pig fat that was quite thick. My uncle was with them. He said he was told that it was the *tunnuq* of a *qalattivik*. I was wondering what a *qalattivik* was. I took a bite of it and it was very salty. It turned out that a *qalattivik* was a *kuukuusik*, a pig. It turned out that the fat of the pig was very salty.

The pig, was it a whole pig?

Victor: It was a rectangular piece about one foot by six inches. It was a pig's skin with fat that was taken home from the plane. Pieces of pig's fat used to be cut in that shape, kind of rectangular.

What was the difference between living in camp and arriving at a big community?

Victor: I didn't think of our camp as a *nunaliralaq*, but we lived where there were no other people. When we would go to see people at Aivilik, it was very scary, because there were so many people. We weren't accustomed to being amongst people. It was kind of scary, because I scared easily. That was the way I was.

Was the change noticeable?

Victor: After a while, I would see numerous people and it didn't bother me. The communities were not large back then when I grew up. I started wanting to see people. These were the same people I had been scared of earlier. As I became older, I would want to see people I'd seen before. Even now, there are people I have met who I haven't seen for a while that I would like to see again, especially when you are an elder and you don't know how they are doing.

Did you have a job when you started living in a community?

Victor: Yes. I was an adult but I wasn't that old when I started working. I worked at the Hudson's Bay Company. I would work all day and I'd have some tea. I'd eat a bit and then I didn't eat anything for the rest of the day. Weeks would go by without us being paid. We would just be given some tea and fed on the job.

What were you doing? What kind of job did you have?

Victor: I carried water. There were two large barrels that I'd fill with water. I also carried coal. They used coal back then, as well as wood. I'd chop and split the wood. There was wood that would have been wonderful to make *qamutiik* runners with. It would split very

well. I still remember the wood that I sawed into pieces and split into firewood. It was probably very expensive to buy. That wood became firewood for the trader. I regretted cutting that wood into pieces. Even though there was *arjiksaq*, coal, I was made to saw wood and split it for firewood because they didn't want to use up the coal right away. That's why I was made to chop the wood.

Who did you go hunting with back then?

Victor: I went hunting with Sivaniqtuq who died just last year. His son Arsene Sivaniqtuq is living here. I went hunting with Arsene's father.

Where did you hunt for different animals?

Victor: We went down to the floe edge and on solid ice to hunt for seals. When there was snow, I'd hunt caribou and I'd hunt polar bear. Those were the types of animals I hunted. I didn't go fishing very often, but I would occasionally go fishing with others. I always went with others. I never went alone. Sivaniqtuq was a much better hunter than I was. I would go hunting with him.

When you first started hunting were you taught hunting skills, or did you just learn by observing?

Victor: In the winter, we would go down on the sea ice, and I wished for someone to teach me. I never put this into words, I only thought about it. After my father died, I had an old man for a stepfather. We would be hunting at a seal hole that was covered with snow and he would just tell me that if I saw a seal coming, that I was to stab at it. The *qiviutaq*, the piece of down that was placed as the float, would start moving. So whenever I thought that there was a seal, I would stab at it. I would never be successful because I was not actually shown how to do this, I was not being taught. Other people were catching seals, and I was envious of them, but I was unable to. I'll tell you what my stepfather told me. It might be embarrassing. When he finally started telling me about how to hunt, he told me to recall the first time that I had had sex, and to remember what my breathing was like. I was to remember my breathing. He said that's the kind of breathing that the seal would have when it was approaching the *aglu*. I had never had sex with a woman, so I didn't know anything about the kind of breathing he was talking about. Then one day the *qiviutaq* moved. You had to just wet the very tip of it and not the rest, because if it was completely wet, it would be unable to move. I was told that this piece of down was used so you would know when there was a seal approaching. When it was moving, I started holding my breath. When the feather started going up, it fluttered a bit, and I was finally aware of the seal's breathing. I was shaking because I knew there was a seal there. Before that time I never knew about this. I never knew what it was going to be like. My breathing became

laboured. The *qiviutaq* would move depending on the inhaling and exhaling of the seal. I started using the seal's breathing to help me know when to harpoon it. When I thought the seal was coming up, I thought it was time for me to harpoon it. I went to harpoon it when the seal was very close. This is how I learned to successfully harpoon a seal, through becoming aware of its breathing. My knee joints seemed very loud because I was shaking so much. That's the way it was. I finally understood how this piece of bird down was used. It started moving because of the movement of the water. It seemed to stop, and then it started fluttering again. When it went down a bit, that's when the seal was coming up and it was time to harpoon it. I found this out myself. In a way it seemed as if I taught myself this. My step-father who was a *Nattilingmiutaq* had knowledge and skills and I wanted him to teach me, but he never did.

There was a *qiviutaq* and an *ajautaq*. The down, *qiviutaq*, was put into the water attached to a string, the *ajautaq*, and when it started moving it indicated that the water was moving. When it was pushed up, it was because the seal had started coming into the hole. It was moving. *Supiraluktuq* is when the *ajautaq* was pushed up because the seal was coming. You would harpoon it when the seal touched it. Because you knew a seal was coming, you were confident about your ability to catch it and you would start to harpoon it before it even came up. Once you had harpooned the seal and pulled it up on the ice, the other hunters would come over. After you pulled up a seal, it would be cut up. The liver, the blubber and the kidneys would be removed. These would be put on the ground. The hunter who harpooned the seal never cut the pieces. They would be cut into small pieces by another person. The liver, the kidneys, the blubber and the spleen would be all be cut into tiny pieces. We would use a *kapurauti* to eat with. Those that did not want to use a *kapurauti* would use their fingers. Every time a seal was caught, we would eat like this. When it was deep winter and things froze right away, somebody would take a piece of ice and put it into the slit in the seal. There was a slit where they took out the liver, and this ice stayed there until it thawed out enough to be removed. It would only be removed when we got home. We would eat on the ice like this and we would bring seal meat home. When it got warmer, we would use a *tuputaq* made of polar bear shin about four or five inches long to close the slit. You didn't want the insides or the blood to come out.

After you killed a seal and you had pulled it out and brought it onto the ice, did you indicate your gratitude in any way. Was there a prayer? Was there something that you did?

Victor: Yes, before we ate, we would pray. After we pulled it out we would poke the eyes out and we put a braided sinew called an *uqsiuti* through the eyes. You put it through one eye and pulled it out through the other. Everybody who was out hunting at the seal holes would do this. We also used a *tukiriaq*. It was a little pack where the things that you were

going to use were put. If we were going to wait at the seal hole, we stood on the *tukiriaq*. It was made from a piece of caribou skin. When you first arrived you took all the snow off the bottom of your boots because you didn't want to make any noise at all. That's how we waited at the seal hole.

In films I have seen seals being given water.

Victor: Some people would melt a piece of snow in their hand and put it into the seal's mouth. They put a tiny drop of water into its mouth. *Sanirairni* was when the seal was cut up by a woman. Children would come to the *katak*, the entrance of the *iglu* and would wait out there while the seal was being cut up. A piece was cut from the side and the children would be given a piece of this meat directly in their mouths. They would keep it in their mouths until they brought it home. This was called *sanirairnirasuarniq*. They would be given a little piece of meat. They did not eat it. They kept it in their mouths and brought it home to their parents. This was called *sanirairnirasuaq*.

What did they do with it when they brought it home?

Victor: It would be eaten. I remember this happening.

Why were seals given a drop of water after they were caught?

Victor: I have never really heard the reason, but I think that it was so the seals would not be difficult to hunt in the future. They would put a little drop of water in its mouth, and would give it a drink. They would put the water into the mouth with their hand. I have seen this but I never heard of anybody saying why they did this.

Do people still do this?

Victor: Today nobody does this any more. If a seal was cut open, all parts of the seal, and the ribs were cut up into pieces. In the past once the meat was cut up into pieces, people would come with a container to get meat. As they came in, they would pick up a piece of meat and take it home. Whoever killed the seal was left with the vertebrae and the head. When a lot of seals had been killed, no one would end up without meat. Everything would be cut up into pieces, even the blubber. That's how everyone would have meat.

Do you think that giving water to the seal helped to increase the number of future catches?

Victor: I didn't notice if this increased the number of seals or if there were less. I really didn't notice at all.

*If a hunter did not have that much respect for seals, did seals come to him?
Were there any tirigusuusiit concerning this?*

Victor: No, not at all. No one would ever disrespect an animal they were hunting. They had a camp leader who was listened to, and he was well obeyed.

*If you showed disrespect to seals, could this be a cause for not catching them
in the future?*

Victor: No. I don't think that mental disrespect affects animals. Personally, though I never had any disrespectful thoughts about seals.

*Have you heard that people who showed mental disrespect towards animals
had difficulty catching them?*

Victor: I have never known of this to happen. Some people would help each other catch seals.

How was it you were able to make seals come to you?

Victor: We would search for an *aglu*, and would use our dogs to find which holes were occupied by the seals. That's how we knew the seals would come. Sometimes we had to wait a very long time.

*Some people seem to be very good at getting seals and some people seem to
have less success.*

Victor: It varies from hunter to hunter. Usually the hunters would have an idea which hole the seal was going to come to. They found the holes with the aid of their dogs. If a hole still had seals coming to it, then the dogs would know. The hunter would also know which holes no longer had seals coming to them. This is how they used to hunt seals. They needed the seals and they wanted to catch them. They would find which holes the seals were coming to. They knew which holes were still being used. The hunters varied in their knowledge of this.

What is urniq? Is it the same as upak?

Victor: They both mean to go in the direction towards something. *Urnik* and *upak* are from different dialects. In our dialect we do not use *upak*. The Amitturmiut say *upak* and because I was not a real Amitturmiutaq I say *urnik*.

In your area, who butchered the seal, the man or the woman?

Victor: Women would butcher the seal.

Why was that?

Victor: Because that was our custom.

Was it only because it was your custom?

Victor: Yes, because it was our custom. The men would butcher the seal more often in the spring. When a seal was going to be cut up to bring home for people to come and get meat, women would butcher it. The house that people would come and get meat from was considered the *niqaiturvik*. All the meat would be fetched by the neighbours. It would be finished in its entirety except for the vertebrae and the head and the skin. When the hunter was a good hunter, then his was often the *niqaiturvik*. Any house that people went to get meat from was called the *niqaiturvik*. They would go to whichever house had some meat.

Was it the women who would go get the meat?

Victor: Yes. A woman would cut it up into pieces, then other women would come and get some and put it in the container they had brought with them.

You mentioned a qingniq. When was it they would qingni?

Victor: In the spring. You call everything *qingniq*. For us, only cached fish is *qingniq*. If they had no *qingniq*, then they had to hunt seal. They would all go down to the sea to help each other hunt. This is how it was in the Aivilik area and in the Utkusiksalik area. This is what we did. I grew up doing this. When I was able to be of help, I would also hunt like this. We would search for an *aglu* still being used by a seal. We would do this using dogs. We would wait for the seals there. That's the way we did it. We all went together in this manner. Everybody that was able to hunt would help each other.

Did you ever go hunting alone?

Victor: I was never in a camp on my own. I always had someone to hunt with. I was never in a camp alone with only my wife. I always had someone. I always had neighbours.

Were there any tirigusuusiit regarding hunting?

Victor: I've never known any *tirigusuusiit* regarding hunting.

Were you taught any maligait about hunting?

Victor: *Maulirniq*, seal hunting in the winter when the *agluit* were snow covered, had it's own *maligait*. The use of the *qiviutaaq* and the *ajautaaq* and the *unaaq* were all part of it. You had to know about this. But once you knew and understood this, then you were able to be successful. If you didn't know it, you would stab at the hole, and there wouldn't be anything there.

Did you have to listen to your isumataq?

Victor: Yes. We would go wherever the *isumataq* wanted us to go. He would think, "Maybe this is a better area for hunting seals". If there was an area without any previous foot prints, maybe we would be able to catch a seal sooner. We would go hunting where no seals had been caught before, if that was where the *isumataq* wanted to go, or we might go to an area that we had hunted in that still had seals, if that's where the *isumataq* wanted us to go.

Was this a piqujaaq that they had?

Victor: Yes. The *piqujaaq* was to have an *isumataq* but it was not through *tirigusungniq*. They relied on the *isumataq* to look for places where it would be easier to catch a seal. Usually the *isumataq* was the one who was the most skillful, who knew where there would be seals. Men who would try to go places where there might not be seal were not followed.

Did you go hunting quite a distance away, or did you go hunting close by?

Victor: We didn't go very far. We would only be gone part of the day. We would leave early in the morning, as the day started, and we would be gone for the day.

You said that you did not call a seal cache qingniq.

Victor: It was only fish caches that were considered as *qingniq*. Everything that was not fish was a *pirujaaq*.

When was the best time to make a seal meat qingniq?

Victor: In the spring, when they didn't have much blubber. There would still be a little, and this is when it became very delicious meat. You cached the whole animal and it became kind of sweet. It became green. You added blubber to the intestines and liver as you ate it. That's how we Aivilingmiut ate it, and we found it delicious. The insides would become sweetish and greenish. It was originally intended for our dogs, but when it was good meat, we ate it. I miss this kind of food, especially in the spring. We would cache this meat in the spring because the insides were usually empty. You would go and get it in the winter, and

you'd eat it with blubber as it was good food. I know that I will not be eating this food now, as I'm not going to be hunting. I am not going to hunt because I am physically unable, and I get sick easily.

When you became religious, which religion did you follow, the Catholic religion or the Anglican one?

Victor: My parents told me that because they were following the Anglican religion, I was to follow the Catholic religion. Because I had been told this, we went to spend Christmas in Igluligaarjuk. We went there and the priest was giving a sermon during Mass. He said there would be noise like thunder on the land and the sea, and the end of the world would come. The earth would shatter and everyone would die. This was the sermon the priest gave. I thought maybe it would happen that night and if not that night it would be the next. I was very scared that night because I was thinking about that. It was only a few years ago, that I read in the Bible that the end of the world wasn't going to happen right away. It was through my ignorance that I made myself scared. We have to try to understand the Bible on our own. We have to try to understand the Word of God ourselves and not through asking people. We have to have our own understanding of what God wants of us. We were told not to hunt on Sunday as long as we didn't need to. This was all in the Bible. We were not to steal and not to put aside marriage. If we had a spouse, we were not to want another, and not to lie to our neighbours. All of this is in the Bible. We would try to follow this. Some things were very hard to follow. Some things you did anyway, even though you were not supposed to. Even though I knew I was not supposed to do certain things, I would do them anyway. It is very easy for a person to do wrong. This also pertains to me. I think there are other people who do follow these commandments. That's the way it is.

When I turned to religion, I thought the time of danger had passed. I thought the time I'd gone through being an *angakkuq* was behind me because I was letting all of it go and because I was turning to God. I thought of this time as something very hard to get through and when I let go of it, when it was over, there would be nothing dangerous, there would be only joy. It is written that Jesus will come again. I searched for this in the Bible and I found it. I believe this. When I started hearing about the Anglican religion, I thought maybe it was only those following the Anglican religion that would be saved by Jesus. I thought those of us following the Catholic religion would be left behind. I looked for this in the Bible and I learned that we are all going to be saved. In the same way that people are given free will at birth, people who want to follow religion will find it.

How were you able to let go of your past life? Was it through your own will power or was it through prayer?

Victor: It was not just through prayer. I told my *tuurngait* that I was not going to think about them anymore. Even though bad thoughts would come to me, I would try to ignore them. There were bad things that came to me, and I turned my back on them. I would be given bad thoughts but I would ignore them, because I wanted to follow God's goodness. I was turning to God and I was leaving the other behind.

*What is *alag&ugu*?*

Rachel: It is when you don't want to follow something anymore and you turn your back on it. In the Bible it is written, "Of course my brothers, I really do not think I have already won it. The one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind and do my best to reach what is ahead. So I run straight towards the goal in order to win the prize which is God's call through Christ to the life above." [Philippians 3:13, 4]

*Did the *angakkuit* know about the end of the world?*

Victor: I didn't know about this even though I myself was an *angakkuq*. It was not known by any other *angakkuit*. For example, my mother and my father helped me as a child. I remember my mother holding my hand, and I picked up a little plant and she said, "God doesn't want you to have this." It turned out it had been a Sunday. We were walking, so we were not to pick anything. It was a tiny plant that I picked up, and my mother told me, "God doesn't want you to have this." To this day I remember those words that my mother said to me. To me it was very real. To her it was very real. Whenever I would have these thoughts, whenever I would think of something that I had heard that seemed very real, it stayed with me, for I was a child who scared easily. Maybe because I was that kind of a person, I remember these words even today. I sometimes forget things I used to know. Sometimes I walk and wonder what it was that I was going to go get. But things that I had done in the past, when we were children, when we were a complete family, when my whole family was still alive, are still very vivid. When my memories of those days are very vivid, I forget what is in the present. Somebody said to me that my mind had shrunk. It isn't that my mind has shrunk, it is because I was thinking about my life in the past. My memories are so vivid that I am more aware of them than what is happening in the present. They say that elders lose their minds. It isn't that. It is that what they have gone through in the past becomes more vivid. They aren't able to tell other people about them because they are more in their head. They are less aware of what is going on in the present. That's the way I see it. I am like that and this is why I very easily forget things. I think other old people are the same.

How did the ministers help people? Were they able to help people hunt animals?

Victor: I never heard about them doing this. My father would be given animals through the help of God. He did not think about the ministers or priests. My father would only make a request to God when we were out of food.

Were the ministers able to go hunting?

Victor: They probably did. I did not know any of them back then. I don't know if they ever went hunting. I heard one time about a minister passing near our camp. The minister did not come to our camp but I heard of this minister passing by. I never heard of any ministers hunting.

When you decided that you were going to let go of your ways and wanted to accept religion, what did you do?

Victor: As I understood more about religion, I let go of my *tuurngait* who were really powerful and really helpful, because I knew there was someone who was even more powerful and even stronger than my *tuurngait*. That made me decide to follow religion. I decided to believe in religion and let go of my *tuurngait*. I did this based on my growing understanding of this new religion. Once I was heading towards Arviligjuaq. I had my oldest *ningauk* with me. He had epilepsy. I was on the wrong trail and instead of going on foot I started praying. In my prayer, I said I was trying to go to Arviligjuaq. I said to God, "Let one person from Arviligjuaq come to us because I don't know this land any more. Send a person to us who knows this land." This is what I prayed. Shortly after we had gone to sleep, I heard a noise. There was no wind at all. This person who I was with had a seizure again and I had my back to him and I turned around. Somebody made a hole through our *iglu*. Some people had come to look for us. They had come directly to us. My prayer had been answered. The eldest amongst them had said to the others, "I think I can go this way." He had been told by the government to take some gas, but he said he would use his own gas. He left on his own and my prayer was answered. He seemed to be talking about my prayer even though I hadn't said anything. I had said my prayer to myself and not out loud, but he was putting the thoughts that I had into words. At that time I realized that if I prayed, God could hear my prayers. Based on this I started trying harder to be a believer. It turns out that if you have a desire and you pray for it, even though God doesn't seem to hear your prayer, he does.

When you were no longer an angakkuq and you began to rely on the church, what did you do?

Victor: We prayed every morning before we went out hunting. In the evening we would pray before we went to sleep. This is what we did. Also, whenever there was plenty of meat for food we never went out hunting on Sunday. It was only when we needed food that we would hunt on Sundays. We would try to observe this day. We were not to do anything because this was written in the prayer books. We are not like this anymore. Even on Sundays people go out hunting as soon as they finish praying in church. That's the way it is in my community. Back then, it wasn't like that. We never saw anyone doing this. The camps in the Kivalliq area were not large. We would live in camps composed of family members. There would only be a few *igluit*. This would be down on the sea ice when we were out by the floe edge. That's where we lived in the winter. In the summer we would separate and try to go where there were more animals. Some of us would stay on this side, and others would go elsewhere. Those of us who hunted would try to go to where there was more game. In the summer, we would save meat for winter food. This is what we did because our lives centered on getting food. We never thought about what we could get from the store. We never thought about possessions. Nowadays, we go to the store and we think, "I would like to own this." Personally, I never had thoughts about things from the store in the past. I didn't think about wanting to own this or that. All that we would buy would be biscuits, flour, jam, sugar, tea, tobacco and bullets. Those were the only things that we would purchase. Sometimes, there would be oatmeal. When we would travel to a trading post, we would be gone for the whole winter or the whole summer. The main purchase was bullets. They would buy tobacco, but bullets were the main purchase because that's what we needed to hunt. Our father would get a lot of lead because that's what he melted to make into bullets. He never threw away the cartridges. He would buy the primer and the powder. These two would be purchased. Our father would melt the lead and pour it into a metal container to harden, to make the bullet head. Everything was measured because if he put too much or too little powder it wouldn't be good. So he would measure how much he put in. Then he would plug it with a little piece of paper. He would make a number of bullets this way. I saw him doing this. I really liked them, but I never tried to make them myself.

Did you have to go through the siqqitiq ritual when you became a Christian?

Victor: I never saw anyone go through the *siqqitiq* ritual. Maybe because my mother, my father and my brother went through this in Iglulik. I never saw anyone go through this when I was a child.

When you started going to church and you let go of your shamanistic powers, did you have to get baptized?

Victor: Yes. I was given instruction for a long time. This was during the winter when that priest moved to the community, and I spent the winter there. I was given instruction about what God wanted. It was only after this instruction that I was baptized. Once I was baptized, I thought I had become a true Christian. When I was baptized my sins were removed. When we had Communion we were told it was the body of Christ. I would think, "I am now ready, I have done all that God wants." I would go to church. When I learned to read I found out there was so much more that I needed to learn. Then I attained more of an understanding of what I needed to do. When there was something I did not understand, I would go to the priest if I did not understand the translation. I was told by the last priest, Father Didier, not too long ago, before he died in a plane crash, that there were not going to be priests or ministers forever. He said, "You Inuit will have to start understanding things yourselves because there are not going to be priests forever. You now know more about religion. You are not new to religion and you are going to have to take more control." This became more daunting and I felt I couldn't understand the priest any more. I started trying to understand more of the Bible from an Anglican minister. To this day I am still trying to understand the Bible. After asking the priest and not getting an answer, I felt I could not go further. I stopped asking him questions because I felt I had to start finding the meaning on my own. I felt I wasn't able to.

Was this when you were an adult?

