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ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREENLANDIC IDENTITY

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Introduction

I shall, in this paper, try to see the Greenlandic identity both in relation to the regional subdivisions and in relation to its being used to distinguish one ethnic group from the other. As some of the terms used by different groups and at different times are not congruent, it is necessary to define some of them: *Inuk/Inuit* is used in the sense of a member of the Inuit people, including a Greenland Inuk. *Kalaaleq/Kalaallit* applies to the Greenland Inuk used by themselves, while *Greenlander* is a translation of the Danish term "Grønlænder", that sometimes means a Kalaaleq and sometimes a member of the Greenlandic community.

Prehistoric and historic background

The Greenland Inuit (and later on the Kalaallit) tell stories of other people: the Tornit (Tuniit in Inuktitut), the Eqqillit (Itqiliit), and the Igalillit. The Eqqillit and the Igalillit are legendary people with strong supernatural abilities, and they were themselves partly supernatural beings. Most of the descriptions of the Tornit are surprisingly realistic. Just as told in the Canadian Inuit stories of the Tuniit, the Tornit had houses without any dugout entrance, as they had a *paag* (Kr. Lynge 1957 I:97). The houses were provided with a smoke hole or a light hole in the roof instead of windows or panes (Bugge & Lynge 1945:90). They had no dogs, and were even afraid of them (Holtved 1951:266), and they had neither bows nor arrows (cfr. *ibid.*:270). They spoke a peculiar, but intelligible language (Bugge & Lynge 1945: 90).

The Qallunaat, i.e. the Norse settlers, were a people of foreign origin who lived in Greenland (Rink 1974:317), and who probably belonged to the same people as the Danes and the Norwegians who colonized Greenland about 1720, unlike the Dutch whalers, who appeared in Greenland in the 17th century, and who probably only in the beginning were called "Qablunaarsuit" which, according to the vocabulary from the 17th century, meant "strangers" (Resen 1987:104). In the early contact period, the distinction between different European nations was not quite clear (Rink 1974:262 f., 267). The Dutchmen were called Arfaliat, the Whalers, or Pukkitsormiut, the Netherlanders. For some reason, the Danes/Norwegians and the Dutchmen were later on regarded as two separate people. This might be due to two reasons: Feykes Haan, a Dutch whaling captain, wrote that he had met some Inuit, who could speak "Nether German", i.e. Dutch (Haan 1914:79), and that they might be able to distinguish Danish from Dutch; another reason might be still more evident, namely that they themselves maintained to be different from one another. But despite all the foreign people, the Inuit had reasonably regarded themselves as belonging to one people with common norms. Their traditions and language had an immediate relation to the common matters of their own. Their attitude towards their own culture was intuitive.

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Within the Inuit community, the main subdivision might be between people living close to your own settlement and people from the other regional communities. The latter were often the object of a number of prejudices. They were considered to be liars and untrustworthy; they were thievish and had other, irritating or ridiculous habits (Rink 1866: 294 f.). Of course, similar peculiarities occurred within your own local community, but there they were just considered to be individual traits. Some of the subdivisions were the Qavaat, the Southerners, who came in bands/crowds in late prehistoric and early historic times, and the Avannaamiut, the people to the North (ibid.:294). You might share a settlement, a hunting camp or a trading camp with them, and you might have friends among them, but still they belonged to strange communities.

Two separate ethnicities: the Inuit and the Danes/Norwegians.

Hans Egede and his group, who colonized West Greenland after 1721 were regarded as foreigners. From the early period they were called Qallunaat, probably because they were identified with the already extinct Norsemen, but it might have been the Norwegian group itself who gave the Inuit this idea. From the Inuit point of view, the Norwegians and the Danes formed one group, maybe because they were citizens of the same kingdom, could speak together, and formed one community in Greenland, etc., and if people knew the difference between them, it might be regarded in the same way as the subdivision of the Inuit. Thus, two separate people lived in Greenland:

(1) Inuit/Kalaallit, people living from hunting, with an organization based on individual households, all equal, speaking the same language, living in earthen houses, travelling in skin boats and, in some regions, also with dog traction, and believing in the old Inuit religion. They were engaged in household affairs. Cultural behavior between two members would be intuitive.

(2) Danes and Norwegians were not hunting people. They mostly ate imported food, lived in wooden houses, had contact with people on the other side of the sea, spoke an alien language, showed no respect for the non-interfering policy between the individual households, travelled in wooden boats, and were very fond of telling of their faith. They were interested in community affairs. The Inuit's behavior towards them would need explicit norms.

Both the Kalaallit and the Danes recognized to belong to two separate people, and, in the beginning, different means were taken, especially among the Danish civil servants, in order to avoid blood mixture. But in the course of time, mixed marriages occurred, and thus children of mixed blood occurred early.

Both in the public opinion and in the parish register we hear about and read both Inuit/Kalaallit, 'Grønlaendere' (Greenlanders), Qallunaat, 'Danske' (Danes, including the Norwegians and a few Swedes), and Akuttat, 'Blandinger' (people of mixed origin).

According to the parish register, children of a marriage between two Danes were Danes. Children of a marriage between two Inuit were "Greenlanders", and those of a marriage between a Dane and an Inuk had a "mixed" blood. Children of a marriage between two persons of mixed descent were "Greenlanders". Some of the children of a marriage between a Dane and a woman from a mixed marriage had the possibility to choose their identity.

The Danish or "Greenlandic" identity as defined in the beginning of the colonization according to descent, occupation, and social milieu created a rather clear ethnic border and can be described as follows:

- If mixed children became civil servants, they would be regarded as "Danes". Socially, they would live among the Danes.
- Hunters, fishermen and their families were "Greenlanders".
- If they became artisans, or catechists (assistant missionaries), it was, in the beginning, possible for them to get a Danish identity, but the conditions soon changed. "National artisans" and "national catechists", who soon emerged, were "Greenlanders".

During the rest of the period only a few artisans came from Denmark, and in this way a potential occupational competition along the ethnic border was avoided. A competition might create tensions (Shibutani & Kwan 1963:378).

Besides, many Danes, and not least their children, could earlier speak the Kalaallisut language, and therefore the question of language did not then interfere with the idea of "identity". The criterion was the social and cultural situation of the families and the individuals, and descent played an important role in this respect.

Today, descent still plays a role, beside the language, as far as the notion of identity is concerned. In fact, the Greenland Inuit are the persons whose parents have, both of them, a Greenlandic identity, and, to some degree, the persons whose parents are a Danish-Greenlandic couple. I know of only one family of brothers and sisters recognized by the local community as having Greenlandic identity too, even though both their parents are Danes. Each of them speaks Kalaallisut fluently.

On the notion of "Greenlandic identity"

Between 1910 and 1920, a kind of debate on identity took place in a periodical called "Avangnamioq". As it was edited once a month, and distributed once a year, the debate was calm in every respect. Some of the debaters maintained, that the question of Greenlandic identity depended on having the Greenland Inuit language as vernacular—(Fr. Lyngé 1913; J.Petersen 1918, B.Lyngé 1919), while others maintained, that it depended on having a "Greenlandic occupation", i.e. as a kayak hunter (J.Thorning 1917). The question of descent was not mentioned, but it was felt as a condition of the debate.

For many years, the former criterion dominated the opinion, namely that a person, whose parents had a "Greenlandic identity" and who himself/herself spoke Kalaallisut, had a "Greenlandic identity". This definition was maintained if the person lived in Greenland, but a person living in Denmark might be accepted as a Kalaaleq, if his/her parents, or just one of them, had a Greenlandic identity, even if he/she did not speak Kalaallisut (R.Petersen 1985). For one group, the identity situation might be somewhat problematic. Some children of mixed marriages told me that it was unpleasant to be referred to as a Dane in Greenland and as a Greenlander in Denmark. In this way they are always included under the other group.