Victor: Yes. After I had a wife and after I let go of my powers I went through a hard time. I went through a lot of things when I was alone with my wife. I didn't have anyone to go hunting with so I went with my wife. Even though I didn't want her to cut up a seal, she would and I would help her a bit. One day it was a bit windy while we were out at the floe edge. After I had taken the frost off my rifle, I shot at a seal. I went out to get it. My wife told me I had forgotten my paddle. I told her to sit down. We were drifting because of the wind. My wife became anxious and I felt very sorry for her. I prayed to God to help me. I had my rifle. I knew it was there. I picked it up without looking at it and I used it as a paddle. I managed to paddle to a piece of ice. I knew I was able to do this with the help of God. This gave me more of an understanding about being a Christian. I was using a rifle as a paddle and I was paddling against the wind and I managed to get us to a piece of ice. Before this time I thought that the powers that I had had were strong. I then knew there were powers that were much stronger than that. I knew I would not go back to my past life. This has happened to me more than once.

Did some of your tuurngait try to return to you?

Victor: I don't know if any of them tried to return to me. I never sensed them trying to come back to me. But sometimes I would feel the need to talk about what I had gone through. It would be very strong. But I couldn't find anyone to talk to. When I found a person I felt I could talk to, I would tell them about my past experiences. I would feel a lot lighter after talking. Through your questions and my answers, I feel better. I have not felt sick. I thank you all for this. I am also grateful that you have more of an understanding about what I went through. Thank you for helping me get this out. You are not the only ones who have gained. I am much happier as well.

Who wanted you to let go of your tuurngait?

Victor: I wanted to let go of them. Nobody forced me let go of them. I did it on my own. I already said that if I had continued to be an *angakkuq*, I was going to be thrown into the great fire. That's why I let go of my *tuurngait*. That's why I sent them away.

If it weren't for this, would you still be practicing? Would you still be using your tuurngait when you needed to use them?

Victor: If I had not understood that there was someone stronger and more powerful than my *tuurngait*, I would have continued to use them. I found out that there was someone powerful enough to have created people and made the land and the sea and the air. Having read this in the Bible, I wanted to get rid of my *tuurngait*. I was also fearful that I was going to be thrown into the great fire. Because of that, I let go of my *tuurngait*.

Where did you see a Bible the first time?

Victor: From a Catholic priest.

Was it easier when you got to know more about religion?

Victor: Yes. For myself, I no longer had the worries of an *angakkuq* and I seemed more peaceful. I was trying to find out more about the Bible from the ministers and the priests. I had both versions. Both Bibles are the same, even though there are two churches. They both use the same Bible. They are the same whether you open one Bible or the other. To this day, I still search for discrepancies between the two. They are both the same. It is possible to understand both of them.

This was when you were an adult?

Victor: Yes, it was when I became an adult and I tried much harder to understand. When I was a young person I never even thought of the Bible. I never tried to read it. I am telling you the truth. When I became an adult, I had a stronger mind based on my growing wisdom and I started following the Bible more.

When you were still an angakkuq, you were able to heal people. When you became a Christian were you still able to do this?

Victor: When my oldest grandchild had diarrhea so badly that it was all liquid, he was medivaced and gone for several days. My wife and I prayed for him and he stopped having this diarrhea. We know that the child was healed by God, not by *tuurngait*. Because we prayed to God to have our grandchild healed, he was healed.

Would there be times when it didn't make a difference whether or not you prayed?

Victor: Yes, this is the way it is. When you pray to God, even though he hears you right away, there are times when he doesn't seem to hear you. It could be quite some time later that what you prayed for eventually comes about. I got to understand this on my own. It isn't from anyone telling me about it. It is from personal experience. I'm not going to talk about anybody else. I don't want to give you erroneous information. I think people who start giving their own interpretations that are not written in the Bible will also be thrown into the great fire. I don't want to tell you what are my own thoughts, as I don't want to tell you anything that is not true.

Who would tell you were going to be thrown into the great fire?

Victor: It is written in the Bible. God has written this and this is the truth. For he is the Creator of all, of heaven and earth and that is what he has commanded us to follow. The Bible lets people know how they are supposed to conduct their life.

What did you find easier, your childhood before or after there was Christianity?

Victor: Before I knew about Christianity, I was satisfied with the life I had. After I learned about Christianity I started seeing things that were not right. I considered the way of life that I had followed to be powerful and strong. Because I did not know how to read and because I did not know about the Bible, I never thought of it. I believed the life I led was strong and true.

What are your thoughts now about having been an angakkuq?

Victor: It was real for me. It was true for me. I knew it to be of help to me.

Was it difficult to change from being an angakkuq to being a Christian?

Victor: Yes, when I was an *angakkuq*, I found it difficult to suddenly be a Christian. I had to let go of being an *angakkuq* first. I had heard of people who would *saagiaqtuq*, people who would turn to God. I didn't think about turning to God but I wanted to enter into something safer than being an *angakkuq*. It seemed that the course I was taking was very steep, and I knew that there was a possibility that I might fall back. I wanted to really let go of being an *angakkuq*, even though I might go through a time of danger. I knew I was going to get through it. From what I have experienced, it is not possible to suddenly turn to Christianity.

When you turned to Christianity, was it of your own free will or was it because of someone else? Because you said your parents had died when you were young, was it your sister who wanted you to change?

Victor: This was of my own free will as I said already. If I tried to remain an *angakkuq* I would go to the eternal fire that never goes out. After I was baptized, the priests would tell this to us in sermons. I prayed and therefore my *tuurngait* went away and that is when I turned to Christianity.

Do you feel that Christianity was easier and made you happier?

Victor: Yes, it did.

After you turned to Christianity, how did you find out about Christmas?

Victor: When I became a Christian, I became one of the choir members during Christmas season. I found my life at that time very enjoyable.

Where did the ministers and priests live when they arrived? Did they arrive before there were houses?

Victor: We were still living in *igluit* when I was growing up. The priests never came where we were living. We went to Igluligaarjuk once around Easter time. After that we returned to where we were living. This was shortly before our father died. In the summer four or five priests went to Igluligaarjuk by boat from Naujaat. My father was baptized there. There were no *qallunaat* where we were living. We never had any priests or ministers come to us. It was always us who would go where there was a priest.

I would like to go back to Christmas. You said that you were part of the choir at Christmas. Did you have feasts right away?

Victor: Yes. We had midnight mass. Then we had feasts the next day. We would exchange gifts that were our personal possessions between each other. The first time I saw this it was very enjoyable. You would give somebody a present even though it wasn't elaborate. It made people happy. I never experienced this when I was a child. It was only as a young adult that I went through this. I felt I was among people who were really happy.

What kind of games did people play?

Victor: During Christmas, the Catholic mission would get items from the Hudson's Bay Company. Also the Bay manager would climb up on to the top of the house and we would have a candy scramble. There would be other items in this *parlaniq*, this scramble. It was very enjoyable. While we were at the Catholic mission, we would *nugluktaq* and try to get a stick in a hole, we would wrestle two at a time, and people would get prizes. The prizes were things like tea and tobacco. I was scared when somebody wanted to wrestle with me. It turned out that the person who wanted to wrestle with me wanted to do so because he wanted me to win. When I lifted that person I couldn't even feel his weight. It turned out that he wanted me to win a prize. I couldn't feel his weight at all when I threw him on the ground. So at first, here I was scared of him and it turned out he just wanted me to win tea or tobacco. I knew he wasn't trying hard to win at all. I was really happy to win.

Was that the first time you saw that sort of thing happening?

Victor: Yes, that was the first time I saw this happening. The priest that we had, Father Didier, would have people wrestle quite often as he enjoyed having a good time.

During the Christmas season, was there any katajjarniq or drum-dancing?

Victor: Personally, I would say *qattipaaq*. We called that *qattipaaq*. I don't like the sound of it much. The *qattipaarniq* of the Utkusiksalingmiut were the only ones I liked. The ones that I listen to on T.V. don't sound very good at all. The people from Utkusiksalik sounded very good when they were doing this. Maybe it was because I didn't hear them very often that they sounded good.

Did people do this at Christmas after they converted to Christianity?

Victor: We didn't do that kind of thing. My parents had become Christian while I was still in the *amauti*. They didn't pray very often. They had prayer books but they didn't teach me about religion.

Victor, can you tell us what you think about present-day religion.

Victor: Since you are asking my opinion, I would like to see people who say they are Christian try harder to live their religion.

Why do you think they should try harder?

Victor: Because I look and listen to them. I am like everyone else, although I try not to be. I have a tendency to be critical of others. I try to be the same as others. I see people going out hunting or house-building on Sunday. Quite often I think these people should try harder to follow their religion. Even though I don't always know what I am supposed to do, I know I should try harder to follow my religion.

Do you think young people should try harder to live a Christian life?

Victor: I don't know about Iqaluit, but young people in my community are given instruction. But some of them don't go to religion classes. I know they don't do this. I feel that younger people should be made to understand. The Catholic priests are trying, but they are not trying hard enough. They should be telling young people about God's love, that they need to attain God's love as they are going to leave their earthly bodies behind. Young people should understand this more. They should not just be taught religion, they should also be instructed to be better Christians.

What kinds of problems do you think young people go through?

Victor: I often speak out. I'm not just doing this here in Iqaluit, even when I'm home I do this. There was one time we talked about problems young people were going through. I feel obligated to tell you this. When we were young, both male and female children listened to their parents. Their parents did not allow them to go out at night. They were not allowed to be out all night. Parents did not want girls to become pregnant. Also young girls were not to make advances towards boys. But nowadays, young girls go after young boys. That's the way I see it. I'm using you as an example. I saw you flirting with this *qallunaaq*. That's what young girls do now. I see this as a problem with young people. Young people do this kind of thing without any embarrassment and I don't like seeing it at all. We weren't like that. As young people we did not exhibit this kind of behaviour. We played when we were young. We had enjoyable times, but we did not flirt. We played to have fun. We did not think of sex.

What would you say to young people who make unwanted advances towards others?

Victor: Once when I was asked to come, I told an RCMP officer and a teacher who were present that when the teachers saw something happening they didn't do enough. I think the RCMP officer agreed with me.

Do you think this kind of behaviour can be corrected through religious instruction?

Victor: Even though they are given religious instruction and the minister preaches about it in church, once they leave they seem to forget what they have heard. This is the way I see it. Even though they hear it in church, they still continue to do things they were told not to do. I have seen this happening.

Do you think that elders are not being listened to enough these days?

Victor: I have heard that elders used to bring young couples together to counsel them. They would tell them what kinds of things they were supposed to do. I personally think they should be shown the Book of Revelations. They should be told, "This is what is going to happen to you." You should talk to them individually. I think this would help them improve. That is what I think. I think that we are going through a very fearful time. If people started fearing what could happen to them, this could really turn a young person's behaviour around.

The way of life today is different from the way it was back then. Young people don't seem to listen to what they are told. In what way do you think you could make them listen?

Victor: Even young people are made to work these days to earn money. I'm not sure what to say to them because of this. People who are making wages should not stop working. Especially if they have a family, they should continue to work. Because of this I don't think I could say anything to them. I don't see them when they are at work. Earning wages now seems to be our only way of life and I am very much in favour of young people working. I am not going to go check up on them while they are working.

Do you think angakkuit could help people today?

Victor: If they still existed, I don't know if they could help. I have not even thought of this.

What do you think about the different denominations that exist now?

Victor: I was told that if I joined the Pentecostal movement I would be a true believer because the Anglicans and Catholics were not true believers. I wondered why they said this to me and I went and listened to hear it for myself. I had to see for myself. In that way I could understand what they were doing. When I went and listened to them it was very enjoyable, but on the other hand they seemed to be chanting like the *angakkuit*. The *angakkuit* would make all kinds of noises. I wanted to see this so I watched it. I wanted to know why they felt the Anglican and Catholic churches were not considered as true religion. They told me that when a person was full of the Holy Spirit they started making all kinds of noises and that the ministers and priests did not want to talk about this.

We are supposed to want to help our fellow Inuit. Why didn't they want to talk about this?

Victor: Because they didn't want people to become scared. You have to personally search for what God wants. It is not just words. You have to really see it in the Bible. That's the way to understand it. That's what I went through.

Why is it that the Pentecostals think they are following a truer religion than the other two?

Victor: I don't know why they say they are truer believers. They too go out hunting on Sunday. In our community people go hunting right after church. Even though there are three churches, they all do this. They all go out hunting on Sunday. They have forgotten that Sunday is the day of rest. They have totally forgotten about this. There was one Sunday when the weather was beautiful. I got a call and someone told me that Satan had made the weather beautiful in order to lead people astray. My reply was that it was Sunday and God made this a day of rest. Therefore, he made the day the way it was. This person said he didn't want to talk to me anymore because I was not taking him seriously. I was very serious when I said this, and yet the other person thought I was not being serious. I answered in the way I thought God wanted me to reply.

Why is it that young people today don't feel they want to follow Christianity?

Victor: They are not all like that. Sometimes when you hear things, you think that every single one is like that. You hear people saying all young Inuit are like that. But it is not all young people. It is only some that don't want to listen.

You said you were baptized. Where were you baptized? Can you tell us what happened?

Victor: I think you are asking about *kuvvirijauniq*. I don't really know the term *vaaqtitauniq*. I was baptized in Naujaat. I was given instruction for a whole year by the priest before I was baptized. After I was baptized, I was confirmed sometime later. I was told that when I was confirmed, I would be slapped on my cheek. I thought it would hurt. I used to think I would be given a very hard slap and it would hurt. But it turned out it was only a very gentle touch on my cheek. Part of me thought it was going to hurt, but I was just given a gentle touch on the cheek.

After I was confirmed, I was told I had to go to confession to remove my sins. When I heard this, I went to see the priest. I thought if I tried hiding anything, the priest would know. On one hand, I was ashamed of my sins but on the other hand, I thought he would already know what my sins were. It turned out that the priest did not know this in advance. When this was done, I thought that I was a Christian, because I went to church regularly, I took Communion and I thought that my religion had reached its height. I would get up in the early morning at 7 o'clock. Starting at midnight we would not even have a sip of water, if we were going to have Communion the next day. So from midnight on we would not even have a sip of water. It was only after church the next day that we finally got to drink and eat something. We would go to church in the early morning. We would sometimes go to church with our *kamiik* still frozen.

Now that I am trying harder to be a better Christian, I don't go to church daily. I am trying harder to lead a better life because back then I did not have a full understanding about what I really needed to do as a Christian. Because I went to church and I confessed my sins and I took Communion, I thought I was a true Christian. I did not understand the things that a Christian had to do. Even though there would be sermons in Inuktitut, I never really learned. There were many things that I did not understand. I would wonder what the priest was saying. I did not understand what was told to me. I did not think, "Oh, this is the way I have to be," because I did not understand what I was being taught.

There was a time I heard someone preaching. We went to Igluligaarjuk while I was a child and I heard this sermon about the end of the world. There was going to be thunder and lightning. Every time I heard thunder and lightning afterwards I would be scared that the end of the world had come. I heard this sermon from a priest. I would think to myself, "Maybe it will happen tonight." When I woke up the next day and everything was alright, I would think maybe it would happen that night. I thought this for a long time. It was only when I learned to read on my own that I learned that it wasn't like that. I lived in fear for a long time. There was nothing that I was more afraid of. The sermon that I heard caused me to be afraid.

When I think back now, I think for once there was a priest who was not being soft on the people. Nowadays, the priests don't seem to try very hard because they don't want to scare people. I went to another priest to try to gain more understanding and I was told, "You are not a new Christian. You were baptized quite some time ago. There won't be priests forever. Christians have to try to learn things on their own because there won't be priests and ministers around forever. Therefore you have to try and understand what you read on your own. You have to try to find meaning on your own." When the priest told me this, I felt discouraged because I didn't think I was going to be able to understand on my own. I did not have confidence in myself and I was discouraged.

Do you remember who baptized you?

Victor: The priest who baptized me was Ataata Masi [Father Joseph Massé OMI]. He was a short priest with a big stomach. He let me do whatever I wanted. He was fun to be around when he was the priest in Naujaat. He made all the people sing. When another priest prayed, and the children started playing around, he would scold them. There were some priests like that. Because I had never experienced a priest scolding others in church before, I felt that I wanted to leave and I went close to the door. I sat close to the door because I wanted to leave. I could feel that the priest knew the way I felt so he never scolded others in church after that time.

There are three churches in Naujaat. I thought of becoming an Anglican. The minister told me that even if I tried to become an Anglican because I was a Catholic, I would still be the same. He said, "Myself, if I were to try to become a Catholic, because I am a minister, I would still be an Anglican. There would be no change." That's what the minister said to me because both denominations are now working together. Those who go to the Anglican church come to our midnight mass at Christmas, and the church is full. We sing together. There was a time when I was part of the choir. We were going to sing a hymn from the Anglican hymnal. I was told that I was going to lead the hymn. I was rather embarrassed by this but it turned out there was no need for embarrassment. I was embarrassed because there were going to be so many people there and because I didn't know all the hymns. Since then I have learned a lot of hymns, both Anglican and Catholic. I know a lot of them. What has slowed me down is that I am unable to see well, but I have always practiced hymns. It was because I really turned away from my past of being an *angakkuq*. Because the change was so great, even up to today I am still trying to learn more.

When people would get baptized, did they celebrate?

Victor: I remember that there was a candy scramble. I remember that when there was a marriage or a baptism there would be a candy scramble as an expression of joy over these events.

Do you remember hearing ajaajaa songs and the drum dance, qilauti?

Victor: Very much so. I have always enjoyed them because they are ways of expressing joy. Therefore I enjoy them very much. I have eleven *pisiit* of my own that I have made and I am able to drum dance. I enjoy it very much.

For those of us who have not grown up with a qilauti, can you tell us more about this?

Victor: From what I have heard and from what I have experienced, the *qilauti* is an instrument for expressing joy. The *pisiit* tell about different experiences such as hunting animals. That is the way I consider *pisiit*. I only see them as expressing joy. I don't know of any other use for them.

After Christianity arrived, why were they no longer allowed?

Victor: I don't know why. Maybe because they didn't want to use the *qilauti* to express joy. I know that in Uqsuqtuuq they do this. The people of Naujaat don't use the drum any more. Here we are just about to have Nunavut. We are preparing for it and they want people to hang on to this because it was an Inuit tradition. Because it was something the Inuit had done in the past, among the Nattilingmiut. The Aivilingmiut also used it but only occasionally. It was a way of expressing joy. I've never known of it used in any other way.

What are your thoughts on Nunavut?

Victor: I have not even thought about Nunavut. Other people want Nunavut. We are only here on this earth for a short period of time and then we are going to leave it behind. Because of this, I think that people should realize that we are only on earth for a short while. We will leave it behind, and at the end of the world it will all be gone. We are only borrowing this land for a short time. Therefore there really should not be any need to try to acquire this land. I have not heard this from other people, but I know this from the Bible. We are not going to remain on earth. Even though other people are trying hard to implement Nunavut, and there are going to be celebrations, I do not have any concerns about it one way or the other. In my mind, as long as nothing bad happens to anyone, and there are just celebrations going on, then it is alright by me. I enjoy it when people are expressing their joy. So I am happy that people are going to be happy. I accept that people want to celebrate.

Shamanism

Victor, some of us have heard that you were going to be an angakkuq. Were you an angakkuq?

Victor: Yes. My parents told me not to become an *angakkuq*, but they died by the time I became an adult. I don't know how I became an *angakkuq*. It was not that somebody made me into an *angakkuq*. I don't know how it happened. In the evenings there would be a brightness on the ground behind me and it would follow me. It turned out that this was my *ikajuqti*. When I mentioned to someone that I would see this when I was alone, I was told that it had been my father's *ikajuqti*. I wasn't scared of it. I didn't think about being scared of it. It was given to me by someone. It would come to me whenever anyone was sick. I would heal people who were ill. It was given to me to help heal people. It wasn't through prayer, it was through shamanism. I used what was given to me because I used it to heal people. When my brother-in-law Peter Irniq was without store-bought food, I was unable to charge from the Bay store, so I went home. We lived a bit of a distance from Naujaat. I told my father-in-law that the trader was making it impossible for me to charge, and he said I should put on my *angaluit* and go to the Hudson's Bay manager in the morning before people started waking up.

What are angaluit?

Victor: I don't know what else to call it but an *angaluk*. My sister-in-law made it for me out of white caribou skin. It had fringes on it and was made into a belt. This was called an *angaluk*. Anything the *tuurngait* would want would be attached to the fringes. The belt of an *angakkuq* was called an *angaluk*. Others called it *tapsi*, but the name I have for it is *angaluk*. I went to the trader who had been impossible, and when he saw me wearing this, his face became very red and I could see he was scared. He said to me, "You have been an *angakkuq*." He had been a trader around Kinngarjualik and he had learned to speak Inuktitut among the Arviarmiut. He spoke in that dialect and said, "What is it that you want?" I said to him, "You knew what I wanted yesterday." He said we would go to the store in a little while. I was able to get the food that I wanted. He gave me all that I wanted. As he was giving me so many things, I thought to myself, "This is a lot of food! I'm going to end up with a great big debt." So I told him to stop. It turned out that I didn't have to pay him back for this. Because I was not charged for this, I thought perhaps he put it against government social assistance. I got a lot of food from that.

Were you made into an angakkuq or did it happen just like that?

Victor: It was because the *tuurngaq* wanted me to help heal people, that it came to me.

Was this when you were an adult or were you still young?

Victor: While I was still young, before I was an adult, it started coming to me. I would be given signs. I only found out afterwards that they were for me. My parents had not wanted me to be an *angakkuq*. I was not searching or requesting this for myself, because I knew my parents didn't want this for me. But my parents died when I was young, and it was the *tuurngaq's* wish. My mother's second husband was an old man, and I told him about the things I was seeing. He told me that because I was not requesting them, because they were coming to me, I was going to die if I tried to send them away. Because they were seeking me, I was to listen to them. Because he was an old man, I listened to what he told me. The words of an elder are to be listened to. Elders base their words on what they know, and it is the truth. Because he told me this, I had to listen. We were afraid not to listen to our elders when we were young. That's how I was. I was afraid of not listening to elders. I, too, would fight with an unseen being and my hands would become bloody. I could only remove the blood with urine. I had to wipe it off with caribou skin only. I couldn't use cloth. That's the way it was for an *angakkuq*. You didn't pour the urine. You had to put it in your mouth and spit it into your hands. You couldn't dip your hands in the urine.

You fought with something that was unseen?

Victor: It was not seen by people. You fought with what was making someone sick, something that was trying to kill a person. It was something bad. I would fight with it.

Would you go to it, or would it come to you?

Victor: It would be brought by my *ikajuqti*. Do you understand what I'm saying? I want you to understand what I'm saying.