Till about 1950, the Greenland administration distinguished between persons under Danish law and those under Greenlandic law. This situation was not mentioned in connection with the debate on identity. Later on, from the 1960's, when the demographic statistics concerning Greenland distinguished between "persons born in Greenland" and "persons born outside Greenland", it was not included in the identity debate either, but created another kind of debate. It was, however, sometimes used as a reference, when people maintained that there were 44,000 "Greenlanders", i.e. Kalaallit, or even 44,000 Kalaallisut speaking persons, while the statistics only mentioned "persons born in/outside Greenland" (e.g. MfG.1987:334). The persons born in Greenland form 80 % of the total population. In the debate itself, both descent and the question of one's first language were used as criteria (Kleivan 1969:78).

In 1988 a "watchword of the day" programme in the Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa (KNR) dealt with "Greenlandic identity" and concluded that the competence to speak Kalaallisut is the main

criterion. This made one of the young Greenland authors make a comment where he described the change in the content of identity debates, earlier based on descent and occupation, and later on based on the idea that the language was a main criterion. But the present idea is part of a development and need not be the final one, and he looked for a new debate on identity where some other criteria might be included (H.A.Lyngge 1988). This might indicate that identity debates need not be limited to cultural identity, but might also include structural identity based on common citizenship. This idea is probably due to the fact that the relationship between the Danes and the Kalaallit underwent a development in the home ruled Greenland.

The latest element in the identity debate came from a Danish artisan, who came to Greenland with a contract in the 1970's. He remained in Greenland when his contract expired. He formed a family by marrying a Kalaaleq woman, and even though he cannot speak the Kalaallisut language, he regards himself as a "Greenlander". His attitude is clearly based on a structural identity: a Greenlander is a member of the Greenlandic community. But I don't know if he is the only one, or if a similar attitude is common, and I don't know if it is accepted by his environment. Earlier "to go home" was, among the Danes in Greenland, synonymous to "going to Denmark". This artisan goes home to Greenland.

Some remarks made by the public opinion

Impressions from different individual remarks might be of interest. A person might speak of his or her own "ancestor" who might be a Dane, but if the same person spoke of "our ancestors", he would unambiguously mean the traditional Inuit. Speaking of "my ancestor" deals with descent, but speaking of "our ancestors" refers to cultural identity. In this connection, it is obvious that the idea of identity includes the other Inuit, i.e. the Canadian and the Alaskan Inuit.

The attitude towards the pre-colonial Inuit in Greenland is dual. One is a rather supercilious attitude according to which the pre-colonial Inuit in Greenland were not Christians, they were illiterate, they were Eskimos, untouched. Another is an attitude characterized by some admiration. The Inuit ancestors could manage to live in a harsh environment without any help from the outside. The Greenland Inuit, from the first decades of this century, were made very conscious of "the help from Denmark", and they also had a vague idea, that the future Kalaallit would be able to manage all right without outside assistance. In those identity discussions, the cultural heritage from the Inuit dominates the articulations, while the consciousness of the cultural heritage is broader, including that from Denmark.

When the notion of identity is based on cultural heritage, there is an acceptance of both the Inuit cultural heritage, and the European, Scandinavian heritage that deals with a new religion, a kind of new philosophy, a kind of organizational pattern, and a kind of legislative tradition, etc. It is those elements, that distinguish the present day Kalaallit not only from their Inuit ancestors, but also from other Inuit of today, but these questions are very often overshadowed by the bi-ethnic daily situation. The attention was focussed on the Danish/Kalaallit difference.

The fact, that the Kalaallit from the traditional times were engaged in household affairs, felt themselves responsible for the settlement fellows, and, not least, lacked engagement in social and organizational questions, still puts its stamp on the notion of identity, even though many Kalaallit of today are engaged in social and organizational matters. It is, in a way, a weak "Gegenidee" (Voegelin 1940:283-317), i.e. some attributes, which you did not want to be associated with yourself, were related to the contrast group (Shibutani & Kwan 1963: 384). This idea created a kind of comparison between the Greenlandic appreciation of human and social values, and a supposed Danish ideal of efficiency, regarded as a kind of opposition to a humane attitude. In fact, it might be true in some respects. But when it made some people say, that the "Greenlanders" prefer to be humane to being efficient, or even when someone indirectly

indicated, that they ought to be humane and not efficient, the past mediocre hunters replaced the great hunters as present day ideals. The great hunters were efficient hunters, and many of them were referred to as being very humane. This identification of the socially weak contemporary Kalaallit with the socially weak group in the traditional community might cement the situation or the point of view according to which the Kalaallit let the "efficient" Danes manage the community matters, and this cannot be an acceptable situation. The notion of an inefficient "Greenlander" was often used by the Danish civil servants; the idea of a "humane Greenlander" might signify a kind of acceptance of the idea, that the Kalaallit were inefficient.

If you look at the everyday situation at that time, it might create some ideas of identity, as the social environment was an important element, especially when the ethnic border also formed the border of one's acquaintances. Today, its value as standard by which you can measure identity is decreasing rapidly. But still, eating habits may affect the attitude, as "eating Inuit food in the Inuit way" is often mentioned in connection with the identity as an Inuk. It sounds as if all the Inuit had to appreciate the same kind of food. But as the Inuit food was very often connected with festivities and social gathering, it may be this situation that links the idea of identity with the idea of the Inuit food. I don't have the impression, that it should be interpreted as: "You are what you eat."

Today, there are other possibilities of subdivision than the regional ones. There are different occupational and social groups that establish both associations and umbrella organizations. Within these different organizations, the members of one organization might be both Danes and Inuit. Another interesting subdivision, that has emerged, might be the one between town communities and settlement communities. There may exist a lack of understanding between the two groups.

Institutions to strengthen the Greenland unity

Administratively, Greenland was divided into different separate regions till sometime after 1950. Even West Greenland was divided into "North Greenland" and "South Greenland", each with a royal governor who chaired a publicly elected "Provincial Council" since 1911. From 1950, the two Provincial Councils in West Greenland were merged into one National Council, and from the 1960's both Thule and East Greenland were included in its electoral area. Even though this Greenland National Council had a limited power, its importance as the united political body of Greenland was considerable, and probably therefore, its influence both in Greenland and in Denmark was greater than its legal status might indicate. It showed the face of the entire Greenland to the rest of the world. But other factors created a national unity already in the course of the previous centuries.

Already in the early colonization period, Greenland got an orthography, as the Egedes began to write Inuttut words according to the local dialect of Nuuk. It happened to be a very lucky choice, as Nuuk was situated within the Central West Greenlandic dialectal area, and thus had the phonetically most archaic Greenlandic dialect, which therefore represented a kind of general denominator of the Greenlandic dialects. That gave West Greenlandic a status as the communication language in Greenland, and as the same dialect is spoken by 90 % of the Kalaallit, this orthography got prestige enough to get generalized. In this way, the book production in Greenland was a common matter. The religious books, the Bible, the hymn books, the sermons, etc. became common literature, and later on the countrywide periodicals, fictions, legend collections, and poems formed a national treasure of literature. Some of the monthlies/weeklies are distributed all over Greenland, for instance the *Atuagagdliunit* which has been edited since 1861 and distributed countrywide. In the beginning, it contained a lot of translated literature, but also essays, life stories, legends, and different events. In this way, a lot

of local or regional matters were communicated to the rest of Greenland. The common written language also ensured that Greenlandic law could be formulated in one official version.

In 1845 two teachers' colleges, which educated preachers and teachers, were established, and this created a uniform level in the educational system. The Greenland school system emerged from the mission, and the Greenland church itself became a part of the common identity. Till 1953, Greenland was a closed community for the outside world, and this excluded other churches than the Lutheran. Even if it was a peculiar thing to monopolize the mission in this way, a church, that, from the beginning, expressed itself in the Kalaallisut, had a strong position as a national church, and stressed the national unity. Even though other churches appeared in Greenland after 1953, the Lutheran Church in Greenland still plays the same symbolic role.