What thoughts did you have when you became an angakkuq?

Victor: I didn't have any thoughts when I became an *angakkuq*.

Did you notice you were becoming an angakkuq?

Victor: Yes I noticed. When people found out that I was an *angakkuq*, the belt was made for me out of white caribou skin. I would be given little things, for that was what the *tuurngaq* wanted. I would tie these little things onto the fringe. There would be a little

string attached to tie them to the fringe. It was called *qalugiujaq*. They looked like little toys and were tied to the fringe. These were called *qalugiujaq*. Your questions help me to remember.

We want to go back to the beginning. How and why did you become an angakkuq? What caused this to happen?

Victor: I had no reason to become an *angakkuq*. Maybe because I was easily intimidated, even when a child didn't smile at me. When you are an orphan you watch people's eyes. When you saw that people's eyes were not friendly, they intimidated you, or when a child came to you and was not friendly, that too was *iliranaqtuq*. That's the way I was as a child. I would *ilirasuk* very easily. Maybe because of that, these beings felt for me and came to me. Later, there were nurses and doctors, and sick people were treated in the hospitals. They were operated on by doctors. That's what I have heard that doctors do. I am not a doctor. I am not going to cut people open. I told my *ikajuqtit* to go because I didn't want to burn in the eternal fire. I sent away my *ikajuqtit*. When I sent them away both my in-laws died. I thought that maybe I had had more power than the doctors and maybe I could have healed my in-laws. I regretted having gotten rid of my *ikajuqtit*. On the other hand, I thought I had to change. I knew that I was deluding myself into thinking that I had more powers than doctors. I was not going to operate on people to heal them. I sent away all my *ikajuqtit*. I thought if they were bad they would stay but if they were good they would go.

Were people scared of you because you were an angakkuq?

Victor: No one was scared of me. I never intimidated anyone. You are not supposed to scare people when you are an *angakkuq*. That is not the way of the *angakkuq*. As long as you were treating people like other people, you didn't scare them. That's the way I was. I didn't think of scaring people even though I was an *angakkuq*.

When you were an angakkuq did you know of things that were going to happen in the future?

Victor: Yes, I would know when things were going to happen. I was also told by that same old man that I wasn't to think about the life my neighbours led. When you are an *angakkuq* you see people upside down. When you see them, they sleep upside down. When they are asleep, you see them upside down. That's how you see them.

Why is that?

Victor: That's the way the *tuurngait* make you see them.

Why were you told not to think about your neighbours?

Victor: Because the kind of *angakkuit* who interfere with the lives of their neighbours have a different kind of power. We were told not to interfere in the lives of others. We were told not to have that kind of life. We were not to look at a person who was a good hunter and try to find out what kind of *ikajuqti* that person had that made him successful. We were only to find the cause of someone's sickness. The cause would be hovering around and then enter the body. *Angakkuit* were not to *tirliaq*, sneak a look into the life of another person.

You said your father's tuurngaq had come to you. Was this because it wanted to stay with your family?

Victor: My father used to tell me that he loved me a lot and that since he was going to die soon and I loved him greatly, I was going to die shortly after he did. I think that's why my father's *tuurngaq* came to me. I don't know if that's the way it was, but it's the way I thought about it when I'd think about his words. He wanted me to die. I would think that if my father had really loved me, he would have wanted me to live to be an old man. But his words were that because he loved me he wanted me to die shortly after he did. I didn't like his words. His *tuurngait* came to me. I think they came to me because they wanted to stay with me.

Is it the case that ones that are loved too much die early?

Victor: I don't know. I don't know about people being loved too much dying early. I only know what my father wanted. Because he loved me a lot, he said I would die shortly after he did. He'd say this quite often. I was old enough to understand what he was saying. I'd think that if he really loved me he would want me to live a long time. He'd want a long life for me. That's the way I'd think. If there were people I really loved I would want them to live a long time. I would try to make them live if I were able to.

Did you live a long time because you got his tuurngaq?

Victor: I don't know. I am not sure about this, but that's the way I think of it. His *tuurngaq* came to me and it made me live a long time. We people do not have life on our own, life comes from God. God is the one who gives us life. We live and die according to his plan. We are here on earth not because Satan has given us life but because of God our Father. It is God's will that makes us live. Even when it seems that we are going to die, if God decides that we will live, then we will live. Also, if it is God's will the doctors are able to save a person. This is the way I see it.

What is a tuurngaq?

Victor: A *tuurngaq*, in my dialect, does not mean Satan. Satan works against people and wants people to do bad things. A *tuurngaq* is there to help people. It would help regarding animals, and it would provide help in other ways. This I know for a fact. There are two kinds of *tuurngait*, the evil ones, and the good ones. This is the way it is. There are those with a bad spirit. The ones with good spirits come from God. The other ones with evil spirits come from Satan and don't want people to live. There are also *tuurngait* who want people to live, who are able to help people, who are able to provide additional life to people. These were the *tuurngait* I knew personally.

Is there another name for tuurngait?

Victor: There was another kind of *tuurngait* that was called a *tupilaq*. This was a *tuurngaq* that was fought by another *tuurngaq* because it would make people sick. It could be fought by an *angakkuq*, and then the *angakkuq's* hands would become bloody. This is called a *tupilaq*. These are the two that I know.

Is it possible to consider tupilait as our enemies?

Victor: Yes, because they want people to do bad things. They are servants of Satan.

Would a tupilaq be an angakkuq's tuurngaq, or are they on their own?

Victor: When people were *angakkuit*, they used their *tuurngait*. If they disliked a person and they wanted people to know how powerful an *angakkuq* they were, they would use their *tuurngaq* to defeat a person. That was the way back then. It doesn't happen like that any more. Back then the *angakkuit* would use their *tuurngait* and if a person gave in then they killed him. If the *angakkuq* started trying to kill people who weren't doing anything to them, then they in turn could be killed. There was an *angakkuq* who was trying to fight my father. My father ignored him for a while but he got tired of it, so he in turn had his *tuurngaq* kill the other *angakkuq*. I don't exactly know how.

How long were you an angakkuq?

Victor: Not for that many years. If I knew how many years it was, I would tell you. But it is only a few years ago that I started thinking about years. I would like to be able to answer your question better, but I wasn't thinking about years then. I started one fall. I was an *angakkuq* from then on.

There seemed to be two beliefs then. Was there any time back then when people were not to do any work, similar to our Sundays today?

Victor: Yes, whenever our *tuurngait* would tell people not to move or not to travel. If a person was ill, then the *tuurngait* would tell people not to do anything at all. The person who was being healed had to listen to what they were told not to do. If they did something they were not to do, the *angakkuq* would be able to tell that person, even if he had not seen the person doing something, "This is why you are sick." The *angakkuq* would be shown the reason for the sickness. There were numerous things that caused sickness. Sometimes, if they did not disclose what they had done, and if the *angakkuq* was not shown what they had done, a person would die. Sometimes the *angakkuq* would expose a person's actions even if the person didn't want to disclose them because of embarrassment.

*How many days would a person have to stop doing things?
Today we have a seven-day week and on the seventh day we don't do anything. Were there a set number of days they didn't do anything?*

Victor: It ranged from three to five days. Three days was the most common. They would refrain from doing anything for three days. They had to follow *pittaliniq* relating to metal, antlers or meat. Of the things they had to abstain from, meat was the most common, especially the heart.

Were you told which days?

Victor: We were always told which day we would be able to start eating. We would be told which days we had to abstain. We would be told, and we would know. Especially when someone who was sick was being healed. For two days they didn't do anything at all. It was like Sundays. When the *angakkuq* was performing a healing, the one being healed had to abstain on those days.

Who told you about tirigusungniq?

Victor: When I was an *angakkuq*, my *tuurngait* did not make me abstain from anything. They also did not require the person I was healing to abstain. This practise varied. I know this from somebody else who went through it. My *tuurngait* did not require the person I was healing to abstain from anything. I don't know why other *angakkuq* had *tuurngait* who wanted the person who was being healed to abstain. Now, I can eat anything. Back then when I was an *angakkuq*, it was the same way. I was not made to abstain from anything. It didn't change when I stopped being an *angakkuq*. When my *tuurngait* would help me they did not have me observe any time of abstaining. They did not have me

abstain from eating or doing any type of work. Because of this, I felt I was different from others. It seemed like my *tuurngait* were similar to the Christian religion, they did not make me abstain from anything. When I was given an item to help someone, then it was up to me to heal the person. That's the way it was.

You talked about the heart. Was that the only thing that people couldn't eat?

Victor: I don't think it was only the heart, but to me that was the most obvious. The heart was not to be eaten. My grandchild has Tungilik as a surname. He was named after Pakak. He lives with me in my house. His name is now Johnny Tungilik. When he was a newborn he couldn't come home for a while because the weather was really bad. We named him after Pakak who was to have been my son-in-law but he shot himself. After the baby arrived I took a caribou heart from the freezer and thawed it out. Although it was boneless I could not swallow a bite. I tried to eat it but was unable to do so. Then my wife told me the baby has stopped breathing. It had died. The baby's lips were totally pale. My wife took the baby outside and then it started breathing again. I called Ullatitaq, Pakak's mother, and I told her that the baby had stopped breathing for a time because I ate a heart. She said it was because when Pakak committed suicide he shot himself through his heart. Even though I was not to *tirigusuk*, I was to wait a year before eating heart again. She told me that. Now when I eat heart, I'm fine. I understood this after a while.

When you stopped being an angakkuq, were you still able to heal other people?

Victor: I could heal only through prayer. I knew that I could only use prayer to help a person who was sick because I was not using the powers of an *angakkuq* anymore. I was not going to be healing the person, God was. God is all strength and God is love. We are all God's people, and we belong to God. If it is God's will that a person be healed, then he will be healed.

What sort of things did you do?

Victor: I would fight with evil *tuurngait* because I did not want them present.

How did you fight the tuurngait?

Victor: I would fight with them. I would get all bloodied from them. I did not use a knife. I did not hold anything. I only used my hands.

Would you be in an iglu?

Victor: Yes, I would be in an *iglu*.

Would you kill them?

Victor: Yes, I would kill them.

How did you kill them?

Victor: I did not wrestle with them. I only used my hands.

Would you be alone?

Victor: Yes. I would be alone.

Would anybody watch you while you did this?

Victor: Sometimes there would be people watching.

Would you actually see the tuurngait?

Victor: Yes. I would. Some of them would have twigs for hair. Some of them would have pelvic bones for a face, and their faces would seem to be dripping. Some of them would have pelvic bones for a face, others would have fire. It varied. Some of them would be animals such as polar bears or *nanurlualuit* which are very big bears. There were different kinds of worms, and all kinds of animals from the land, from the sea, and birds that fly. They varied.

Could they be seen by others, or just by you?

Victor: As I was not the only *angakkuq*, other *angakkuit* would see them too. They were known to other *angakkuit*. There were people around who were stronger *angakkuq* than myself who never let on they were *angakkuit*. They were unable to talk about it. They would not say anything. When asked, they would say, "I have never been an *angakkuq*. I don't know anything about it." There are people who say this now. I don't want to keep it inside myself as I am not going to be using this anymore. I want to talk about it and get it out of my system. Because you are asking me these questions, I am telling you what I remember. I am thankful to you for asking about this because I need to talk about it.

They say that at the end of the world, everything that has ever lived will be there. Do you think the power of the angakkuit will be there until the end of the world? Do you think it will remain? How do you feel about this?

Victor: I feel very sorry for those who do not want to let go of their powers. I think it would be much better if there were no more *angakkuit*. If they don't already believe in the Bible, I think they should let go of their powers as *angakkuit* and start following the Bible. I feel very sorry for people who don't want to let go of their powers because I don't want them to go to Hell.

Why did you fight those tuurngait?

Victor: I only fought *tuurngait* that were trying to kill people. I would also get my *tuurngait* to fight with the evil *tuurngait*. My *tuurngait* protected me. They were my helpers. They protected me from those that were evil. They looked after me.

What kind of tuurngait did you have?

Victor: Some of them were in human form. Some of them had characteristics of animals. There was one that was a big piece of ice. They were very different from each other. One of them was a snake as thick as a person, a very big, thick snake. They were all different.

Were you exhausted after fighting with a tuurngaq?

Victor: Yes, sometimes it would be very tiring.

How many tuurngait did you have?

Victor: My *tuurngait* were numerous and varied.

There are other people like yourself who were angakkuit, but who are unable to talk about this because they think they are bad. Do you think each community has people in it who have been angakkuit?

Victor: I don't think there are any other former *angakkuit* in my community, but I think there are people in other communities. In fact, I think there are some people who are still *angakkuit*. Sometimes when you go to another community, you can sense there are *angakkuit*. For instance, I know that is the case in the Qitirmiut area. When you hear them, you know that they are still practising.

How do you sense that there are angakkuit?

Victor: Because they use the words of the *tuurngait*. Because of this I know that they are *angakkuit*. There is the Inuktitut language and the English language. The *tuurngait* have their own language as well. They don't speak our language. They speak some words of our language but they have their own. Some are Inuktitut words, but some are not.

Do you think angakkuit are iqsinaqtuq, scary?

Victor: If they are not doing anything bad, they are not scary. Even if a person is an *angakkuq* they are not necessarily doing something bad. They are not scary. It is even alright to tease an *angakkuq* jokingly.

Why is it that some people seem to be afraid to talk about what they have gone through?

Victor: It isn't because they are *kappiasuk*, afraid, it is because they are *kangusuk*, embarrassed. When people are *kangusuk* they are too embarrassed to talk about what they know. When someone is *kangusuktuq*, they are *ijiraqtuq*.

When you were an angakkuq would you nakkaajuq?

Victor: I don't understand *nakkaajuq*.

Would you go down to Sanna, would you go down to Nuliajuk?

Victor: I have never been to *Nuliajuk*, but I have had her interfering with me in the winter in an *iglu*. The door was closed tight. It was made of snow. She would push it in and then pull it back. Whenever it was pulled shut again, it would be slammed so hard it would seem as if it was going to shatter. Although the door was made of snow it didn't break, it didn't shatter. I didn't do anything. I didn't deal with her at all. They say that whenever she would start showing herself, it was because she was going to keep the sea mammals to herself. I didn't do anything when she did this.

Was Nuliajuk angry with you?

Victor: She was angry about something. Perhaps there were people doing things she didn't like. I personally didn't do anything she didn't like, and I didn't know what the reason was. I had no idea why *Nuliajuk* was angry.

How was Nuliajuk appeased when she was angry?

Victor: When people found out what it was that *Nuliajuk* didn't want done, then the wrong would be fixed. Once they found out the reason that made her angry, then it would be over and things would get better.

Who is Nuliajuk?

Victor: She used to be a person, but when her fingers were chopped off she became a being of the sea. She has been given different names. She has been called Sanna. In my dialect she is called Nuliajuk. Among the Iglulingmiut she is called Takannaaluk.

Did you heal people that were sick?

Victor: Yes, of course. This is what we did as *angakkuit*.

How did you heal them?

Victor: We would be given a small token. Once we had been given the token, we would start healing the person.

How did you heal them?

Victor: We would fight with the *tuurngaq* that was trying to kill the person. We would expose the reason why the person was sick, because we could see the reason. Once we exposed the reason, the *tuurngaq* would depart and the person would start getting better.

Do you think there are still healers today?

Victor: I don't know of anyone who has these healing powers. I think there are still people that are *angakkuit*, but they do not show their powers. They are hiding their powers.

Can you give us an example of how a person was healed ?

Victor: There would be different reasons for sicknesses. Whenever a person did something that displeased a *tuurngaq* the person would become sick. There were some *tuurngait* that would make a person sick because they had the desire to kill. There were different reasons. Different *tuurngait* had different reasons for making people sick.

Rachel to Victor: A person would do something that a *tuurngaq* did not want, and that would be the reason why the person would become sick.

Victor to Rachel: Yes, that also happened. If a person was told not to do something, such as abstaining from eating a certain meat, and the person ate the meat, or worked on something they were not to work on, then those would be reasons for sickness. They would get sick the next time they did that. Even though some people didn't disclose what they had done, the *angakkuq* would find out the reason why a person was sick. A person would have to say, "This is why I am sick. This is what I have done." Then the person would start getting better. Sometimes when they didn't disclose it themselves, the *angakkuq* would expose it. I found this very tiring.

What was the most difficult healing that you performed?

Victor: All healings were different. This was a difficult experience. Sometimes, when the reason was hidden from the *angakkuq*, even if the *angakkuq* was very powerful, he would find it difficult to find the reason. Sometimes it would be a child who, although not an *angakkuq*, would see the *tuurngaq* first. Then the *angakkuq* would see it and find the reason. Even if the *angakkuq* was very powerful, if the reason remained hidden, he was not able to heal the person.

Do you still experience feelings of being an angakkuq?

Victor: I don't have them at all. I let go of them. I don't have them anymore. I don't sense them anymore.

Was it difficult to let go of them?

Victor: No, it was not difficult to send away my *tuurngait*. Nowadays when I get sick, sometimes I think a *tuurngaq* is the cause of my sickness because of what I went through. I often think of this when I become sick. When I was an *angakkuq* I would see the causes of sicknesses, and I sometimes think of that. I have heard the *qallunaat* doctors say that a person gets sick because of germs or because of cancer and I believe it. I believe that is the reason. But for those of us who have been *angakkuq*, for those of us who are old enough to know about *angakkuq*, it wasn't like that. Sometimes, if there were people who were bad who had died, they also started trying to kill people. If you were an *angakkuq* you would see this. These were people who had been bad.

I would like to know how you were able to understand the language of the tuurngait.

Victor: They have always had their own way of doing things. I heard about them from the time I was growing up. Even though my parents had a Bible I didn't really know how to use it. I didn't know much about religion, but I learned about the language of the *tuurngait*. I did not know that many words, but I remember them. If you were to ask me, I could tell you them. For instance, in the language of the *tuurngait*, an *inuk* is *tau*. A *qallunaaq* is *tauja*. Because Rachel is an old woman, she would be called *tulluut*. I would be called *tulluk isarrutalik*, because I'm an old man now. You're young so you would be called *sanilliaq*. A child was *quattiaq*.

What were the animals called?

Victor: Animals were *qilujaksat*, which means those which are to be pulled. *Kumaruaq qilujaksat* is a caribou. The word for seal is *qajuaq qilujaksat*. Their blubber is *uqsuliaq*. A polar bear is *tulurialik qilujaksat*.

What do you call those who are sick?

Victor: I've forgotten some of the words. I can't remember them at all. *Qamutiik* is *ikinniq*. Dogs are *unnguit*, which is also the word for warts. I've forgotten a number of the words. No wonder, as I haven't used this language for a while.

Did someone teach you?

Victor: There wasn't much to do so I learned them.

Did the angakkuit have another language?

Victor: Yes, they had another language, it was called *tarriumaq*.

What is that?

Victor: An *angakkuq* was a *tarriuuq*. They were able to see things that were not visible to ordinary people. Therefore they were called *tarriumaq*. They could see things that people couldn't see. They had a separate language. Everything has its own language. In the same way, the *tuurngait* had their own language. Just like we have our own language, they too had their own language.

Did the angakkuit have degrees of strength?

Victor: They had degrees of ability. Some *angakkuit* were able to fly in the air. They were able to go and visit their families that were a great distance away. They would go to them by air. Their families would not see them, but they would be able to go somewhere without anyone knowing that they had been there. They would go to make sure that people were alright, that there was no need to worry about them. There were no phones. That's how they found out how people were, because there were no other means of finding out. They wanted to make sure that no one was sick or hungry. If they were alright, then they would never let them know that they had gone to see them. My mother had my oldest brother's *manu*, a caribou flap placed on the front of a child's parka to keep the wind out. Whenever she was worried about him she would burn a little bit of the *manu*. Whenever the smoke went straight up then she would know that my brother was fine. If he had died, the smoke would not have gone up. It was only when my mother was worried about her child that she would do this.

Did you ever fly anywhere to see your family?

Victor: I never did this.

Did you ever send your tuurngaq?

Victor: Yes, I would send my *tuurngaq* to go and see. There was only one *tuurngaq* I would send to visit my family. If there was someone in need, then I would try to help him.

Did your body go there or did you stay where you were?

Victor: I would stay where I was, and I would send my *tuurngaq* to go fix a problem that a person was experiencing. That was possible. Now, I can't do that. These powers are not going to return. When you have these powers, you feel as if there is not much air around you.

Did people have to be wary of angakkuit?

Victor: If an *angakkuaq* was being talked about, the thought looked like a thin string coming from the person who was talking against him. If someone had bad thoughts about another person, this spiralling string-like object would go towards the person they had bad thoughts about. You could see it through the air. You could see that somebody had bad thoughts towards another person. I might seem to be lying because nobody else has seen this, but I am telling the truth.

Were other people at the same camp like that?

Victor: Not all of them were like that. Some of them would know, but they wouldn't say anything. It would be as if they didn't care. That's what I used to think, that they didn't care. There were times when people were trying to help, not because they were trying to be helpful but out of self-interest.

What did you do about the weather?

Victor: A long time ago when the weather was bad I would do whatever my *tuurngaq* would ask. I would go to a place where there were no footprints at all, and bring back whatever the *tuurngaq* wanted. For instance, if it was snowing or blizzarding or raining, the weather would improve after I did this. If it was my *tuurngaq* that made the weather improve, then people had to hurry, because the weather was going to get bad again. They would do their hunting quickly, because this weather was changed by human intervention. It would not stay for long. This improvement in the weather was not natural.

What kind of things did the tuurngait ask for?

Victor: Anything at all. I would make something. It could be very small. It didn't have to be large. Sometimes I would make it into an animal, or into a knife, or a beating stick. Whatever the *tuurngaq* requested I would make.

After you healed a person, were you given a gift by the person or by the person's family?

Victor: No, it wasn't like that. I would be given something before I healed the sick person. I would not be given anything afterwards.

Were you given this as a payment?

Victor: No, if someone was sick, I was given something to help that person. Whatever was given was not a payment. It was given to help strengthen the powers to heal.

Who would come and ask you to heal a person who was sick?

Victor: Either the person who was sick, or a relative, or a family member. Because they wanted that person to live, they would give me an object.

How would you find their sickness?

Victor: With my eyes closed. I did not have my eyes open.

You would find out what part of them was sick?

Victor: The person would have already said where they were sick. They would have indicated where there was a pain.

What kind of sickness was the most difficult to heal?