During the second world war, transmission of news by radio was established. In the beginning, it was difficult to reach all corners of Greenland. In 1958, the transmission system was reorganized, but it wasn't till after 1975 that Disko Bay could be reached by using radio-chain technology (Stenbaek-Lafon 1979:13). In the 1980's, the remote corners of Greenland were reached by satellite transmissions (KNR 1983:63). The Kalaallit Nunaata Radio (KNR) became an important means of communication, a medium for cultural work, and an institution that gave the Greenlandic communities an opportunity to share the transmitted experiences. The role of the KNR in creating a common structural identity is limited by its role as a supporter of the cultural identity, as the transmissions in Danish and Greenlandic are edited as two separate entities, even though a lot of news are identical.

In the 1960's, cable TV was established on local basis, and cable TV associations began to drain the Danish TV for programmes. It was a more or less illegal action, that was tolerated because it took place within a closed circuit. But in the course of the 1980's, an agreement was reached with Radio Denmark (F.Lynge 1983:36), and almost simultaneous TV transmissions secure a new way of sharing experiences. In the beginning, there was almost no Greenlandic production of video, but it is slowly increasing, and last spring, even TV news were transmitted daily in Kalaallisut.

The traffic in Greenland is most developed in West Greenland. There is scheduled passenger traffic by boat from Upernavik to Nanortalik, but there may be pauses due to ice conditions at both ends of the route, and from January to sometime in March there is no West Coast-wide passenger ship traffic. The passenger traffic to and from East Greenland and Thule goes only by air. All over Greenland the scheduled air traffic links the populated regions daily or weekly. But it is an expensive way of travelling, especially because many communities are linked together by helicopter flights. But domestic air traffic in other countries may also be rather expensive. In the communities north of the Polar Circle, the dog sled is still in use in the winter time, but today it is mostly used for hunting. Its importance for traffic between the local communities is limited.

The creation of the identity conditions continued by the establishment of Greenland museums, archives, and recently also a Greenland University. In these establishments, common Greenland cultural heritage is studied and new expressions of it are produced. The Greenland theater school and the Greenland art school are also initiatives, that, together with culturally based associations, try to link the past, the present and the future together. These associations, such as that of the women, work to strengthen both the traditional skills and the engagement in the new skills offered by the modern community. They may have members from both ethnic groups in Greenland. They might divide the population into different interest groups, but via their umbrella organizations the different Greenlandic associations contribute to unite the community, and their work might strengthen both the cultural and the structural identity.

In the 1980's, the new identity expressions were strengthened by the introduction of some new common identity symbols, that is the Greenland National Day, celebrated on June 21st, and the flag of Greenland. These symbols might serve as a signal to the outside world of a

separate Greenlandic identity, and as such they may stress the difference from Denmark, but internally they symbolize the ethnic unity of an area having its own cultural and political expressions. They stress the structural identity.

A Political dimension of the Greenlandic identity

A former director of the Greenland administration in Copenhagen once said, that the Danes left for Greenland as ordinary persons and returned as eccentric ones. In fact, both the geographic distance between Denmark and Greenland and the alien environment changed the attitude of the Danes in Greenland. Even though there was a distinction between persons under Danish law and those under Greenlandic law, the attitude of both groups towards Copenhagen was often indulgent.

It was accepted by the Danes that Greenland was something else than Denmark and the colonial situation was accepted by the Kalaallit, which was characterized by a deeply thankful attitude towards Denmark, and only slowly did the idea of home rule in Greenland develop during the 1970's. When Jørgen Olsen, a remarkable member of the Greenland National Council, in the beginning of the 1960's, stated that what he wanted for Greenland was a development towards a regional autonomy, some of the other Greenlandic members of the council demanded an apology from him (J.Fleischer 1989:14).

The Greenland Inuit group in Denmark played a role in this development. They got ideological impulses earlier than the Inuit in Greenland. Especially, their contact with the "fourth world minorities" created a new dimension in the relation between Denmark and Greenland. Until then, the Danish newspapers mentioned Greenlanders as a "population group", i.e. a group among the Danish citizens. This made them compare the Greenlanders with Danish population groups of similar size, for instance the population of the island of Bornholm or of a Danish town. But after the contact with people from the fourth world, the concept of ethnic minority was adopted in the cultural debate, and it rapidly found its way into the political debate. Thus, the idea of ethnic minority within the Danish realm/kingdom was strengthened in connection with a referendum that joined Denmark to the European Economic Community (EEC). In this referendum Greenland said no, but had to join the EEC because the ballots in Greenland were not counted separately but added to the Danish ballots.

Before this situation, the political articulations in Greenland were very similar to those of the Danish civil servants, and, in fact, they accorded with the interests and points of view of the civil servants. People who disagreed were either uneducated people or "quarrelsome individuals", while educated people very often adopted the articulations of the civil servants. This period is sometimes referred to as "a harmonious period" by old civil servants. But in connection with the EEC referendum, even respectable politicians pleaded for keeping Greenland outside the EEC. I suppose, that the emergence of the concept of ethnic minority brought about the idea, that the articulations of the Danish civil servants might primarily represent their own interests. At least after 1972, when Greenland joined the EEC, the idea of regional autonomy became no longer a naughty thing, but acceptable in the Greenland political opinion both in Greenland and in Denmark.

Both the Kalaallit and the Danes in Greenland shook their head at some decisions from Copenhagen. This critical attitude looks very similar to the common opposition formed by the centre and the periphery in Denmark, but it seems to have other dimensions, too. In fact, Greenland is clearly separate from the Danish political system, and the system of the political parties in Greenland is quite separate from, and different from, that of Denmark, and a lot of Danes in Greenland are members of the Greenlandic political parties.

The main political parties, that emerged in the last half of the 1970's, operate within the Home Rule. Atassut and Siumut worked for Home Rule, but while Atassut wanted to

strengthen Greenland's membership in the Danish state as the first point of its programme, Siumut only mentioned it after the need of forming Greenland politics according to Greenlandic conditions. In this way, Atassut probably wanted a structural identity, while Siumut wanted a cultural identity (A.S.Sara 1986: 12). Inuit Ataqatigiit who, in the beginning, wanted total autonomy, accepted it, after the Home Rule referendum, as a basic principle for their further political work. In connection with Atassut's stressing the community with Denmark, the opinion existed that most of the Danes in Greenland supported Atassut, but after the last public election it looks as if the Danes do not support any particular party.

Opinion polls in 1984 and in 1990 indicated the tendency, that the distribution of the Danish polls with respect to parties is no longer so different from the Greenlandic one. The first figures indicate the total electoral part of the single parties, while percentage of polls given by persons born in Denmark is written in brackets. In 1984 the figures were distributed in the following way: Atassut 38 % (but got 60 % of the Danish ballots), Siumut 47% (30 % of the Danish ballots), Inuit Ataqatigiit 15% (10 % of the Danish ones). Issittup Partii was not established yet. In 1990 the distribution was somewhat different: Atassut 33% (49 %), Siumut 46% (33%), Inuit Ataqatigiit 18 % (16 %) and Issittup Partii 3% (2 %) (Skydsbjerg 1990).

Before the referendum on the EEC, in 1985, Atassut was against the withdrawal from it, while Siumut and Inuit Ataqatigiit pleaded for the separation from it. But, in fact, Atassut's wish to remain within the EEC was primarily based on economic considerations.