Victor: The most difficult people to heal were the ones who did not want to talk about why they were sick. Not about their pain, but about the kinds of things they had done, the kind of wrong-doings they had done. The ones who didn't want to disclose anything were the hardest ones to deal with. If a woman or a man had had sex with any kind of an animal, whether it was a dog, a caribou, or a seal, they were unable to disclose this out of embarrassment, or shame. They didn't want to talk about it. Sometimes it was only when they knew that they were going to die, that they would finally talk about it. If they were able to talk about it right away, because they didn't want to die, then they would recover. That's the way it was. This was part of what I would do back then. I sometimes

think that even today, there are people doing this kind of thing. The doctors are not going to know that that is the cause for their sickness. I think that if there is anyone who is ill because they have done this type of thing, they will die.

Is it true that people who have sex with animals shorten their lives?

Victor: That is true if they do not talk about it. I have heard that this kind of behaviour shortens their life. It's very dangerous. It is not dangerous to have sex with a person. If one woman rejected you there would be other women. One should never have sex with a woman during her menstruation. This too causes illness. All these things were told to me. If a woman enticed a man to have sex with her while she was menstruating, then she too would shorten her life. Those were the sorts of things that the *tuurngait* did not like. These were the sorts of things that would make a *tuurngaq* angry. This was back then, not now.

Rachel: I want to explain further that if a person was too ashamed to disclose their wrong-doing, they could die. If they didn't want to die, they had to disclose what they had done. Then they could recover. I just wanted to explain this.

Victor: I am very grateful to you for helping me. She said what I was trying to say, and because it has helped you to further understand, I am very happy about it.

In the same way that angakkuit had names for the animals, were there names for tuurngait as well? Did your tuurngait have names that only you knew?

Victor: All the *tuurngait* had different names. In the same way that we people have different names, they too, had names but they didn't have individual names. In the same way as animals had one name, the same kinds of *tuurngait* were called by the same name.

Did each angakkuq have their own language that was different from the language of other angakkuit?

Victor: I don't know. I couldn't tell you whether each *angakkuq* had their own language.

Did you have your own individual names for animals?

Victor: All *angakkuit* had names for the animals. I also had names for the animals. They were the same.

If you had a nanuq for a tuurngaq, would you be the only one who knew about this or did others know this as well?

Victor: Other *angakkuit* would know because they would try to find out these things. We were not supposed to do this. We were not supposed to try to find out what kind of *tuurngait* a person had, but there were some *angakkuit* who would do this. They would try to find out more about other people. They say that these *angakkuit* were vain. I was told not to be this kind of *angakkuq*. I was not to find out hidden things about people. I was not to find out what kind of helping power a person had. So, I would never try to find out about others. I knew about my wife, my children and those close to me, because I did not want anything bad to happen to them, but I did not try to find out anything about anyone else. I was not supposed to find out what kind of helping power another *angakkuq* had, what abilities he had, or what kind of *tuurngait* he might have. Even tiny, little things, such as worms, bugs, and snakes were used by the *angakkuit*. Even inanimate objects, and people could be used. *Angakkuit* could go into a person through a cup.

Were you able to do this?

Victor: No, I did not try to do that kind of thing. I did not want to have the power to do that, so I didn't work on being able to do it. I heard about an *angakkuq* who went down into the earth because he was *akiraqtuqtuq*, going against another person. If a person went down into the earth, another person could make them get stuck in there. The *angakkuq* could be prevented from coming back. You would be prevented from coming back by blood. The term for this was *sapijaujuq*. For instance, if somebody went down into the earth through a cup, then a person could use that object to prevent the *angakkuq* from coming back out. An *angakkuq* who was sneaking up on someone else, who would *tirliaq* another, would know that someone had gone into the earth, and therefore would be able to prevent him from coming back out. That's the way it was back then. Maybe some *angakkuit* are still like this. I don't know this for a fact, as this type of *angakkuit* does not expose this kind of ability. They would not talk about it. *Angakkuit* would be able to go through the earth, through the water and through the air. The *angakkuit* had strong powers.

Did you ever try to do this?

Victor: No, I never tried to do this.

The angakkuit who used their powers to kill, were they scary?

Victor: As long as someone did not upset them, they would not go after him. But if there was anyone who was very skillful, a good hunter, a fast runner, a good seamstress, or had skills to make good tools, then the *angakkuq* would be jealous and

would try to kill them. The kind of things they did were to make them weak. They wouldn't be able to grasp anything anymore. This was done to them through the power of an *angakkuq*.

The angakkuq did this because he was jealous?

Victor: It was out of envy. The *angakkuq* wanted to have more abilities than that person. That's the way I understood it to be.

[Rachel to Victor]: Would all this be done unseen?

Victor to Rachel: Yes, none of it would be visible. No one would see it being done. It was always invisible. The *angakkuq* could use objects. They could do this without letting anyone know what they were doing. But another *angakkuq* could find out that this was happening to a person and protect them.

Have you ever heard of tarriasuit?

Victor: I have heard about *tarriasuit*, but I don't know what they really are. I have heard about *tarralijaat* maybe they are *tarriasuit*. I have heard about them, but I don't know what they do. I don't know how people treated them, or what they did to people. I've only heard their name being mentioned. I'm not going to talk about them, because I don't know about them. I'm sorry about that.

I heard that angakkuq would sakajuq. What exactly does that mean?

Victor: Among the Kivallirmiut, but not the *Nattilingmiut*, they did this through songs. It is not the song of the *angakkuq*, it is the song of the *tuurngaq*. The *Nattilingmiut* and *Qitirmiut* did not *saka* like this. In those areas they only used words. The *Kivallirmiut* would sing.

What is ingiuq? Is ingiuq different from imngiq?

Victor: Yes, it is different, because the singer was singing but not singing an *ajajaa*. One of my *tuurngait* had a *pisiq*. The *pisiq* was talking about the reflection of a mirror.

Uvangailaangai

Me, myself

Tarrarmiutarilarimiannilaangai,

He does not consider me as merely belonging among the shadows,

Alianait.

I am happy.

That was the *pisiq* of one of my *tuurngait*. After I sang it, my *tuurngaq* would start showing itself and describe what it was seeing. It would use me as an agent. It would have me start saying what it could see. These weren't my words. These were the words of my *tuurngaq*. You've heard of people being possessed. It is something like a person being possessed. This *tuurngaq* would enter me. If you've ever heard of a person becoming *ilummiqtaujuq*, possessed, it was the same kind of thing. The *tuurngaq* would have me say what it was seeing. We would be told to sing, but the songs would be different from those of humans.

I don't really understand. Are sakaniq and ingiurniq the same?

Victor: You could say that *sakaniq* was *ingiurniq*. When someone was singing a *tuurngaq's* song it could be considered as *saka*. An *angakkuq* would start singing the song of a *tuurngaq*. I have my own *pisiq* which I sang when I celebrated different lands that I went to. In that song I would name the different places I had been to. It's not the same as *sakaniq*. Songs that are made by a person are not *sakaniq* because they are made to express joy. You create these songs without *sakaniq* in mind. That's the way it is. The songs of a *tuurngaq* are different.

Are those that are called pisiit more of a story?

Victor: Yes. They talk of things that have happened. I had a *pisiq* that I made telling about what I had done. It was about when I was a child. I would go out *siksik* hunting with a bow and arrow. Some people really like this *pisiq* from when I was a child, even though I personally don't like the tune very much. I created it just to express joy. We all have our own *pisiit*. My ancestors the Nattilingmiut have a different kind of *pisiit*. Their kind of *pisiit* were bad because they used them to say bad things about other people. This was not *sakaniq*, it was just a way to express *akiraqtuutiniq*, being against another. They would put things they heard about another person into song. That's the type of *pisiit* the Nattilingmiut had. The kind of games they played were very physically harsh, such as hitting on the temple, or hitting on the shoulders and wrestling. Some people did this for fun, but for me this was not fun, because it would be painful to have your shoulder hit. They would hit each other until they felt pain. There are songs that are sung for joy, and songs that are not joyful. The kind of songs that are sung for joy are the ones that are danced to with a drum. I don't consider the ones that are sung against someone else as songs of joy. They were meant to hurt. That's the way I understand them.

You said you would be possessed by a tuurngaq. Why would you be possessed?

Victor: Whenever we started singing the song of the *tuurngaq*, it would enter us. We would be told the cause of the sickness. We were also told what wrong-doings the person had committed. The *tuurngaq* would tell us what it saw. The *angakkuq*, who was the agent would tell about that. This was called *sakaniq*.

Were you the only one who would hear this tuurngaq?

Victor: All those who were present could hear it. All those who were together would hear the song as they were present.

You were not singing the song?

Victor: I was singing it, but it was coming from the *tuurngaq*. The *tuurngaq* would express what it saw through the *angakkuq*. It would make the *angakkuq* put what it could see into words. When it was put into song it was *sakaniq*.

As an angakkuq, you were given an objet to heal someone. What were the uses of these objects? Did they become your possessions?

Victor: They were given to me to keep. They would be tiny. Whoever gave something could not request that the object they gave be given back. These were given to the *angakkuq* to keep.

Do you still have any of these objects that were given to you?

Victor: No, I do not have any. I don't have anything that was given to me. I threw away everything when I let go of shamanism. I let go of being an *angakkuq* entirely.

Did people give the object to you on their own, without you requesting it?

Victor: I never requested anything. People gave of their own accord. If a person did not wish to give something to you, you could not request something be given. An *angakkuq* would not try to heal someone without being asked.

Did you burn those things that you threw away?

Victor: They probably were burnt, because they burn things at the garbage dump. They probably were burned because they didn't know what was in there. I wrapped them up, and nobody saw what I threw away. I was not going to use them anymore.

Were you in control of your tuurngait or did you work for them?

Victor: I was not in control of them, and they were not in control of me.

You just helped each other?

Victor: Yes, we just helped each other. I told a priest that I had been an *angakkuq* in my past. I told him that I had sent away my *tuurngait* even though they were there to help me. The priest told me that what I had done was wrong because they were there to help me heal people, and that any way of assisting and healing people was a gift from God. When the priest told me this, I believed him. But, as I had already sent my *tuurngait* away, I was not going to request their return.

If you requested their return, would they be able to return?

Victor: I don't know if they would. I am not going to request their return.

Did it take you long to decide you were not going to be an angakkuq any more?

Victor: This is what happened. I was given a very nice rifle and a sewing machine by a couple. I'm not going to say who they were. After they were healed, I returned these things to them because they wanted their rifle back. I started thinking I'm not a doctor. I don't heal people through operations. I should not be a healer anymore. Once I started thinking about this I returned the rifle and the sewing machine and I sent away my helpers. Not everyone was like this though.

Did you have to give them back?

Victor: Yes, I had to give them back. After I sent away my *tuurngait*, I was not going to heal people anymore. I was told that I was not supposed to be doing that kind of thing anymore. In the past, whenever anything was given, it was given freely and it was not taken back. Whatever was given became the property of the *angakkuq*. It was never taken back.

When that couple requested that the object be returned, what happened?

Victor: They died. They didn't die right away. They lived for a few years.

Did they die of the same sickness that you cured them of?

Victor: They died of the same sickness. They died because they had requested that those items be returned. We are not to request this kind of power. It was not right for them to have this power.

We are grateful to you for answering our questions. We are going to be asking you more questions about angakkuit. Did the angakkuit go out hunting?

Victor: *Tuurngait* who were good would not hunt people. Those that were bad would hunt people. The *tuurngait* that would heal were not hunters. Some of them would need meat, but they would only require a small amount. This I know. If they needed some meat you would throw it into an area with freshly fallen snow that had not had footprints on it. I never knew of *tuurngait* going hunting.

Even though they wanted the meat, did the tuurngait throw it away?

Victor: No, I would throw the meat to an area without tracks. I would throw them whatever they had requested.

Whenever you threw meat to them, they would take it?

Victor: Yes. It was only when they wanted to eat that they would request meat. This is what I know. I have never heard of a *tuurngaq* going out hunting to get meat.

They would let you know what they wanted?

Victor: Yes, they would let me know what kind of meat that they wanted. It would be meat, but I have forgotten what kind because this was a long time ago. I regret that I have forgotten some of this. If I had tried to keep it in mind I would not have forgotten so much. I have forgotten what other things they requested. I'm sorry. I've forgotten about that.

You mentioned that some people would not disclose having had sex with animals out of shame. Do you think that this still occurs?

Victor: I don't know. I don't think about it happening. The way I see it, it is the young girls who are going after the boys. I don't think the boys need to go after sex. It is the girls who go after the boys these days. In the old days, the man would seek a wife, but today it is the girls who seek a husband, as though they were men. Because of this, I don't know if there are still men having sex with animals.

You mentioned that you used to heal people who were sick. Do you think you are able to heal sick people now?

Victor: No. Only God can do this. My *tuurngait* are no longer healing the sick because I let go of them. I only use prayer now to ask God to heal the person.

After you let go of your tuurngait, did you ever feel they tried to return to you?

Victor: No.

Did your tuurngait try to return to you? Did you have any feelings like this?

Victor: No. I did not feel this. I had no sense of them trying to return to me. Not at all.

Did you regret having gotten rid of your tuurngait? Did you have any regrets at all?

Victor: After I had gotten rid of them, there was a time that I regretted it for my two in-laws died at the same time. A thought went through my head. I knew it was not the truth, but I still thought that if I had not changed my ways, maybe one of them would still be alive. I had that thought. That was the only time I felt regret. I thought that maybe if I had not sent away my *tuurngait*, one of them might have remained alive and I would continue to see him. This thought came into my head and I regretted sending them away. When I was sending my *tuurngait* away, I thought I am not a doctor, I cannot perform operations. I am not going to cure people with these powers anymore. If I continued to be an *angakkuq*, I would end up in Hell in the great fire. Because I didn't want this to happen, I let my *tuurngait* go.

Was it because you were told by a minister that you would go to Hell?

Victor: No. I was not told by a minister or a priest. I made up my own mind. It was not because somebody else told me. It was because I didn't want to burn in Hell. I'd heard of the great fire where Satan resides, and I had read the scriptures. I knew that all those who clung to wrong-doings would end up being thrown into this fire. That's why I let go of my *tuurngait*. When my two in-laws died I regretted having let my *tuurngait* go. Although I knew that I might not have been able to heal them, I still thought that maybe I should have hung on to them a little longer and not sent them away right away. Part of me knew it was their time to die, and therefore they died. Although I knew that I did not have the power, I still regretted letting go of my *tuurngait* for if I had kept them, maybe one of my in-laws might still be around.

Did they die from sickness?

Victor: Yes, both of them died from sickness.

Did your tuurngait know if the weather was going to change?

Victor: Yes, because they were not human, they knew about the weather.

Did they let you know what was going to happen with the weather?

Victor: I don't remember if they let me know about the weather.

Did they let you know, for example, if the wind was going to be blowing?

Victor: I don't think they did. I would know myself whether the weather was going to be bad or when the wind was going to blow because I observed the weather.

Elders say that they would know what was going to happen. Is that how it was?

Victor: Yes, they could tell what was going to happen.

Do you think that the tuurngait that had been with your father first, and that came to you, would have gone to your children, if you had kept them?

Victor: I don't think so. I don't think that's the way it was.

Do you think the tuurngait only went to the ones they loved?

Victor: My father used to tell me that because he loved me very much, I was going to die shortly after him. I remembered these words of his. Whenever I remembered these words I would think, if he really, truly loved me, he would try to add to my life after he died. He would look after me because he was no longer of the flesh. Instead, his *tuurngait* came to me. Maybe because my father loved me, he had his *tuurngait* come to me. I started thinking about this afterwards. He was a Christian and he prayed, and was answered by God. And, yet, he was an *angakkuq* also. For most of them, it was not possible to be a Christian and an *angakkuq* at the same time. I often wonder if this was not really the way it was supposed to be. Although my father was an *angakkuq*, he did not let go of his *tuurngait*. When he needed to, he prayed to God and he was given what he wanted. He was able to be both a Christian and an *angakkuq* at the same time. I understood this to be possible because of my father. I was not like him even though he was my father. I was afraid to try and remain an *angakkuq*. Therefore I sent my *tuurngait* away. I wasn't able to be like my father.

Were you able to see a person's tarniq?

Victor: I never actually saw a person's *tarniq*. I would not see it when I looked at a person. It was only when a person was separated from their body in death that I would get a mental image of this *tarniq*.

When you let go of your abilities, did you stop seeing tarniit?

Victor: Yes, I stopped seeing *tarniit* when I let go of my powers. I let go of them entirely.

What do you think your tuurngait thought of you when you joined the Christian faith?

Victor: I was told by the elders that *tuurngait* do not think like people. We were not to request their protection. Even when they seemed to want to stay around, that did not mean I was supposed to let them stay. I never knew what kind of thoughts my *tuurngait* had.

Did you ever hear about angakkuit who wanted to keep their powers instead of becoming Christian?

Victor: No, I never heard this. I know that some people said I was still probably an *angakkuq*, even though I said that I had become a Christian and let go of what I used to do.

Was it difficult when people didn't believe you?

Victor: Yes. It is very hard for a person. It causes one to be depressed. Then I thought, if they want to say this about me, let them say it. I didn't let it bother me.

Was your snake tuurngaq strong? Was it a good tuurngaq?

Victor: Yes, I would use it to help heal people. It was the one I favoured the most of all my *tuurngait* because it helped me the most. Even if I didn't voice my thoughts, it would know them.

Now that you have let go of your tuurngait, is it better for you?

Victor: For myself it is much better. The only thing I have to worry about are my children. My youngest child now has a partner. He is an adult and nobody bothers him. I don't feel I am that useful any more. I am just living, and it is alright.

Have other people besides ourselves asked these questions? Have you ever told your children about having been an angakkuq?

Victor: No, I have never told them about it. I don't want them to hear about it. I don't want them to hear bad things. It will not be of any help to anybody. It is not going to bring anybody to heaven.

I'd like to know what you thought about dreams. Rachel mentioned that people had to stop believing in dreams. What do you think about this?

Victor: I don't believe my dreams at all. I never ever believe my dreams at all.

In the past when you were still an angakkuq, were dreams meaningful to you?

Victor: No, they were of no use to me. I was not able to use them. I would find out things, but it was never through a dream. I do not believe anything that I dream.

*While you were out hunting, were you helped by your tuurngait?
Did they come along with you?*

Victor: They were always with me. I don't know if they helped me, but they were always with me. No matter where I went, they were always with me. If I went anywhere, they were with me.

Was anybody ever able to see them?

Victor: Only if I wanted someone to see them, then it was possible. But I was told never to do this. I was told that if a person did not have any bad intentions towards me, I was not to do anything bad to them. But if someone made me angry, and if I had to defend myself in any way, then I could use them.

Where do you think these tuurngait came from ?

Victor: I think they came from my father.

Do you think that those tuurngait came from your father's father?

Victor: Some of them did. Maybe all of them did. If someone made me angry, I was afraid of what I could do. But if someone hadn't made me angry, then there was no need for them to worry about my actions. I would never have used my hand to get at someone. One time there was a person that had made me angry. It was not long before I took religion. This person was about to get on a plane, at the airport. I was at the airport seeing people off. I thought that there must be something that could interfere with the engine. The plane took off, and then it returned and the passengers got off very quickly. When I went up to them, they said they almost crashed. I asked what had happened. They said that part of the gas line had pulled out, and there was fear of the plane catching fire. They were quite afraid. The pilot came to me while I was with someone else, and said, "I'm looking for something that looks like this." And I thought, "He knows it was me." I thought he knew that I caused that leak because he came to me and said, "I want you to help me look for another piece like this." Then the person who was going on the plane came to me, and said, "The

plane took off, and it was alright, but when it started moving towards one side it was scary." I didn't have anything to say to him for I had done this out of anger. That was the last time that I did anything out of anger. I did not want that plane to crash. I did not want anybody to die. I just wanted something to happen to the plane because of my anger. I've never done this again, I never caused danger again. For in turn it was dangerous to me.

In the Kivalliq region for example, some angakkuit used the power of their tuurngait to kill. What do you think about this?

Victor: Even though this is not written I feel that in the Bible the one that led Adam and Eve astray is the leader of these *angakkuit*. I might be wrong, but that is okay. This is what I think. It's only recently that I started thinking this. And that's why I'm saying it.

Did this type of practice come from evil?

Victor: Yes. Not all *angakkuit* were like that. You hear of *angakkuit* having different powers. Those that used their powers for evil died not too long after. Those who used their powers for control, especially the ones considered to be strong *angakkuit*, did not live very long.

Were they scarier than the angakkuit who had good tuurngait?

Victor: Yes, it was obvious that they were scarier. I know that I had helpers that were good, that I used to heal people. A lot of people knew they belonged to my father. There was one of my father's *tuurngait* that was very strong. There were three of them that were very powerful. They say that my father obtained the third one.

Were there more than these three strong ones?

Victor: There were probably more than these three.

How did your father's tuurngaq show its strength?

Victor: My father was known as an *angakkuq* even by people he had never seen before. There was one *angakkuq* who tried to *tirliaq* him. He went down through the earth to observe him because he wanted to best him. My father got tired of this *angakkuq* who was going after him and he eventually killed him. He told me about this more than once because he didn't want to cause me illness or be a burden for me. They say that we have to disclose this kind of experience to whoever we are able to talk to. That is why my father told me this.

Did angakkuit who were not pleased with your father try to sneak up on him?

Victor: Yes, he had *angakkuit* who were trying to kill him, who sneaked up on him. It is when he got tired of this one *angakkuq* trying to kill him, that he retaliated. He told me that he had done this. He said that if he did not disclose this, that I was the one who would become sick because of it.

Was this all that he told you?

Victor: The other thing was that because he loved me I was not going to live long after his death.

This morning you said that before you went hunting, you would pray. Who told you to pray before you went out?

Victor: We did it on our own. We knew we had to do this. We would pray before we did anything. We were told to put God first. We heard this from the priest. Before we did anything at the start of the day, before we started our daily activities, before we went hunting, we prayed to God. After we prayed, the rest of the day was ours. That's what the priests would tell us. We didn't start our day without praying.

Before you became a Christian, what did you do before you went hunting?

Victor: I don't remember doing anything before we would start. I never saw anything being done.

We would like to get a better understanding of your tuurngait. How did they come to you? What names did they have? How did you learn the names of the animals? Was it on your own, or were you made to understand what they were?

Victor: I was not taught, I just learned by listening. For instance, it seemed like the name was said twice. For example, like it was said in English once and then in Inuktitut. It was said in their language and then in our language. That's how I learned to understand them.

Was it Inuit or your tuurngait that told you the names?

Victor: I was not told directly. I heard others talking about them. Anything that had to be named would be said. At first I wouldn't understand it and then it would be said in a language that I understood. That's how I got to learn this language. I was not really taught but I learned it through listening. When I was a child I was told not to listen to things. I was told, "You are a

child. You are not to listen to this. Go outside.” I was not even allowed to sit on the floor. I would just listen. That’s how I got to learn what their names were. I have forgotten so many things, but there are some I still remember.

Did you hear the names from your step-father?

Victor: Not from him. I heard them from other people. I would listen to them and learn them. When someone was sick, people would get together for a healing to take place. If there was *qilaniq*, there would be questions asked. When the question was asked for the first time, I did not understand it. When it would be in a language I understood, then I would understand. During *qilaniq* this is the way it was. When the head was heavy, that symbolized that the answer was yes. When the head was light that meant that the answer was no. Sometimes the head would be heavy and sometimes it would be light. That’s what they called *qilaniq*.

Who would perform the qilaniq?

Victor: I would first observe, but my knowledge grew. I did not really watch who was performing the *qilaniq* when I was a child. I didn’t really think about this. We had to listen when we were there. It seems that there are things that I should have forgotten that I have remembered, and things that I should have remembered that I have forgotten. That’s the way I am.

You heard this when you were a child. When you became an angakkuq you already knew this?

Victor: Yes I already knew this before I became an *angakkuq*. I knew what words to say.

If your tuurngaq was a nanuq, would it have the appearance of a nanuq?

Victor: Yes, it would look just like that.

Was it a real nanuq or was it invisible?

Victor: It was real when the *angakkuq* wanted it to be real. If the *angakkuq* who it belonged to wanted it to show itself as a real bear then it would show itself as a real bear to convince someone who didn’t believe, a doubter. They would show someone who was doubting the *tuurngaq* in its true form. The *angakkuq* really could do that.

Are the inurajait controlled by angakkuit?

Victor: I have never heard anything about *inurajait*. Maybe they are human, and that's why they are called *inurajait*. I don't know where they come from, but I have heard of people seeing them while on their dogteams.

Are they the ones that people sometimes see as caribou?

Victor: I know that those that become caribou are not *inurajait*, they are called *ijirait*. Those that you call *inurajait* are different from the *ijirait*, the ones that become caribou. They do not make themselves visible if they do not want to be seen. You can go right up to them and not be able to see them. It is only when they want to be seen that they allow themselves to be visible. The *inurajait* would leave footprints that could be seen by a dogteam.

Have you heard about tarriasuit?

Victor: I have heard of *tarriasuit*, but I have never seen them. Maybe because they look just like shadows. I think they looked like shadows. That's why they are called *tarriasuit*. I used to wonder what they were. I was not able to understand what *tarriasuit* were. I've heard of *tarriasuit* for a long time but never knew what they were.

The ones you call inurajait are the ones we have with the dogteams.

Victor: Really?

Which ones follow hunters and try to lead them astray? If a hunter is out travelling and sees something and tries to go towards it and it goes further and further away, what is this?

Victor: I've never seen that at all. I've never experienced it, so I can't tell you about it. I don't want to tell you something I don't know about.

Those that you consider ijirait, what do they do?

Victor: From what I have heard they use wolves as dogs and they become caribou. They look just like caribou. That's what I've heard.

Why do they look like caribou?

Victor: Because they don't want people to know that they have a human form. They are people. I want you to know that this is true and we are told to believe in this.

Is it better to believe or not to believe in them?

Victor: Personally I'm not going to say they are not real when it is something I know about. It is only if I don't know about something that I wonder if they are real or not. When an *ijirag* is shot and you go up to it, you see that they have legs like Inuit caribou leggings. When a hunter was going to cut the caribou he would find out that this caribou had been an *ijirag* because of the pattern on the legs. When an *ijirag* had been shot there would be a lot of fog. In the days of the *angakkuit*, after a person would arrive with their catch they would be told by an *angakkuq* that they had committed a murder. It was only then that the person who had shot the caribou would realize it was an *ijirag* and tell about the caribou they shot. This is true. It is not a lie. Nowadays, we hear that maybe there are still some *ijirait* around. I think they are still probably around. I don't think they are extinct but I don't think there are anymore *amajurjuit*. Nobody ever talks about them any more.

What are amajurjuit?

Victor: They are beings that will take someone who is alone and put them in their *amauti*.

Do they live in the water?

Victor: No, they live on the land.

How did your tuurngait help you? How did your tuurngaq that had a human form help you?

Victor: To me it did not just look like an Inuk. It was a real Inuk to me.

Even though it was not visible to others?

Victor: Yes, even though it was not visible to others I could see it. It would come close. It would be with me. To me it didn't just look human, it was real, but it would not make itself visible to others.

The other tuurngait, how did they help you?

Victor: They too tried to help. If anything bad got close, they would tell me. I'm going to tell you about an *angakkuq* that was trying to put me down. I was thinking about this book that you will be writing. Because people are going to read this, and everybody is going to ask me about it, I wasn't going to tell you about it until now. There was one man who was trying to get me. This person started to put me down and said, "You are an *angakkuq*. You are a very powerful *angakkuq*, and you are enviable because you are going

to be capable all your life.” This was at the Co-op store. A lot of people were gathered at the Co-op store and this person said this to me very loudly. I knew I was protected. As I said, my *tuurngait* protect me from bad things and as a result I am still alive today. I was protected because they didn’t want me to die. I do pray. I do go to church, but at that time I used my powers.

Were you still an angakkuq at that time?

Victor: It was when I no longer wanted to be an *angakkuq* that this was said to me. That’s when I learned that my father’s *tuurngait* were protecting me.

After this person put you down, did you pay him back?

Victor: No I didn’t. I thought I needed to be the kind of person that did not retaliate no matter what bad things were being said. No matter how much I was hurt, I was not alone. Even though I was just a person, I had unseen help. I was not going to retaliate and hurt a person. Those were the thoughts that I had.

Why did the person do this? Was that person kappiasuk, afraid?

Victor: Maybe that person felt *kangusuk*, shame or embarrassment because he was afraid I would expose him.

When you were an angakkuq, did your tuurngait help you when you were sick?

Victor: I can’t think of any time that I was helped when I was sick.

You were never sick when you were an angakkuq?

Victor: When you were an *angakkuq*, you did not get very sick. I was told never to eat the mammary glands of any mammal. One time I ate this even though I knew I was not supposed to. The moment I ate this, whether it was seal or any other mammal, I would have the taste of milk in my mouth, all day and all night. I did not get sick, but I would have the awful taste of milk in my mouth.

Was it because you didn’t listen to what you were supposed to do?

Victor: Yes, it was because I did not listen to what I was supposed to do and therefore I was made to taste the milk. It happened because I did not want to listen to the *angakkuq* that made me abstain from eating this.

You told us about a person who was talking to you in a loud voice in the Co-op. Was he doing this so others would hear?

Victor: Yes, that’s how it was.

Why was that?

Victor: Because that person has a lot of relatives in Arviligjuaq and this is going to be read, I am reluctant to talk about it. I felt that I had to tell you about it but I'm not going to say who it was. I was minding my own business. I was just there, enjoying myself. Usually there are people that you enjoy being with more than others and you enjoy talking to them. There might be a lot of people around but you ignore some people and you just converse with the ones that you enjoy being with. You're not thinking about anybody else. So I was just conversing with this person when suddenly there was this voice that said, "You are a very powerful *angakkuq* so all your life you are going to be able to deal with difficult things." I was not thinking of this and I didn't consider myself as a powerful *angakkuq*. Even though I have a very quick temper, I did not lose my temper towards this person. I did not try to answer back.

Was this person who did this to you an angakkuq himself, or do you think he was made to do this by an angakkuq?

Victor: He too was an *angakkuq*. He is an elder now. That's what he did to me.

Was this after you were no longer an angakkuq?

Victor: Yes, I was no longer an *angakkuq* but I knew that I had protection. I knew that I was protected against this person's helpers but I did not have any of my own helpers because I had sent them away. In the past, I had had my father's helpers to protect me.

Did that person say this without even trying to find out if you were still a practising angakkuq?

Victor: I don't know why he said it. I never understood what was on his mind. When you are yourself, you do not think of yourself as being powerful or skilled. When you are trying to be religious, you don't consider yourself as religious. Anything that you try, you try to do your best. I did this while I was an *angakkuq* as well. When I became Christian, I did not think to myself, "I am now Christian and I am religious." You do not consider yourself personally as someone who is able and skilled. Even if there is a person that I dislike or if there is a person that I really like, I'm not going to show my feelings. That's the way I am. I am going to tell you something that you haven't asked. My granddaughter who lives with someone in Talurjuat now, had diarrhea so badly when she was a child that she was sent away. She was taken to Churchill for medical attention, and she returned. I told my wife that children could die because of diarrhea. I said that because it could cause death, we should pray for her. We prayed for her and her stools got formed and in a few days she was alright. We know that we were helped by God.

Transition to Christianity

We will be asking questions about how religion started and how you heard about it.

Rachel: I was old enough to remember when religion first started. The term that they used when they wanted to convert to Christianity was *siqqitirniq*. I was one of the people who went through the *siqqitirniq* ritual. I was quite young when we went through *siqqitirniq*, but I remember the ritual that we went through. I participated in it.

There was a *qaggiq*, a big *iglu*. It was a very large *iglu* made of snow. There was also drum-dancing. There was a very high platform made of snow inside the *qaggiq*. Two people came in through the entrance and jumped over this pillar of snow. One of them had a whip. One of them had a stick. I remember seeing those two. The person who was drumming had really long hair and he wore a band to keep his hair out of the way. The people who were singing were towards the back. Their hoods were over their heads in front of them. They were sitting on a platform. Those that did not have their hoods over their heads had a mitten placed on their head. That was what they did. This memory I had was just before we went through *siqqitirniq*. It was a time of happiness, of celebration.

It was after that, in the spring time, when they turned to religion. The *siqqitirniq* ritual took place at a windbreak made of snow that they used to work on the skins. This took place when the weather had improved and it was nice to be out.

What is siqqitirniq?

Rachel: It was when people wanted to turn to Christianity. When they decided they were going to *siqqitirniq*, they went to the windbreak. It was nice outside. The sun was shining as it was spring. They brought a seal to the windbreak. They cut the seal open and took out the intestines, the liver, the heart, the eyes, and the tongue and cut them into small pieces. They did not have plates in those days, so they placed the pieces on the seal. They were cut into tiny pieces and mixed together. In the end, people lined up and were given a piece of meat to put into their mouth. People were asked why they wanted to go through this ceremony. Everyone of them replied, "We are going through this because we want to become Christian." My mother told me, if I were asked, to say, "I want to be with Jesus." When the person giving the meat came to me, he gave me an eye and a piece of intestine. It was cut small enough to chew. I was asked why I wanted to become Christian. Here I was, just a child. I was old enough to speak and I replied as my mother had instructed me, "Because I want to go to Jesus when I die." Everyone of us was given a piece of meat. We did this because all those parts of the seal, the heart, and the intestine were all parts of the *pittailiniq*, the taboos. They were no longer going to be observed. There wouldn't be any part of the seal that people would have

to abstain from eating. This was not just the case for seal, but for all other animals as well. There was not going to be any more abstaining from eating any part of any animal. This is why we were given bits and pieces of everything.

After this happened, whenever anyone would arrive from elsewhere, we would all go down and shake hands. Before that time, people did not used to shake hands. It became a new ritual. People who accepted religion shook hands. They started to pray. What they wanted to do was rid themselves of all that was from the past, whether it be the *angakkuit* or other ways of living. They were all brought together into the largest *iglu*. This was another part of getting rid of the past life. They didn't do this every day. They would come together and get rid of the wrong-doings they had done, by confessing them. After they went through this, there would be a prayer. I don't remember all of it. This is probably what I remembered from when I was a child. When a child or an elder was sick, people would come and pray for that person, because that was what they had to do. We, the Tununirmiut from Mittimatalik, were told not even to sing *ajaaajaa* songs any more. We were just to sing regular songs. We were told that we were not to sing *ajaaajaa*, and our parents wouldn't talk to us any more about the way of life that we had before this.

When was this?

Rachel: I don't remember. I was born in 1914, so it must have been close to that time because I was old enough to remember things going on, but I can't say exactly what year it was. There were no *qallunaaq* back then. In the Mittimatilik area there were people living at Igarjuaq, Itiq&aq and Sanniruti. There was also a *qallunaaq* called Kapitaiqallak [Joseph Bernier, the captain of the ship Arctic] living around there. There was another person called Quvviunginnaaq [Wilfred Caron, Joseph Bernier's nephew] who was also a *qallunaaq*. This was when trading was starting in this area.

When you turned to religion, which religion did you follow? Was it the Anglican or the Catholic religion?

Rachel: I joined the Anglican church because that was the first religion I was exposed to. When people got together, there were people who were following the Anglican religion and those following the Catholic religion. They talked to each other and compared what they were supposed to do to follow the religion. Because we didn't know much, people tried to follow both religions. I remember people talking about the type of religion they were following. Those from the Kivalliq region told us about Catholicism. Those of us who were Anglican talked about that. People would talk and try to follow both. It was quite a while before there was a missionary around there.

Because there were no missionaries at the time, did that affect which religion you joined?

Rachel: Yes. We would sing both Anglican and Catholic hymns. We followed whatever we learned because we did not know there was a difference between religions. Whenever we heard about religion, we would try to follow what we heard. This was through word of mouth as people could not read anything written then. At that time there was nothing to write on at all. There were no pencils or papers. It's a wonder that we learned to read!

Before religion, was it the angakkuq or the isumataq that made people follow iliqusiq, customs?

Rachel: People were people both before and after the time of religion. Before they heard about religion, they followed the *pittailiniq*. Although people knew they were supposed to refrain from doing something, some people still did it. If there was something they were not supposed to take, sometimes they would still take it. We who are now following religion are the same way. We have a religion that we are told to follow, and we follow it because we want to. People know what they are supposed to do, but end up not doing it. In those days there was *pittailiniq*. People followed the *angakkuit*. There were some who, although they knew what they were not supposed to do, would still do it anyway. They did this on purpose. The *angakkuit* would use their powers to heal. Some *angakkuit* would use their powers against a person they were not pleased with. They tried to use their powers to kill that person through *ilisiq*.

What was ilisiq?

Rachel: An *angakkuq* would use the power of his mind to try to kill a person. It was through his powers that he began feeling that there was somebody that he didn't like. Then he would try to kill this other person.

You talked about siqqitirniq. Can you tell us more about this?

Rachel: It happened when we wanted to join the Christian religion. We lived in the Tununig area. We lived around there. There was a minister living in the Pangniqtuuq area and word about him reached the Tununig area. So we decided to start following this religion. The ritual they used to convert was *siqqitirniq*. We ate animal parts that were not to be eaten before, when we went through the *siqqitirniq* ritual. This broke the *pittailiniq*. There were so many things we were not allowed to eat. There would be times when people would sneak pieces that they were not to eat. Whenever anyone did this, there would be sickness. Victor talked about *angakkuit* who were healers. These *angakkuit* would have to heal them, but the people would have to disclose what they had done. That's what they used to do. When they went

through the *siqqitirniq* ritual, animal parts were given to everyone. Everyone was given a bite. We went through this because there was not going to be any more *pittailiniq* after we began to follow Christianity. Because animals were made by God to be food for humans, people were going to be able to eat whatever part of the animal they wanted to. When they started following religion, the *angakkuit* let go of their powers, and people let go of their *pittailiniq*. That's what we did when we chose the Christian religion. I was old enough to remember what was going on. Later on, people would get together in the largest *igluit* and *qarmat*. Depending on the family size, some dwellings would be larger than others. People would get together in the largest *igluit* and they would *aniat*, they would start disclosing the wrong-doings they had done. That was called *aniattuq*. I was there when it was done. It was not done daily. It was done from time to time, whenever someone felt the need to disclose. All the people who were living together in one camp would assemble in the largest *iglu* and then whoever was an *angakkuq* would try to get rid of their powers. Whenever people would arrive from elsewhere, they would shake hands. Not everyone was able to read back then. Whenever anyone would disclose a wrong-doing, whoever was able to read would read from the Bible and there would be prayers. At the time there was a minister from the Pangniqtuuq area. We started receiving Bibles and hymnals by dogteam. That was when we were converting to Christianity. I don't remember any *angakkuit* using their powers after that. They would pray instead when people were sick. I heard one person who went through the *siqqitirniq* ritual say that he was going to let go of all his healing powers that he used when he was an *angakkuq*. Someone else said we would be helpless, because there would no longer be anyone to find out the causes of illness. I remember someone saying this.

We started celebrating Christmas, the birth of Christ. We had to celebrate this as Jesus was born to save us. He was our Saviour. Therefore the birth of Christ is called the time of celebration. We began to celebrate when we became Christian. Before religion, we did not have a time of celebration. When we heard about religion we started following this practice. Whenever anyone heard about customs a Christian had to follow, they would tell others who would also try to follow them. They heard about loving their neighbour, about having to help others, and the need to help orphans. Although these ideas were present before religion they became stronger after. Before there was religion, we were told to look after orphans, we were not to lie, and we were not to steal. When we were children, we were told not to fight amongst each other and not to pick on orphans, those who we call *iliarjuut*, ones without a mother or without a father. We were supposed to love and help those children. If we found anyone trying to pick on them, we were not to participate. Even before religion we were instructed how to be good people. We had to try to be good people back then too. It was not always possible to be good. That is just human.

What animal parts were not to be eaten?

Rachel: The heart and the intestine of a seal were not to be eaten. Anyone who wasn't supposed to eat a certain part of an animal was considered to be *kilingajuuq*.

Rachel to Victor: Do you know about *kilingajuuq*?

Victor to Rachel: This was part of *tirigusungniq*.

Rachel: Also, if women had just given birth there were parts of animals they were not to eat. I'm not exactly sure what the parts were, but there were parts that a woman with a newborn baby was not to eat. They were not to eat alone, those with newborn babies. There were set rules they had to follow. They started letting go of these practices when they adopted religion. Today there aren't any parts of an animal people are not to eat. It is only now we know that when meat gets old, it has germs. Even though it was *igunaq*, we would eat it because we lived on nothing but meat. We didn't know about germs.

Did you pray before eating those pieces of meat?

Rachel: We didn't really pray. We only went through this one time. There would not be a prayer, but we would be asked why we wanted to go through *siqqitirniq*. Everyone had to explain their reason for doing this. Their reason was because they wanted to convert to the Christian religion. Afterwards, whenever we were going to eat freshly killed meat, we would have to pray out of thankfulness. We would be told to say, "I'm going to eat the body of Christ." Whenever we would drink water, we were to say "We are going to drink the blood of Christ." We were to remember that. We would say that.

Who do you think started siqqitirniq?

Rachel: A minister in the Pangniqtuuq area named Uqammak [Reverend Peck]. He was the first minister to arrive here. He lived in the Pangniqtuuq area. He tried to make people understand that Jesus died for them. When he started explaining religion, he said that whenever anyone who heard about this went elsewhere, they should tell others so the word was spread. It probably didn't happen right away. It happened gradually. Nobody lived in Kaniq&ugaapik then. As the word spread, it reached the Tununiq area. Uqammak arrived in Pangniqtuuq by ship.

Do you think there were some people who didn't want to believe in Christianity?

Rachel: They didn't all go through *siqqitiq* at the same time. There were those who didn't believe right away. Only those that believed would go through *siqqitirniq*. That's the way they say it happened.

Were children able to participate in siqqitirniq?

Rachel: Yes. I participated. Older people who had left Pangniqtuuq to go to the hospital remember the first minister. I heard more of this from them. They were elders back then, and they are probably no longer alive.

What happened after you went through the siqqitirniq ritual?

Rachel: No one would follow *pittailiniq* anymore. They would try to disclose all their wrongdoings. Whenever they had done something wrong, they would talk about it. No one would be baptized because there was not a minister for a long time. It was only later that a minister went to Mittimatalik. Again, people did not get baptized all at once. Only occasionally would a marriage be performed. We did not get married. I never married either of my husbands. We did not call it *piqannaariik*, because we considered ourselves actually married. Nowadays, we would probably just be considered as living together because we did not get married. My two husbands died, and I never married either of them.

Using that seal as an example, what was done to the seal before it was cut?

Rachel: Being a child, I was not always aware of the things that were going on. I remember it was dragged to a windbreak and it was cut up. The meat was exposed, and all the insides, the heart, the kidneys, the tongue, and the eyes were cut into tiny pieces and were given out. We were asked why we wanted to go through *siqqitiq*. We lined up, and went from one end of the line to the other end.

Was the rest of the meat eaten?

Rachel: At that time we did not actually have a meal. We were just given the meat. It was not cooked, it was raw.

What season did the siqqitirniq ritual take place, winter or spring?

Rachel: The one I went through took place in the spring, when the sun was shining and it was getting warmer. Since it was a beautiful day, and it was warm, we went through it at that time. I don't know what month it was. It was when it started warming up but there was still snow and we had a windbreak made of snow blocks.

Where were you at that time?

Rachel: We were near Mittimatalik in a place called Sanniruuq. The place I'm calling Sanniruuq was a place that was frequently inhabited because it was a good place to go seal hunting. People tended to move there in the spring. It was on the land close to the shore and we had *igluit* there. The *siqqitirniq* ritual took place outside of *igluit* by a windbreak. I believe the sun was shining when we went through the *siqqitirniq* ritual.

Could you also use caribou meat?

Rachel: Yes, it didn't matter what kind of meat it was. We ate the meat of seal and caribou. We had nothing but caribou clothing at the time we went through the *siqqitirniq* ritual. We didn't wear anything but caribou fur. We also used caribou as bedding. We wore seal skin *kamiit*. We did not have any store-bought clothing at all. Because we didn't have anything store-bought, our tents were made of skins.

Those who didn't want to participate didn't have to?

Rachel: It was only those who wanted to who participated. At first, those who didn't want to, didn't. After they had thought it over, it was their choice to change over. It didn't happen all at once. Everyone didn't participate all at once.

It was okay not to participate?

Rachel: Yes, it was alright because they knew they would participate after a while.

Before you went through this, did people go seal hunting?

Rachel: Yes, they would go seal hunting. They would leave in the early morning in the winter, even before the break of day, to go seal hunting. It would start to get light by the time they got to the place they would be seal hunting. They didn't hunt much at the floe edge because there wasn't much of a floe edge where we lived.

Who looked after the meat during siqqitirniq? Was it the ones giving out the meat?