After the establishment of the ICC, the Greenland relation to the outside world underwent a change. There are two points to mention in this connection. The first point is, that the contact to the other Inuit was reestablished, which gave an opportunity to create a cooperation between people who shared the experience of being subject to decisions taken by metropolitan states, and who, to a great extent, had a cultural heritage in common, but in some way it also uncovered different developments from one Inuit group to another. In this way, the possibility to stress the common descent as a part of a cultural identity was not so strong as before. The other point is, that the contact between Greenland and the rest of the world did no longer have to go via Denmark. It is more evident now, that Greenland is part of the world society. But travels from Greenland to the outside world mainly still go by SAS to Copenhagen. And as Greenland became a member of the Nordic Council, an organization similar to the ICC, the direct contacts to Iceland and the Faroe Islands are also strengthened. The Danes in Greenland respect, very loyally, the Greenlandic political decisions, even if they might criticize them seriously.

During the 1980's, "Greenlandization" was one of the political slogans. It lacks a clear definition. According to some definitions, the purpose of the "greenlandization" was that of replacing the Danish administration staff by "Greenlanders" rather than that of finding solutions as to how to make the Greenlandic communities function better. But, in this context, the concept of "Greenlander" also lacks a clear definition. This year, the Greenland Home Rule runs an educational programme, and one of the purposes of this programme is to replace "Danish academic civil servants" by "Greenlanders". But the courses are open both to Greenlandic Greenlanders and Danish Greenlanders, as well. Whenever the debate mentions "replacement of Danes by "Greenlanders"", "Greenlanders" can be defined as "Greenlandic-speaking" people. Thus, in this debate a Dane can be defined as a non-Kalaallisut-speaking person.

Conclusion

The ethnic identity situation in Greenland does not quite depend on the subjective choice of an individual. The choice of the individual is limited by descent and language. To most people, this is an unambiguous criterion. To some people of mixed descent, the possibility of either double identity or of a choice exist. But to some children of mixed marriages it is unpleasant that

people always identify them with the opposite group. I know only one family of sisters and brothers who are accepted as having both Greenlandic and Danish identity.

The question of one's first language still plays a role, especially in Greenland itself. The Greenland Inuit's competence to speak Danish is very common today. Only very few Danes understand Kalaallisut or speak it fluently, and this is probably the main reason why the competence to speak Kalaallisut is still regarded as one of the identity factors. But after 1950, you might meet non-Kalaallisut-speaking children whose parents had, both of them, a Greenlandic identity. People belonging to this group often have a strong need to stress their Greenlandic identity, but, at the same time, they often have problems because of their acquaintances' belonging to the Danish-speaking group. In Denmark, an individual may be accepted as having Greenlandic identity because of his/her descent, even if he/she cannot speak Kalaallisut. It gives a kind of defensive attitude, saturated with the feeling of a need to express one's cultural belonging. It is a rather complex matter. This kind of identity attitude contains some aggressivity/intolerance towards the others. But even though Danish newspapers write a lot about hatred towards the Danes, the recorded cases of violence in Greenland normally occur between people of the same ethnic identity (Sigsgaard 1977). The Kalaallit stories that ridicule people are stories about themselves.

Occupation, educational level, social situation or interests, all elements that were used as a kind of identity criteria before, are now destroyed as means of distinction between Danes and Kalaallit. Today, we may meet, in Greenland, some Kalaallit who are alienated to the traditional culture or to the Greenlandic nature outside the town area. But the establishment of different community-strengthening institutions links several regional and local communities to the national community.

After the introduction of Home Rule in Greenland, the culturally based identity is supplemented with the structurally based identity. In many ways, both Danes and Kalaallit are members of the same associations and even the same trade unions. But some trade unions are members of Greenlandic, others of Danish, umbrella organizations. But the discrimination as to wage systems, i.e. the "birth place criterion" from 1964, is just in these years being dissolved, and even though it might hit both Danes and Kalaallit, statistically, it hits the Kalaallit harder than the Danes. The interference from the Danish trade unions, which earlier reminded us of the colonial past of Greenland, is also undergoing a change today.

Even though the two ethnic identities still play a role as far as the self-understanding in Greenland is concerned, the attitude towards the bi-ethnic identity in Greenland has become much more relaxed after the introduction of the