Rachel: At the time I went through it, I don't remember who it was, who led the *siqqitirniq* ritual. I was quite a young child so I can't really say who it was. We only went through this one time. After we went through this, I don't recall seeing him again.

Was it a man or a woman?

Rachel: There were a man and a woman. The man would give some, and the other pieces were given by the woman. I can't remember who they were.

After you went through the siqqitirniq ritual, what did you do? Did you have a ceremony after that?

Rachel: I don't remember any ceremonies afterwards.

Did you brothers and sisters participate as well?

Rachel: I didn't have any brothers and sisters. I was adopted. They didn't have any other children besides myself at the time. They adopted another child after me.

After they had gone through siqqitirniq, could you describe the first Christmas or Easter you had?

Rachel: We didn't know about Easter. We knew about Sunday after we had gone through the *siqqitirniq* ritual. We knew that Sunday was a day that no hunting was allowed. It was a day that there was supposed to be prayer. People started following this after they went through *siqqitirniq*. They would go into the largest *iglu* and pray there. They did not know about the other days such as Easter. Shortly after this we heard about Christmas. We probably heard about it through word of mouth. We learned we had to celebrate the birth of Jesus. That's when the Christmas celebrations started to happen.

What can you say about the first Christmas you remember?

Rachel: I can tell a bit about the first Christmas I remember. We all lived in our own *igluit* when we were going to be celebrating Christmas. We children were told that we were going to be celebrating Christmas and how many more days it would be. We started counting the days. We were told that we would be using our personal effects as gifts. It was probably because we wanted to get new things that we were counting the days. On Christmas morning I was told it was Christmas and I should now be awake. I put on my caribou clothing. We tried to put on our best clothing that day. Those that had additional clothing did this. I was woken up by my father. He went out for a bit and came back. We started shaking hands with each other because we heard that was what we had to do. Just before we went out people started rushing around. My father took a rifle and went out and shot it. We heard the rifle shot and we all rushed out. I was wearing my caribou clothing and my hat. We were told that after we went out we were going to say "Hurray." My mother gave me my hat and said that I should use it when we said, "Hurray." Our neighbours also shot their rifles. This happened while it was still dark. We could hear rifle shots and people would shout, "Hurray." I was holding on to my hat, and we'd shout, "Hurray." We were celebrating and were very happy.

Later on that day, we went to pray and sing hymns. We went to someone else's *iglu*, and it was cold. Even though it was light it was still winter. We all went in. The women each took off their *kamiik* and went up on the bed platform. The bed platform was totally full. There was hardly any place to sit. There were people sitting all over the place because we were going to pray. We prayed and there was a hymn sung. It turns out that the hymn that was sung was not a Christmas hymn, but that's the hymn we sang. People sat down on the floor because the *iglu* was so full. After this hymn was sung, somebody read a prayer. Then another hymn was sung. This is the first Christmas I remember. I remember the first hymn, but I don't

remember the other hymns that were sung. After we had sung hymns and prayed and were about to go out, we all shook hands with each other. Those women who had sat on the bed platform put on their *kamiik* and we all went home.

We knew that we would be having a feast. We were to have a feast where we prayed, so all the meat we would be feasting on was brought to that *iglu*. We feasted on meat. We did not have tea. There was *tummuq* that was prepared as *aluk*. We ate *quaq* and *uujuq*. We ate meat that we did not normally eat such as polar bear and caribou. It probably was kept for this occasion. It was a joyous time because we were celebrating. That is the first Christmas I can remember.

After we feasted, we started to exchange gifts. These were our own personal belongings that we exchanged. We did it at the end of the day. It was already dark. We would go to another *iglu* to exchange gifts. The gifts that were exchanged were not that elaborate. It might have been a caribou skin, or a sealskin or any other personal belonging. It was still a very happy occasion.

You mentioned that when you would come in from inland, people would gather together. Was qilaujjarniq the only thing that was used?

Rachel: When I was a small child, there was no *qilaujjarniq*. It was only when I went to the Iglulingmiut area that I saw people drum dancing. While we were over there, when we got religion, we were told that whether they were *angakkuq's* chants, or drumming, or singing *pisiit*, they were no longer to be practised. It was when I became old enough to go visiting that I heard a person singing a *pisiq*. It would come into my head that my parents never sang that kind of song. It was when I would go visiting that I would hear it. When my parents seemed to be asleep and I was old enough to go visiting on my own I would hear the song. At first, I would sing it in my head. Then, I would quietly start singing. My father would tell me we were not to sing those songs any more. These songs belonged to those who were not religious. Now that we had religion, we were not to sing those songs any more. I became quite embarrassed that time, and I stopped doing this. We did not *qilaujjaq* over there.

What were your thoughts the first time you heard someone drumming and singing?

Rachel: I wanted to hear more. I really liked how it sounded. As soon as I heard a *pisiq* sung it would stick in my head. Maybe it was because my parents didn't approve, I would *tusaarruuq*.

You said that that you didn't sing the ajaajaa and you did not play the qilaut, the drum.

Rachel: We didn't sing the *ajaajaa* or play the drum. We tried to learn the same kind of hymns they are singing now. We also received Bibles by dogteam from the Pangniqtuuq area. When people came from the Pangniqtuuq area with Bibles, there weren't that many available. As Bibles were brought, we would learn the hymns.

Did you ever learn children's hymns?

Rachel: There is a song I learned when I was a child. I'm going to sing it without adding to it this time. It was a hymn that we learned from the people who came from the Pangniqtuuq area.

Nunamiinnittinni ilaak

During our time on earth

Maani pinasuarvingmiippugugguuq.

We are in a place where we have to work.

Nunamiinnittinni ilaak

During our time on earth

Naanna piulijauvvingmiippugugguuq.

We are in a time of being saved.

Piralangniq atunngilaq.

Just playing around is of no use.

Atullarmi pijunnannginniqaamut.

It is of use only for the worst thing.

Pijunnaqugaminga piralacunngilaanga.

He doesn't want me playing around.

Takugit Jiisusi,

Look at Jesus,

Laami Guutip irninga,

Lamb, Son of God,

Piulijituattiasi.

Your only Saviour.

I learned this hymn when I was very young. We were told not to just run around. We were told to keep Jesus in mind. We were to talk about Jesus, and we were to sing songs about Jesus. We weren't prevented from playing but they didn't want us just running around and not really doing anything. We were told that just running around was not putting any thoughts to our actions, and this implied that you were not thinking about Jesus. Running around was not paying attention to your actions, and you were not thinking of what you were doing. Just playing and not thinking of your actions is what this hymn is about. This hymn is one that I learned when I was a young girl. There were other hymns that I learned, but this is the one that I remembered most.

Do you know any other songs that were not from the hymn book?

Rachel: Yes, there were other songs. There were other songs that could be sung that were not from the prayer book, songs that we sang for just having fun. Here's another song that we sang.

Niviaqsiarainnuk niviaqsiaqutikuluga.

Wonderful little girl, my wonderful little girl.

Qiturngarinngitannut, niurrujjiliqpunga.

To someone who is not my child, I'm bringing someone from afar.

Qujanakalaurngai, taimaipakkunai.

Never mind for now, that's the way some people are.

Taimaipakkunai. Taimailirlanga.

That's the way some people are. Let me be like that.

We sang this song when we were playing. We knew of *qallunaat* even though we didn't see a whole lot of them. We would talk as though we were *qallunaat*, and we would change our inflection to sound like we were speaking *qallunaatitut*. This is what we did when we were pretending to speak *qallunaatitut*. We also sang songs that were not from the Bible or hymn books just for enjoyment.

You also said that Bibles were brought by dogteam. Were you able to read right away when the Bibles were brought in? What kind of things did you write ?

Rachel: There were no pencils. I'd never seen a pencil. I'd never seen anything to write on. When the Bibles were brought, our parents would work at learning how to read. That's when our parents started reading to us children, and we got the desire to learn to write. We tried to be better than our fellow-children. We would practice writing on the frost in the winter. For instance *ikuma*, or *mannik*, because there were only two or three letters in these words. Sometimes when we were playing outside, we would go where there was fresh-fallen snow

and write on it, because there was nothing to write on and there were no pencils. We would try to learn to write the “ai ii uu aa.” We learned that from our parents. We would be told that if we learned these, then we would know how to read, and we would learn how to write. So we would practise with words on the snow. Whenever we were travelling, and an *iglu* was built, there would be fresh snow. There would be a lot of writing on it. Then we started to have short little pencils. They were very precious, and we were told never to lose them when we started to write with these pencils. Also, whenever there was anything that was store-bought, there would be paper containers such as sugar and tea packets. If there was any part that was blank we would write on it, because we had never seen any writing pads. That’s what we did.

Those old prayer books were called pisiliit. Did you learn any of the things at the beginning of the prayer book that were to be used for learning to read?

Rachel: They were written at the beginning of the book. I remember that we would use those to practise our reading and writing, but I had forgotten about them. I haven’t thought about them for a while.

When we were being taught to read there was “rai ri ru ra”. Do you remember those?

Rachel: I remember the “ai ii uu aa.”

What kind of dancing did you do?

Rachel: After we started celebrating Christmas, we started trying to learn how to dance. People would start practising with the harmonica. Some people played the harmonica while others tried to dance. This was before any accordions were acquired. There were people who were able to play the harmonica, and around Christmas we would dance in an *iglu* to harmonica music. Of course we tried to use the largest *iglu*. Any time that any gathering took place, it always happened in the largest *iglu*.

When you were gathered in an iglu and there were a number of people, was there any order in which people had to sit, for instance, where the adults sat and where the children sat?

Rachel: I told you earlier that when people would come together to eat in an *iglu* there were no chairs. The women would each remove their *kamiik* and sit on the bed and their small children would sit beside them. The slightly larger ones would also sit up on the bed platform. Down on the floor people would find something to sit on. Sometimes the *iglu* would get full. Sometimes it wasn’t that full. They would try to bring whatever there was to

eat into the largest *iglu*. If it was cooked they would yell out *uujuuq*, or if it was raw, they would call out *mikigaaq*. This was how people were invited to come and eat. Sometimes they would just get together to eat if it was *patiq*. When it was frozen it would be *quamajaaq*.

What kind of Christmases did you have?

Rachel: We would exchange personal possessions as Christmas gifts. Even one single needle was considered a worthwhile gift. We used anything we had. When we had caribou clothing and sealskin for *kamiik* we would also exchange caribou skin and sealskin as gifts. Nobody would *narru*, dislike what they received.

Did you try to win these items?

Rachel: We would do them as a gift exchange.

How did you learn about gifts?

Rachel: Before we learned from the *qallunaat*, we would exchange our own things, whether it be dogs, or the dog traces, or anything that belonged to us.

When you were celebrating did you eat all kinds of food?

Rachel: We would eat food that was not common everyday ordinary food. It would be caribou that was cached over the summer. They would go and get it from inland as there was meat cached all over. Meat for the winter would be cached in the summer. Close to Christmas they would go and get it. There would be caribou and *maktaa*, but it wouldn't be right where our camp was. It would be cached elsewhere. People would go and get it from a distance. We would also have fresh seal meat. Meat that we didn't eat daily would be brought in. There would be meat that was cooked. We would also eat frozen meat. We ate other food besides. We feasted on meat. The *tunnuq* would be made into *aluk*.

Aatami's grandmother quite often kept berries that she collected over the summer. When it was winter she would add this to the *tunnuq* and she would give it to us. That was part of our feast. Also, there would be *uruniq*, ptarmigan droppings. They would be added to seal meat. Then fat from seal blubber would be added. It was all mixed and it too would be made into *aluk*. We would eat that.

They don't eat this anymore?

Rachel: I don't know if it is eaten any more. If someone provided it, I would certainly eat it in a second. It is delicious.

Can you tell us more about how religion was back then?

Rachel: I didn't think much about religion except having to follow it. I believed that I had to follow it along with everybody else. We had to follow it. After we became religious, we started shaking hands with people who had newly arrived to welcome them. Also, if there was someone arriving, even if they were related to us, we would all go outside and wait for them to arrive. People would sing a hymn and when they got together, the dogteam would stop and those who had been singing the hymn would go towards the *qamutiik* and shake hands with those who were arriving. That was what I saw. If people moved, or went to another camp, or were preparing to depart for a distance to go trading at a trading post, a few hymns were sung before the dogteam would depart. That's what they would do. I think that's when religion was new. Afterwards this became less frequent.

Where did the pisiq, the hymn, come from?

Rachel: It was from the hymn book. There was a hymn that was sung for people that were arriving.

When did they receive the pisiit?

Rachel: I talked about *siqqitirniq*. After we went through this ritual near Mittimatalik we went past Kangiq&ugaapik. I don't remember with whom. I remember my mother talking about having gone through the *siqqitirniq* ritual. I don't remember having travelled inland to Kangiq&ugaapik when I was brought over there. That's where I grew up. While we were living over there, there were people who arrived from the Pangniqtuuq area. Only some people would get Bibles because they didn't bring that many. We learned the hymns and prayers from these books. We started learning to read from these. It was the people in the Pangniqtuuq area that brought the Bibles. The songs would be sung. That's how we learned to sing. Whenever we would hear more about the new religion that had to be followed, we would try to follow it.

Did you see Uqammak in person?

Rachel: They say Uqammak was the first minister in the Pangniqtuuq area. They say that after him there was another minister called Ilataaq. It was a long time before we saw a minister in our area. We would be told all of this by word of mouth. We would learn from our parents that we would have to follow this religion. As they received more Bibles, they learned more about this. I was never taken to Pangniqtuuq. Qivittuq was where I lived. I grew up more in the Kangiq&ugaapik area. People travelled by dogteam. We would also go into Mittimatalik by dogteam as our father had relatives there. We would go and visit. There were also those who were following the Catholic religion, but those people had heard about religion from the Kivalliq area. We would talk about anything we had heard about the new

religion. Anything that was heard about religion would be offered. We heard some things about the Catholic religion and we would learn those as well. It was not until I was an adult and had children, that I finally saw a minister. It was back in Mittimatalik. There was a *qallunaaq* living there. There was a priest and a minister who went there at the same time. The priests had their own followers, and they didn't want them to follow the Anglican religion. The Anglican ministers did not want their followers to follow the Catholic religion. It turned out that whenever we would get together we would talk about religion. They didn't want us to follow both at the same time. It seemed that the ministers and priests were trying to separate us people in this way. This seemed to cause a rift between people. Those who came from the Iglulik area were Catholic, and those from the Kangiq&ugaapik area were Anglican. We seemed to separate into two groups, once we had the ministers.

Was it difficult to know which religion to follow?

Rachel: We learned what to follow once the ministers came. We didn't learn right away.

What were your thoughts when you saw a minister for the first time?

Rachel: Whenever we were about to go to the minister, I would start wracking my brains wondering what kinds of sins I had committed. I thought the minister would be able to see these sins. I always scared easily. In the area where we lived there were no *qallunaat*. I know in the spring we would go to where there was a post to go trading. There would also be people going from the Iglulik area to the trading post. All those that lived in places where there was no trader would gather together in one place. When we would get close, I would start trying to recollect all the sins I had committed, all the wrong-doings that I had done. For I thought that when I came across a minister, the minister would know about them and this made me very scared. I was very scared about this. We would go to where there were *qallunaat* when it was Christmas or Easter. There was a minister there. I would start thinking about the things that I had done and wonder what would be done to me. I did not want to arrive there having sinned.

Whenever you would go to where there were ministers, would your children be baptized?

Rachel: No. We didn't get baptized right away, even after we started going where there was a minister. Once, there were two couples who were baptized. Those were the first ones I remember seeing being baptized. They took turns. It didn't all happen at once. Only adults were baptized. Children were never baptized. It was long after the adults were baptized that children would be baptized when they were born. Those two couples were baptized first. Because we ourselves weren't sure, we didn't get baptized for a long time. We were only baptized after we desired to do that. There would be more people in the spring. People would

get together in the spring. Even long after other people were baptized, we ourselves didn't get baptized right away. There were few of us. We were alone and we started discussing this. When we went back in the spring, we got baptized. This was after I was with my husband. We had a number of children by then. We never got married. Even though I've had a couple of husbands, I have never been married.

When was it that they started having confirmation?

Rachel: It was only after we were living in the Iglulik area that we were confirmed. That was when we saw a bishop for the first time. It was after I stopped having children. It was only when I started adopting my grandchildren, because I was no longer able to bear children. I gave birth to ten children and I adopted five others.

Why did your parents decide to convert to Christianity?

Rachel: Because they did not want to be the only ones left not following the new religion. Everyone else chose to follow this new religion too. Maybe they followed the belief as this belief grew. It didn't happen all at once.

Was this religion of use to you personally?

Rachel: Probably it was, because I am alive today. I tried to follow the things I was told. I was told not to lie or steal. Because we lived in small camps we tried to follow what we were told. To this day I have always tried not to lie or steal, to follow the Bible, and not to bear false witness against my neighbour. Those that wanted to follow, followed.

Were Uqaallak and Umik the same person?

Rachel: The Uqaallak that I knew was a woman. Umik was a man.

Were they ministers or priests?

Rachel: I never saw Umik. I only heard that he used to baptize people. Before we had a minister, we didn't know who he was.

Rachel to Victor: Have you ever heard of him?

Victor to Rachel: No.

Rachel: I don't know who he was. I was still living in the Kangiq&ugaapik area before we had ever seen a minister in the Iglulik area, when he was baptizing people. Maybe he was a minister or trying to be a minister. I've only heard about him. I heard that he died before I was brought to this area.

Can you tell us more about the Anglican or Catholic religion starting in the Iglulik area?

Rachel: This was before the Iglulik area had any *qallunaat*. The minister and the priest were sent to Iglulik by ship. Prior to that the priest was brought to Iglulik from Mittimatalik by dogteam and would spend the summer there. The ministers were living in Mittimatalik and the people from Iglulik would go to Mittimatalik for trading. After there were priests and ministers in Mittimatalik, they would gather there for trading. Then the priests and ministers started having their own followers. I already mentioned that the ministers did not want their followers to go to the other church. People seemed to be separated into two groups back then. At least two priests went to Iglulik by dogteam. They were taken back by people from the Iglulik area. There were no materials to build them a house. There was no wood. They say that the priest had a house up in *Avvajja* made of *kauk*. I never saw this. I only heard about it because I was living in the Mittimatalik area at the time. We were also living in *Aggu*.

What is kauk?

Rachel: The skin of a walrus, walrus hide.

Was his tent made only of kauk?

Rachel: Maybe there was a bit of wood. Maybe the frame was made of wood, but the cover was made of walrus hide. This was before I moved to the Iglulik area. It was only after they had a dwelling of *kauk* that they got a small little wooden house. I went to this area only after there was a small little house.

Do you remember when they started having Communion?

Rachel: Yes. It was after the first minister had come and we gathered to celebrate Christmas. That was the first time that we were given Communion by the Anglican ministers. At that time I did not understand what it all meant but we were all given a host.

Were you an adult?

Rachel: Yes, I was an adult. I already had children by then. It was the first time we had seen a minister, those that lived where there was a trading post. We heard that a minister was coming in by ship. Those of us who lived outside of the community saw a minister for the first time, and were given Communion for the first time.

When did the Catholics come?

Rachel: I think both religions started at the same time.

Can you tell us, or do you know what kinds of things the two religions did?

Rachel: Those who were Catholic would go and pray with the other Catholics. When there was a priest brought back to Iglulik by dogteam, we would stop travelling. We would never travel on a Sunday. Whenever those who were Catholic would go to pray with the Catholic priest, we did not go and pray with them. We were trying to follow what we had been told by our minister. Anybody following the Anglican religion prayed with us. Those of the Catholic religion would not pray with us. This was at the request of the priests and ministers.

Were there less tirigusuusit after there was religion?

Rachel: They would *tirigusuk* when they refrained from doing something. When we became religious, after we had gone through the *siqqitirniq* ritual, there was no more refraining. We did not have to *tirigusuk*. After religion the difference was that on Sundays, we weren't allowed to collect plants such as *qunguliit*, [mountain sorrel] and *paurngait* [blackberries]. We would be told when we were children that we were not to pick *uqaujait* [willow leaves] or *kigutarngirnait* [blueberries] on Sundays. We were told that we were not to do anything at all on Sundays.

Why were you told not to do anything on Sundays?

Rachel: I don't know why! We were told that we were not to gather plants on Sundays. Hunters were not to go hunting unless we were hungry. If we were hungry, then we were told that we could go hunting if we were in a time of need. But if we were not hungry, we were not to go hunting. We stayed in one place on Sunday. We prayed and sang hymns. We did our morning prayer and prayed throughout the day. Those of us who were children would be told that we were not to collect plants.

What is avvuq?

Rachel: Collecting edible plants.

I ask this question because of the difference in our dialects.

Rachel: We *avvuq*, others *nunivak*. We say that we are going to *avvuq* berries. Other dialects say that they *nunivak* berries.

Was it because Sunday was a very special day that adults were told not to work?

Rachel: We were told that Jesus had died for us. Everything seen and unseen was made by God. After he created everything, he rested on the seventh day. Because the seventh day was the day of rest for God, we also had to rest. When this was still new, everybody would try to observe what they heard.

So was this always observed?

Rachel: They would only go hunting when there was a need to go hunting. We also heard that if there was an animal hunted on Sunday, it was obligatory to finish whatever was caught on that day. As there were only a few of us in an entire camp, it was not always possible to eat it all. If you were not hungry and you were not in need, you did not go hunting as you could always hunt the next day.

What different ways of life did the Catholic priest bring to the people?

Rachel: The ministers and the priests wanted people to rest on Sunday, not to do any work, but it seemed different. Those who were Catholic would go hunting more than the Anglicans. This was not so long ago. This was even after we had ministers.

Why was it that the old songs were not to be sung anymore?

Rachel: Are you talking about *ajaaajaa*? Is that what you are referring to as old songs? We were told that we were to turn our back on our old life and start a new life. We were to let go of anything that was old. That is the reason those of us from the Tununirmiut area, those who lived in Mittimatalik and Kangiq&ugaapik dropped our *ajaaajaa* songs right away. It was only after I was taken to the Iglulik area as an adult that I finally heard and saw *ajaaajaa* songs and drumming with the *qilaut*. In our area, we didn't sing these songs.

Did you have to let go of other things besides ajaaajaa?

Rachel: We didn't even hear those. Whenever I heard an *ajaaajaa*, I'd start singing it in my head over and over again. When I heard that *ajaaajaa* playing through my head, I started singing it quietly while my parents were asleep. Although my father seemed to be asleep, he said we were not to be singing those songs anymore, for they belonged to the people who had no religion.

What other things were you told to stop?

Rachel: We stopped *pittailiniq*, and stopped *sakaniq* and *qilaniq* and anything that belonged to the *angakkuit*. We were told not to follow these at all. We were even told not to believe in our dreams anymore, for people used their dreams to know what was going on. We were also told to stop other things. For example, when a person's ear was ringing, people believed that somebody would catch an animal that was not ordinarily caught and bring back meat than we don't normally eat.

Where did we get this belief that if our ear was ringing, someone was thinking of us?

Rachel: People had different ways of knowing what was going on. We were also told to stop believing in these things when we got religion. Even though they were told not to follow them, people still believed them.

Would this cause a problem?

Rachel: It didn't cause a problem for me, because I wasn't really aware of what was going on. I didn't really try to see what was going on. I never heard or saw anything supernatural from the time I grew up until now.

I forgot to ask you some questions about the start of religion in Iglulik. Is it okay if I ask about it?

Rachel: Yes. Except that I am the kind of person who forgets things as my life goes on. I'll tell you about things as I remember them. I remember that when I was a child, Anglicans and Catholics didn't seem to like each other.

Was it that way?

Rachel: Yes. There was a minister and there was a priest at the same time. The community seemed to become separated. That's the way it was. They didn't want their followers to go to the church of the other. The minister did not want his people to go to the Catholic church, and the priest did not want the Catholics to go to the Anglican church. Before we knew about denominations, it did not matter whether a person was Anglican or Catholic. They would try to follow the Christian religion, and they would teach each other about it. They were trying to follow things that were good, and they did not take into consideration whether it might be an Anglican or a Catholic thing. Those that stayed at the trading post became accustomed to seeing ministers. Those of us who lived outside the community never saw a minister. The minister and the priest came at the same time to Mittimatalik by ship and they stayed there. We went to Iglulik that Christmas, and for the first time there was a minister. At that time we didn't know much, and since it was Christmas we were given Communion. We were told not to pray at the Catholic church.

Why was that?

Rachel: Because they thought it was a different religion. I don't know. Because we were told not to go to pray in the Catholic church, we didn't do so. There were those who would choose not to listen, and they would pray in the Catholic church.

After you were told by the ministers and the priests that you were not to go to the church of the other, did it seem that your community was not unified anymore?

Rachel: Yes, it seemed as if we were separated into two then.

If one person was following the Catholic church and another person was following the Anglican church and they had grown up as friends, did they stop being friends?

Rachel: No, they did not really stop being friends. This only affected what church they went to, especially on Sundays. That's when they stopped going to pray in the other church. Back then, there were no actual churches. They would pray together in people's houses.

Did you really not know that you were praying to the one God, and that you had to work together?

Rachel: It was before this was well known. Our ministers and our priests seemed to want more people in their churches. Therefore they didn't want them going to the other church. Because of the way they were, our community seemed to be divided. People stopped going to the church of the other. Those that went to the Catholic church sang their own hymns. Even though we were Anglican, we would also sing the hymns of the Catholic church.

When you were told about religion and you were given rules to follow, how were those rules given to you?

Rachel: We read our Bibles. They were available. People didn't do as much reading then, so they heard about the rules they had to follow and what they shouldn't do by word of mouth. Even though it turned out that all of this was in the Bible and prayer books, we didn't use them often. They were used in church, but because we didn't understand this right away, we listened more to what was said. We seemed to believe more in what was told to us about the things we had to do or not to do.

Was it because it was so new?

Rachel: Yes, it was because it was so new we didn't fully understand it. There were parts that we had more difficulty to understand. Even after we became capable of reading the Bible, sometimes we wouldn't understand what we read. People probably weren't all like that. There were some who were able to understand what they read.

After you had accepted religion were there people who still clung to the pittailliniit about what type of meat that could not be eaten, or to restrictions for pregnant women? Did you use these for a while or did you drop them right away?

Rachel: I don't know. I don't remember this happening. People would talk about the things that they weren't supposed to do. They would reminisce about them. If, for instance, a woman was pregnant and the baby was born early, they would discuss what had to be observed back then that they didn't have to do any more. They would be happy that they didn't need to refrain from certain things any more. They knew that they would have endured a lot of hardship. I often heard people expressing gratitude that they no longer had to follow the *pittailliniq*. The situations where *pittailliniq* had to be observed most often were menstruation and miscarriage.

If a man was from the Catholic church and a woman was from the Anglican church, were they allowed to get married?

Rachel: At first they were told that they couldn't marry each other. Those who were following the Anglican religion could only marry another follower. Also, if anyone was in the Catholic church they could only marry somebody who was a fellow Catholic. This was the way it was in Iglulik. As a result people got married to their relatives.

Why did they want it like this?

Rachel: Because we were too ignorant about this, we didn't understand it well.

Did you dislike it in any way?

Rachel: No, we were told to follow this, and we just followed it. We would sometimes hear people gossiping in disbelief about someone who was going to marry a Catholic. We were very conscious of it. But things did change. People started getting married to others from different denominations. Now, people get together for a while, and then separate shortly after. Back then, parents talked to each other and that's how marriages were arranged. Also, marriages were arranged when people were quite young. Those who had an arranged marriage would get together when they became of age. Those who had arranged marriages that did not take place, might have ended up with another spouse. Where we lived I saw this happening, and I heard about people from the Iglulik and the Tununiq area that ended up with another spouse even though a marriage had been arranged ahead of time. They were able to find another spouse. But if the person that she was to marry came, he would take her away from the man she was then living with. I would hear about this. I never saw this sort of thing where I grew up.

So that man would have his wife taken away?

Rachel: Yes, it must have been very sad.

In the past, when you were given qallunaat names by the ministers what did you think?

Rachel: I didn't have any thoughts about it. We were baptized and we would be asked what name we wanted to have. We would look into the Bible for a name that we wanted. Then we would tell the minister the name that we wanted and we would be baptized with that name. We would have already indicated the name we wanted. We would be told that we had to look for a name in the Bible. We would be baptized with the name that we had chosen. We were asked what name we wanted. We got to choose our own name.

Did you ask for the name Rachel?

Rachel: Yes, being an Inuk, I asked for Raigili.

Did many people get baptized?

Rachel: Those who wanted to be baptized would be baptized together. At the time that my husband and I were getting baptized, we were the only ones baptized. People discussed amongst themselves if they wanted to be baptized, and then they were baptized together.

Were there any rules about men and women being baptized separately?

Rachel: Couples would be baptized side-by-side when there were a number of them. Sometimes people who had been baptized in the Catholic church would decide to be baptized in the Anglican church. There was one occasion where a person who had decided to become an Anglican was not baptized because he had already been baptized. He was just given instruction on being an Anglican.

Were you confirmed after you were baptized?

Rachel: It was quite some time after we were baptized while we were living in Iglulik, that we were confirmed. Those who had been living where there was a minister had already been confirmed. But because we lived outside of the community for a long time, we were confirmed when we moved to Iglulik, but it didn't happen right away. When we indicated that we wanted to be confirmed, we would be given instruction before our confirmation. There were quite a number of us getting confirmed at the same time since the bishop was coming, because our minister did not have the power of confirming. When the bishop arrived we were confirmed.

How were children baptized?

Rachel: It was only after we were told that everyone had to be baptized, that even newborn babies were baptized. Even then we would have to go to the minister to tell him we wanted our child to be baptized, and we would be given instruction as to what to teach the children as their understanding grew. We had to teach them how to live their lives as Christians. Even the ones who were a little older, the ones in the *amauti* would all be baptized at the same time.

Would there be a celebration?

Rachel: It was a joyous time when there was a baptism. We would be told how we had to bring the child up. We would be happy that we had more understanding about being Christian. As children grew up, we were not always able to give them instruction. As they grew older we would try to teach them and we would try to read and pray with them. As they became older it was more difficult to teach them these things. Once they started going to school, we would always try to say the Lord's Prayer in the morning with them. If they were in too much of a rush, they would go to school without praying.

Were there any Inuit who did not want a qallunaatitut name ?

Rachel: I never knew of this happening.

Back then, was it only the adults who were baptized?

Rachel: Yes, because we would only occasionally go to where there was a minister. Then the adults would be baptized. We would only be there for a short while because we were living elsewhere.

Was it only after there was a church that baptism took place?

Rachel: Yes, only after there was a church, people got baptized. Also, only those who had been confirmed could receive Communion. Because we didn't know better, we had taken Communion before we were confirmed. When the minister first arrived and found out that we weren't confirmed, we were told that only those who had been confirmed could receive Communion. We stopped receiving Communion until after we were confirmed.

Why was this?

Rachel: Maybe to help us become stronger in our faith.

I think this is still the practice. Has this practice been carried on since then?

Rachel: It was only after there were ministers that we heard about this. We were only taught this after ministers started living in our community. We didn't know about this before.

Were the Catholics the same?

Rachel: Yes. They use the word *tamuasuk* for Communion while we use the word *kummuniumi*.

Only those who had been confirmed received Communion?

Rachel: We would only occasionally go to the Catholic church, so I'm not really sure what they do. It's only now that we have people from the Anglican and the Catholic church praying together annually. It isn't a daily occurrence, just occasionally.

When were you confirmed?

Rachel: After we had learned about confirmation. It was only after decided to be confirmed that we started being given instruction. We had to indicate our desire to be confirmed. After the summer, the bishop arrived, and we were confirmed.

Did you have to take instruction for a long time?

Rachel: This happened because the bishop who had arrived to do the confirmations had to leave suddenly, so we were not confirmed. He left without confirming anyone, so we had to wait until the following summer to be confirmed. During the summer, we always lived outside of the community. We were not there over the summer to get instruction. It was only when we came back to where there was a minister, that we were given instruction again.

Did the people who were confirmed receive Communion right away?

Rachel: Yes, when we were confirmed, we started receiving Communion.

Was there a celebration after this?

Rachel: Yes we would celebrate. We would indicate our gratitude. We would accept that we were not able to do things without the help of God.

Would you all get together?

Rachel: It would be in the church before we went out.

How did you celebrate?

Rachel: Because there were so many things to do, we had our celebration in the church.

Were those who had just been confirmed allowed to receive Communion first?

Rachel: When Communion was being given, they were just part of the congregation and they just joined the others who were having Communion.

When a person died and a baby was born the next day, would the baby be given the name of the person who has just died?

Rachel: With some people it happened that way. There were some people who would not name a baby after a person who had just died because the person had been sick for a while, and they wanted the person to have a chance to rest. On the other hand, some women did give the baby the name of a person who had recently died.

Did this happen because the person who had died had not been sick?

Rachel: This was done even if the person who died had been sick. These days I hear about people having their name given to children while they are still alive. It's as if they can't wait for the person to die. I have been told that there is a child named after me in Naujaat.

Is that their custom?

Rachel: Yes, because it is their custom.

I've heard that sometimes the child can be of assistance to the person they're named after. For instance, if the person was going to become sick, it is the child who becomes sick instead.

Rachel: I have not heard that. This is what I have heard. If a person is named while still alive, once the baby that has received the name has become able, the person holding the name would die. When I heard that my name had been given to a child, I thought they wanted me dead.

I have never heard about naming someone after a person who is still alive.

Rachel: What I've told you is what I've heard. I have never heard of it being helpful to the person they are named after. Maybe because this is not the kind of thing that is of concern to me, I have forgotten about it.

Is it true that the woman assisting in labour bestows characteristics or skills to the baby?

Rachel: I've never known of this to happen. I heard of this happening amongst the people from the Qikiqtarjuaq/Pangniqtuuq area. It was only these people, that used *arnaliaq* and *angusiaq*. In our area, the midwives didn't do anything like this.

Rachel, do you remember any of the prayers you used shortly after you became Christian?

Rachel: I can't really remember the words. There were different kinds of prayers. This is true even today. There are different prayers used depending on the reason for the prayer. At the time we went through *siqqitirniq*, there was a prayer used, but I can't remember the words. All of us who were present prayed. We prayed silently while our leaders prayed. I don't remember what the words were. It was only afterwards, when I became aware, that we were told that we had to gather together to pray. We were trying to follow what was in the Bible, what was in the prayer books, as we were becoming more religious. Whenever anyone was sick, we would have prayers for them in someone's house. Not for a fatal sickness, but for instance, if somebody had a very bad cold or was not feeling well we would pray for this person. We had different kinds of prayers, so I can't really say what the words of the prayers were. We would pray to be given meat. The hunters would pray to be given game for food in the morning before they went out hunting. Also, whenever people were experiencing difficulty, they would pray in their dwellings. There wasn't a gathering. They would just pray in their dwelling. They would pray for what they would want. It was only on Sundays they gathered to pray and sing hymns. Also, if there was someone who had been sick for awhile, even though there were people in the household, others would come over to pray if this person was not getting better.

Can you tell us more about when the ministers arrived for the first time?

Rachel: I can't tell you the year they arrived. The minister and the priest arrived at the same time right after I had had my second child. The minister and the priest arrived together by ship at Mittimatalik. We heard about this. When the ice had formed and someone went trading at Mittimatalik we learned of their arrival. I am not able to tell you the year.

Was it in the winter or the summer?

Rachel: They arrived in the summer. When the ice formed and people went trading, we found out about their arrival. I had given birth that winter. When Christmas came, we went to Mittimatalik to spend Christmas there. The houses seemed very far apart back then, but

by today's measurements they were close together. The Anglican church and the Catholic church seemed very far apart, but it turned out they were not that far apart really.

At the time the ministers went to Iglulik and there were two religions, was that a problem?

Rachel: There was a minister in Mittimatalik first. This was long after we had heard about Christianity. When the minister and the priest finally came to Iglulik at the same time on the ship, we started praying in church. The priest did not want their followers praying in the Anglican church and the ministers did not want their followers praying in the Catholic church. That's when the rift happened. Before that we weren't like that because we didn't know about different denominations. Our elders would just tell us that they tried to follow everything they heard about religion.

Was this a problem for some families?

Rachel: It was shameful to show any affection for your relatives that were not of the church you belonged to.

When was it that the church was first built?

Rachel: In Mittimatalik they would pray in the mission house. The church was not separate. They lived in one part. They prayed in another part of the same building. There were two ministers. One was called Mikiniqsaq [John Turner] and the other was called Anginiqsaq [Harold Duncan]. That's what they called them.

Have you heard about the minister who shot himself?

Rachel: I've heard about him. He was Mikiniqsaq. He had been up there for quite a while. He was living outside of Mittimatalik in a place called Siuralik. He had a wife and two children.

Was it on purpose?

Rachel: Because he had been up North a long while, he had dogs and could travel by dogteam. He would travel to different communities on his own. He would also go hunting without other hunters. He could even build an *iglu*. He would travel to other camps on his own. He was able to do this on his own because he had been up North a long time. One summer he was trying to shoot this seal. He was on the shore and it seemed that the seal did not come up again. The rifle was fully loaded and he was coming back into his house. Somebody had put ice in a *qattaq*. He picked up the *qattaq* that had ice in it. He was holding both the rifle and the bucket. He was about to open the door. He must have tripped on

something and he shot himself. He didn't die right away when he shot himself. They started talking to each other by radio. There was a lake that was hardly frozen and they came to get him by plane. It was after they took him down South that he died.

Where was the first church built? Can you tell us more about the first church that you saw in Mittimatalik?

Rachel: Those two ministers lived in part of the building and the other part was the church. We used to pray in the upstairs portion.

What was the first time you went into church like?

Rachel: Myself, I was a little bit scared because I scared easily. When we arrived where there was a minister for the first time, I was quite worried because I thought the minister would know what kind of sins I had committed. Every time we were about to arrive there, even after I had seen a minister before, everytime we would be coming into Mittimatalik, I would start thinking back to what sins I had committed, because I didn't want to come to the minister with sins. When we would get to Mittimatalik I would get quite worried. I was quite scared because I didn't know what would be done to me. We were on our way to pray. It was during prayer time. They did not do anything scary at all. They were very welcoming. They were smiling. When we saw the ministers for the first time we would think, "They are *qallunaat*." And yet, when they started reading the Bible, they read in Inuktitut. But when we tried to talk to them in Inuktitut it would seem like they didn't understand. It didn't seem they were able to speak Inuktitut. When they were reading from the Bible they were able to read and were understandable. As they got to know more Inuktitut, they became better at speaking to Inuit.

Where did they get those Bibles that were in Inuktitut?

Rachel: Those of us who lived close to Pangniqtuuq got them from Pangniqtuuq by dogteam. We received Bibles and prayer books and hymnals. We had received these already and we were learning to read and write. It was after we had learned to read these Bibles that we finally got to see a minister.

*Were those the ones that were called *tungujuqtat*, those hymnals?*

Rachel: The first hymnals that I saw were wide and short, and the lettering was far apart. People only knew the hymns that were in the hymnals. When we heard the hymn for the first time, the tune would start playing in our heads and we would try to learn the hymn. The first hymn in the hymnal was: "At night before I go to sleep and in the morning when I wake up, I remember you Jesus." When we got our new hymnal, this became the second hymn. When

we were growing up this was always the first hymn. It was the first hymn for a long while. It was only later when I was in Iglulik, that the blue hymnals were delivered to us and it became the second hymn.

The first hymn should have been the second one?

Rachel: Maybe it didn't have to be the first hymn. Also, back then, I remember little hymnals that I saw for the first time made for children. It was quite some time after we had ministers that those came out. In the same way whenever we learned any new hymn we would be playing it in our heads and we would try to learn it. When we would learn a new hymn, I would think I wanted to learn all the hymns. I haven't heard some of the hymns for a while. I can't remember all of them.

Could you tell us about the differences between having a qallunaaq minister for a while and getting an Inuk minister. After Noah Nasuk became your minister, can you tell us about the differences?

Rachel: I am not aware of any differences. Noah Nasuk came to Iglulik by dogteam from Mittimatalik to be the minister in Iglulik. He came to replace the *qallunaaq* minister. He learned from the *qallunaaq* minister so he seemed to be just the same.

Did he make any changes or was it just the same?

Rachel: It was just the same. We had to follow all that the *qallunaaq* minister told us. Noah Nasuk told us the same things about having to go to church. Because he was an Inuk, he too would camp out for a while and even when we were outside of the community, we would always pray in a tent. That's the way we were.

When you went to church for the first time, what was the feeling that you had?

Rachel: I was kind of scared as I was entering the church because I was not sure what was expected of us. Also we were seeing a minister for the first time. And because he was a *qallunaaq*, I thought he was going to speak *qallunaatitut*. Once we started praying, he started reading from the prayer book in Inuktitut. I thought he was able to do this because he was receiving help from God.

When you went to church for the first time and you were scared, were you a child or were you an adult?

Rachel: I was an adult. I already had children when I saw a minister for the first time.

What was the appearance of the church that you entered?

Rachel: It was attractive. All *qallunaaq* housing looked attractive, because we were still living in *igluit* and *qarmait* then. Any *qallunaaq* housing looked attractive.

What were the causes of death in the past?

Rachel: We all have different life spans. So death is something that has been with us even up to today.

Before religion started, what would be done with the body of the person who died?

Rachel: In the days before there were coffins, and because we did not have fabric, the bodies were wrapped in caribou skin. The caribou skin was either an *alliniq* or a *qipik*. They were not put in wood boxes. They piled up stones and they would put the body inside the pile. In the winter, when there was snow, there were times when we did not have much game. When there was more game we would have more possessions. Sometimes, they would just put the body in the snow, having wrapped it in caribou skin. The body would be put on the ground and covered with snow. In the summer or late spring, they would arrange stones so there would be a hollow and they would put the body in there. Sometimes they would take the body by dogteam. It would be placed on the *qamutiik* and they would go to bury it. Sometimes they would not be brought by dogteam and the people would drag the *qamutiik* instead. They would go to bury them like that.

What happened when the snow melted? Would they be left there?

Rachel: Once they were buried, they were left there. When the snow thawed, it melted all around them and they ended up just on the ground.

Did you have any kind of pittaliniq when someone died?

Rachel: I was not aware of this happening because they did this before religion when there were *angakkuit*. I have only heard of that happening at the time of the *angakkuit*.

Nowadays when someone dies and is buried, a cross is put on their grave. Were they also given markers back then? Were crosses placed on their graves?

Rachel: There were no markers placed on their graves. Crosses were not placed. During a burial there would be a prayer, and they would be put in the ground. Then they would pray before they left.

When did the placing of crosses start happening?

Rachel: Just recently after we had started living in Iglulik.

Before there was religion they did not pray for the dead, did they?

Rachel: After we learned of religion, there was prayer before the body was taken out. The family that had lost a relative would be prayed for. Then, they would pray at the grave, after the burial. Because they didn't live in large groups sometimes it would just be the family present. Because I was never aware of death for a long time, I never saw a burial. I have heard that sometimes it would be just the family who would be present at the burial.

Are you able to tell us what prayer was said?

Rachel: As I said earlier, the prayer would depend on the occasion. They would pray for food or to be given power, whenever they were going to do something. They prayed for assistance. When they prayed at a burial, they probably prayed the same prayer. People prayed for the ones left behind. Sometimes we were told to pray in the morning. When we would pray in the morning, we would pray for the families that were left behind.

When they died, were any of their personal possessions put in their graves with them?

Rachel: Yes, even more so before Christianity. I have heard that before Christianity, when they buried someone, they would go back to the grave again with the personal possessions and these would be placed all around the edge of the grave. I am only telling you what I have heard. After the bodies started being put in wooden coffins, all their clothing would also be put into the coffins. Their personal possessions would be divided among the family.

Before there was wood, was the body put under rocks? Was it wrapped in cloth?

Rachel: Because we did not have store-bought fabric, the person would be wrapped in their blanket or in their *alliniq*. People would go to bury the person. They arranged rocks around the body to form a grave. They did not place rocks on the body. The body was placed inside a circle of rocks.

With their clothing on?

Rachel: They would wear their clothing. They would have their clothing on.

Did people go and visit the grave from time to time?

Rachel: Yes, family members would go to visit the grave. Those who lost a family member in the winter time would stay at home. Only those who had gone to the burial knew where they were. Those who did not go to the burial did not know where the body was placed. When they wanted to find out where the body was placed, they would be shown where it was buried. If people didn't ask where the body was, they wouldn't be shown. You knew that the people who had not been to the burial would constantly search for where the body was buried.

What did the ministers do if the deceased had not been baptized?

Rachel: Even though they were not baptized, they would be prayed for. They would have a prayer at the funeral. Whether they were baptized or not, the funeral prayer would be said at their burial.

After people became Christians, was there a change in the way people were buried?

Rachel: It is only now that the prayers have changed. I think they were changed so they were easier to understand. Prayers are said at funerals. That's what they do.

Before Christianity, who would preside over the prayers?

Rachel: I don't remember when there was absolutely no religion. I was too young then. I probably was born before there was Christianity, but the *siqqitirniq* ritual seems to be my first recollection. As I grew up, I was only aware of being Christian. The person who was able to read best would be the one to do the prayers. That's the way it was. Whenever people gathered to pray, whoever was able to read was the one who led the prayers.

We are going to be asking you about beliefs back then and beliefs now. Are they different? Do they do more in church today?

Rachel: Before there was a minister we prayed together only on Sundays. That's the way it was. Whenever there was sufficient food they were instructed not to do anything on Sundays. This was before there was a minister. They were also trying to listen to what they were told. It seems that now, even though there are ministers, people don't seem to listen to what they have to follow. Maybe because there are so many people in one place, people are ignoring the things they have to do. There are still some people who try to follow the teachings they were given. Because there are so many people and the workers are always working, they don't follow what they are supposed to. This is because there are too many people gathered together in one place.

*Back then, even when there was no minister, people used to pray.
Now that there are ministers there are a number of people not going to church.
Is it because they are too busy?*

Rachel: Since we started having churches there are those who continue to go to church, even though they work. Nowadays, especially when there are things that need to be done, there are fewer people in church. Even in these days when it is easier to understand the Word of God there are fewer people in church. Nowadays, there are reasons, such as illness or emergencies, or sickness in a family or someone has a disability. Those people don't go to church. Sometimes people will go to pray with these people instead. This is something they have to do as Christians.

Are the present beliefs the same as they were back then or are they different?

Rachel: They are still the same beliefs, but we are learning more and more things that we hadn't heard of back then. That's what seems to be different. People now know more than they did and as they hear new things, they try to follow them. Back then, everything was learned by word of mouth because not everybody was able to read the Bible. It was through word of mouth they got their knowledge and instructions. Those who were able to read the Bible would try to teach what they understood. Now that we have ministers, we are given what we need to know. We are also better able to read our Bibles. If we tried harder we would be able to do a lot better, but we do not always try our utmost. We don't seem to do well. We have a tendency to forget. When we understand what is said we can remember. Those of us who have a hearing problem will forget something if we don't really understand it. We don't want to remember it if we don't understand it. Back then, the priests and the ministers were separated. These days the Anglicans and the Catholics seem more unified. It seems like a new religion has surfaced.

*In the past the Catholics and the Anglicans were really divided. Now that these two churches seem more united, a new denomination has surfaced.
Do you think whenever unity seems to be achieved something new comes up to divide us?*

Rachel: From what I have heard, on the last day, before Jesus returns all people have to be one. We know there are people trying to become one. Those of us in Iglulik had a minister, but we don't have a minister anymore. Sometimes there is a priest and sometimes there isn't a priest. There is a joint annual prayer service with both churches. Even those that are part of the third denomination get together and pray with us. We don't do this daily. We do this in the early spring and it shows we are trying to work together to become one. We are working hard at helping each other. The Catholic and the Protestant churches are trying to work

together. Back then, when we just got ministers and priests, there was not this unity. As we learn more, as we understand more, we work today to become more unified. We have heard that before Jesus returns, we are going to become one. We can see that this is beginning to happen.

Even though this is presently happening, is there a sense that some people are trying to disrupt this?

Rachel: There are those who try to tempt us from religion. I'm not pointing fingers at these people who are trying to tempt us, but if you read what has been written then you can understand what is happening. Because we are not able to have only one church, there are healing gatherings that go on. Using these healing sessions, people try to get together and heal themselves. This includes prayer. This is the only way we can do it. If we do not let go of our problems, they are going to get worse. That's what we consider healing. When people are in a healing session they are confessing.

Do you have to go through confession as part of healing?

Rachel: Yes, it is part of healing.

Is it acceptable just to express your regret to ordinary people?

Rachel: We have been told that sometimes confessions become the source of gossip. This does become a problem and it does happen with some people. If a person discloses something in a confession, we are not to be spreading that around. During a healing session, if someone makes a confession, then people are not to talk about what happened. Whatever is said in a healing session is not discussed. Maybe this doesn't happen as much now, but back then if someone was talking to an individual then that would sometimes become a source of gossip.

A little while ago you said that some people are sangutittinasuk. I have never really understood what that means.

Rachel: In the Bible it is written that if a person only thought about the present life they were living, and they hadn't considered that their soul would continue to live on, and they tried to convince others of this, they would be *sangutittinasuk*. They would tell us that this is all there is, there is nothing else ahead, but we know that our faith in Christianity is going to continue. We as people are all different. We have different beliefs. There are people who are able to say this because of their faith. It is what they believe.

Is this someone who is trying to make a believer out of a non-believer?

Rachel: No. A person would believe either way. It would be if their belief was made to change.

Even though there are different denominations now, could there be another religion? You said there were three churches in your community, do you think there could be another church?

Rachel: I do not know if another denomination could come up. I have heard that we can have different beliefs and there can be different churches. I have heard that there are people who have idols that they pray to. It is because of this that we really have to try to understand religion.

I wanted to ask when and why people prayed outside of the church. You said when there was someone who was sick people prayed at their homes. Were there any other times?

Rachel: When there is someone who was sick or someone who was unable to go to church, then people would go to that person's house to pray. They would go and pray in their house. We have also been told that God's spirit is not contained in any one building. No matter where you are, even out on the land, you can pray, even working or being outside or walking you can pray, as God's spirit is not in one location. It is everywhere and that's why we do this. We have always prayed even when we were outside. If we wanted to pray, we would pray. Even if we were alone, we could pray just in our heads, when we were requesting help from God. You can pray anywhere. We have been told this and we believe what we have been told.

The Anglican and Catholic churches are the oldest churches. I have heard they will no longer exist in the future. Do you believe this?

Rachel: I have not heard that they will no longer exist.

I seem to have heard that these two churches will be replaced when religion becomes unified.

Rachel: We would be told that those who went to the Anglican church who wanted to become Catholic were *ikaaqtut*. The same applies to Anglicans. We were also told that as we become more unified, it wouldn't matter what church we go to. We are just to remain in the church we belong to. We should just wait and then we will become one in Jesus. I have not heard that these two religions will not exist in the future.

I would like to know what you think of this unification, because in the Bible it is written that when they had one language, they were trying to create a tower to Heaven. What do you think about this?

Rachel: If they become one, not everyone is going to be part of this. Even though they are trying to unify religion in order to help each other. I think this will be a good thing.

This is now our last session. Therefore, is there anything else that you would like to express?

Victor: Yes. I would like to say that when I was at home, I was told that when you stay in one place, you start getting sick easily and that you become tired. I was told that when you leave for a while when you come back home that you come back rejuvenated. I am very thankful and happy and grateful that you asked me to come because I have become more relaxed for a while. I am happy that I was requested to come. I am happy about this. I am thankful to you and although I should feel tired I don't feel tired. That's the way I am, so I am really happy.

Rachel: I too would like to express my gratitude. What he has said is true for me also. When you stay in one place all the time you get tired of it. There are times when you feel very tired and your body doesn't want to do anything and you start not feeling well, maybe because you are tired. When you go to another place for a while, even when you are gone outside of the community, you come back rejuvenated. You come back rested and happier. I too have gone through this just like he has just said. We are very happy to be here. We are not young anymore and we were brought here. Coming back to our home will be so much happier. Also, during our stay here, we have been guided by God. I am happy about this. The people we have stayed with have made us feel welcome and we are thankful for that. I would like to sing this hymn. I learned it when I was a child. It comes from the hymnal. It is about how we are always helped through our life by God. Whenever I am requested to go anywhere else, I always sing this and here it is.

Jiisusiup saimmaqsautinga,

The peace of Jesus,

Ataataup naglingninga,

The love of the Father,

Anirnirjuup ilagiingninga,

The unity of the Holy Spirit,

Qaujittainnarlavut.

Let us know them.

Tagva inuuniaqpugut

Therefore we will live

Nagliktigiilaarluta,

In loving each other,

Piksaqarluta takpaanngat,

Receiving what we need from up there,

Quvianalaaqtunik.

Which will be joyous.

Qujannamiik.

Thank you.

Aangarnisat

Amauti with very pronounced shoulders.
Also see *tuilit*.

Aaqqigait

Home made bullets.

Aaqsiiq

A game played in teams. The side that would make the other side smile or make a noise would win.

Aarnguaq

An amulet.

Aglu

Seal breathing hole. Pl. *Agluit*.

Aivilik

Settlement of Repulse Bay; "place where there are walrus." Also *Naujaat*.

Ajaajaa

A type of traditional song.

Ajautaq

The string attached to a *qiviutaq*.

Ajuriksuijiit

Anglican ministers.

Aki

The place where the meat was kept inside the *iglu*.

Akiraqtuq

When an *angakkuq* went down into the earth when going against another person.

Akiraqtuutiniq

When people are hostile towards each other.

Akulik

An *amauti* with a pointed hood. It also has an *akuq*.

Akulliarjuq

A late-summer caribou skin. The fur is beginning to get a little thicker.

Akuq

Back flap of an *amauti*.

Alaq&ugu

Turning your head away from something.

Alliniq

The topmost layer of bedding.

Aluk

Food that was eaten with a spoon. It usually contained caribou fat, blubber, soft meat, *ptarmigan* droppings and berries.

Amajurjuq

Pl. *amajurjuut*. Beings that live on the land that take someone who is alone and put them in their *amauti*.

Amauti

A parka with a large hood and a pouch for carrying babies.

Amittermiut

People of the Igloodik and Hall Beach area.

Angaju

Elder sibling of the same sex as oneself.

Angajuqtaujaq, angijuqtaujaq

An *amauti* has the same pattern as an *akulik* but is circular at the bottom instead of having flaps.

Angakkuq

A shaman.

Angaluk

Also can be called *tapsi*. The belt of an *angakkuq*.

Angusiaq

A male delivered or “made” by a midwife; they then have a kind of godmother/godson relationship.

Aniattuq

A person who disclosed their wrong-doings.

Anngiaqarniq

Not disclosing a wrong-doing.

Anngutarngauti

First catch.

Arjiksaq

Coal.

Arnaliaq

A girl delivered or “made” by

a midwife; they then have a kind of godmother/goddaughter relationship.

Arraaq

Placenta.

Arviat

Community formerly known as Eskimo Point.

Arviligjuaq

Pelly Bay (now, Kuugaruk).

Arviq

Bowhead whale.

Asanaqtuq

Someone who angers easily and needs to be appeased.

Atiriac

The white part of an *amauti* around the hood.

Avvuq

[Iglulik] Collecting edible plants. Also *nunivak*.

Igititaq

[Nattilik] Fat or blubber that is boiled to removed the oil.

Igliq

The bed platform in an *iglu*.

Iglu

Snow house. Pl. *igluit*. Also any dwelling.

Igluligaarjuk

Chesterfield Inlet.

Igunaq

Fermented meat.

Ijiraq

Pl. *ijirait/ijiqqat*. Human-like beings who show themselves as caribou.

Ijiraqtuqtuq

A person carrying out an action but not letting anyone know about it.

Ijuriqtuq

Correcting a person whose actions are not appropriate.

Ikaaqtut

To change from one religion to another.

Ikajuqti

A shaman's spirit helper. Also called a *tuurngaq*.

Ikinniq

Term for *qamutiik* or sled in the language of the *angakkuut*.

Iksirarjuat

Catholic priests.

Iktitaq

[Iglulik] Fat or blubber that is boiled to remove the oil.

Iliarjuk

Pl. *Iliarjuut*. Orphan.

Iliqqusiq

Customs.

Iliiranaqtuq

To be intimidating.

Iliirasuk

To be intimidated.

Ilisiq

A hex.

Illaq

An animal foetus.

Illumiqtaujuq

A person who is possessed by something evil.

Ingiurniq

Singing accompanying a drum dance.

Inullarik

A real Inuk.

Inurajaq

Pl. *inurajait*. Invisible beings that had footprints. They could be seen by dogteams.

Iqaluktuuttiaq

Cambridge Bay.

Iqquqtaq

The upper part of the sleeve of an *amauti*.

Iqsinaqtuq

Scary, as in wild animals.

Irinaliutit

Incantations.

Irgutaq

Pl. *irngutait* grandchild.

Isarrutalik

See *tulluk*.

Isumasiuriniq

Allowing a child to do what he or she wants so the child doesn't become upset or angry.

Isumataq

Camp leader.

Itinniq

The side parts on the pouch of an *amauti*.

Kaliku

The name of long parkas made from calico cloth, frequently worn in the *Qitirmiut* region.

Kamiik

A pair of seal skin boots.

Kangusuktuq

Is embarrassed.

Kanqiq&ugaapik

Clyde River.

Kappiasuktuq

Is afraid.

Kapurauti

An instrument used in the same manner as a fork.

Karngalaq

The moulting fur of a caribou.

Katajjarniq

[S. Baffin] Throat-singing.

Katak

Entrance to an *iglu*.

Kauk

Walrus hide, also the skin part of *maktaa*q or *maktak*.

Kigutarngirnait

Blueberries.

Kikpattuaqquti

The lower part of the sleeve of an *amauti*.

Kilingajuq

Not being allowed to eat certain parts of an animal [*tirigusungniq*].

Kinguppingajuq

A breech-birth baby.

Kiniq

Front flap of the *amauti*.

Kinngarjualik

Henry Voisey's trading post at Padlei.

Kisuliaq

Qualities bestowed on a child by the midwife.

Kivalliq

The Keewatin region.

Kukukpaaq

The point at the top of a hood.

Kumak

Louse. Pl. *kumait*.

Kumaruaq qilujaksat

Term for caribou in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Kummuniuni

Communion [Anglican].

Kuukuusik

Also *qalattivik*; a pig.

Kuvvirijauniq

Baptism [Catholic].

Majurajjuq

A person whose sickness travels upwards in the body.

Maktaa

Skin of a beluga or narwhal.

Maktak

Skin of a bowhead whale.

Maligaq

Pl. *maligait*. Something that is usually followed.

Manu

A caribou flap placed on the front of a child's one piece caribou outfit to keep the wind out.

Maulirniq

Seal hunting in the winter when the *agluit* were snow covered.

Mikigaaq

A call to come and get raw meat.

Miluktui

Sucking the mucous out of the baby's nose after birth.

Mittimatalik

Pond Inlet.

Nakkaajuq

Going down to Sedna.

Nangiaq

Fear of falling.

Nanuq

Polar bear.

Nanurlualuit

Beings the shape of polar bears but bigger. Beings like the *Ijiqqat*.

Narru

Be unhappy about a gift received.

Nasaq

Hood or hat.

Nattilik

Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven, Repulse Bay region.

Nattingmiut

People from the Pelly Bay, Gjoa Haven, Repulse Bay region.

Naujaat

Place name for Repulse Bay; the cliffs where the sea gulls nest north of the settlement.

Nigjait

Fringe.

Ningarniq

Spousal assault.

Ningauk

Son-in-law, daughter's husband; brother-in-law, man's sister's husband.

Nipinnngajuq

When the placenta became stuck during delivery.

Niqaisuuq

A call to come and get some meat.

Niqaiturvik

A house from which people could fetch meat.

Nugluktaq

Game where you try to get a stick in a hole.

Nuila

The trim on a hood of a garment.

Nuliajuk

[Qitirmiut], *Sanna* [S. Baffin], *Takannaaluk* [Iglulik]. Spiritual being

who lived in the sea. The *angakkuit* would go to visit her when game was scarce.

Nunaliralaq

Outpost camp.

Nunivak

Collect edible plants.

Pangniqtuuq

Pangnirtung.

Parlaniq

A candy scramble; candies were thrown off a roof and everyone would rush to get some.

Patiq

Bone marrow.

Piqannaariik

Living in a common-law relationship.

Piqujaq

Something that was requested to be done.

Pirujaq

[Nattilik] Anything that was cached other than fish. Cached caribou [Iglulik].

Pisiliit

Early prayer books.

Pisiq

Pl. *Pisiit*. A traditional song. These are now used as hymns.

Pittailiniq

Abstaining from doing something.

Puinirniq

[*Nattilik*] Caribou tallow.

Pukiq

The white part of a caribou skin when it is used as trim on a garment.

Punnirniq

[*Iglulik*] Caribou tallow.

Qaggiq

Large *iglu* used when people gathered together.

Qajaq

A one-person boat.

Qajuaq qilujaksat

Term for seal in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Qaksungauti

Tie for the *amauti*.

Qalattivik

Also *kuukuusik*; a pig.

Qaliruaq

A parka made from caribou with thin fur.

Qallunaaq

A white person. Pl. *qallunaat*.

Qallunaatitut

The English language.

Qalugiujaq

Tokens given to the *angakkuq* to hang on his belt.

Qamutiik

A sled.

Qangiaq

Pl. *qangiat*. Man's brother's child, nephew or niece through a brother of a man.

Qariaq

The side of the *iglu* where guests would sleep, also used for storage.

Qarlikallaak

Short pants.

Qarmaq

A sod house; also a snowhouse with the top covered by a tent.

Qattaq

A bucket to carry ice or water.

Qattipaaq

[*Utkusiksalik*] Throat-singing.

Qikiqtarjuaq

Community formerly known as Broughton Island.

Qilaniq

The ritual used to find the cause of what was bothering a person by tugging on a rope tied around the head of someone lying on their back. If the answer was affirmative the head was light; if the

answer was negative the head was heavy.

Qilaujjarniq
Drum dancing.

Qilauti
A traditional drum.

Qilujaksat
Term for animals in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Qingniq
Also *qingni*. Cached fish [*Nattilik*].
Cached sea mammals [*Iglulik*].

Qipitat
One hundred pelts.

Qirniq
Back trim on a garment.

Qitirmiut
People of the Central Arctic.

Qiviutaq
A piece of down that was used to indicate a seal was approaching an *aglu*.

Quamajaaq
A call to come and get frozen meat.

Quaq
Frozen meat.

Quattiaq
Term for a child in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Qujuuniq
The white part of a caribou skin.

Qukturautiik
Leg warmers.

Qulittaq
An outer parka made from caribou with thick fur.

Qulliq
The traditional seal-oil lamp made of soapstone.

Qunguliit
Mountain sorrel.

Saagiaqtuq
Turn to God.

Saalaksaqtuq
Winner.

Sailliqtujut
People who sit around not doing anything.

Sakaniq
The ritual singing of an *angakkuq*.

Sangutittinasuk
Trying to convince another person that their beliefs were false.

Sanilliaq
Term for a younger person in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Sanirairnirasuaq

When a seal was cut up by a woman in an iglu, children would be given little pieces of meat that they kept in their mouths until they reached home where they would eat it.

Sanna

[S. Baffin], *Nuliajuk* [Qitirmiut], *Takannaluk* [Iglulik]. See *Nuliajuk*.

Sanningajuliuqtut

Roman Catholics; “those who make the sign of the cross.”

Sapijaujuq

When an *angakkuq* was prevented from coming back when he had gone down into the earth.

Saqqaq

A summer caribou skin.

Siksik

A ground squirrel.

Singnaniq

Jealousy.

Sipiniq

A baby girl who is believed to turn into a boy during birth, according to traditional belief.

Sipsisajuq

When a baby is taking a long time to be born because it is in the process of becoming a *sipiniq*.

Siqqitiq

V. [N. Baffin]. Converting to Christianity.

Siqqitirniq

N. [N. Baffin]. Ritual to convert to Christianity.

Supiraluktuq

The string attached to the *qiviutaq*. When it was pushed up it indicated a seal was present.

Takannaluk [Iglulik], *Sanna* [S. Baffin], *Nuliajuk* [Qitirmiut].

Talurjuat

Community formerly known as Spence Bay.

Tamuasuk

Communion [Roman Catholic].

Tapsi

Also *angaluk*. The wide belt worn outside the *qulittaq*. An *angakkuq*'s belt could also be called a *tapsi*.

Tarniq

The soul.

Tarriassuk

Pl. *tarriassuit*. An invisible human-like being that can make itself visible to people. Also known as shadow people.

Tarriuq

Term for an *angakkuq* in the language of the angakkuit.

Tarrumaq

Name for the language of the *angakkuit*.

Tatitusaaq

Someone who takes a long time to do something after they have been asked.

Tattaujaq

A game similar “Blind Man’s Bluff” where the person who was blindfolded would try and hit one of the others. This game was played outside.

Tau

Term for Inuk in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Tauja

Term for a white person in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Tiraujait

Black and yellow lichen.

Tirigusiit

Refraining from something that was forbidden.

Tirigusungniq

Something that should not be done.

Tirliaq

When an *angakkuq* would try to look into the life of another person while that person was unaware that he was doing so.

Tivajuut

Traditional winter feast.

Tuilit

Amauti with very pronounced shoulders. Also see *aangarnisat*.

Tukirniq

The centre part of the pouch of an *amauti*.

Tulluk

Term for an old man in the language of the *angakkuit*, also *isarrutalik*.

Tulluut

Term for an old woman in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Tulurialik

Term for polar bear in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Tungujuqtat

Early hymnals that were blue in colour.

Tunnuq

Hard animal fat.

Tununirmiut

People from the Arctic Bay, Pond Inlet and Clyde River area.

Tupilaq

An evil *tuurngaq*.

Tuputaq

A peg used to pin the cut made in a seal while still out hunting.

Tusaarruuq

Having a song play over and over in your head.

Tuurngaq

Pl. *tuurngait*. A shaman's helping spirit. The Catholic priests took the term and used it for Satan.

Ua tamannaq

A game similar to "Blind Man's Bluff" where the person who was "it" would try to touch one of the others.

Uati

The wall of the *iglu* that contains the entrance.

Ujuru

Man's sister's child; nephew or niece through a sister of a man. Pl. *ujuruit*.

Ulu

A crescent-shaped woman's knife.

Umiarjuaq

A ship.

Unaaq

A harpoon.

Unnguit

[Also means warts]. Term for dogs in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Upak

[Amitturmiut] To go in the direction towards something.

Uqaujait

Willow leaves.

Uqsiuti

Any container to hold sea-mammal oil.

Uqsuliaq

Term for seal blubber in the language of the *angakkuit*.

Urnik

To go in the direction towards something.

Uruniq

Ptarmigan droppings.

Uujuq

Cooked, usually boiled, meat.

Uujuuq

A call to come and get cooked meat.

Uviluq

A mussel.

Vaaqtitauniq

Baptism [Anglican].









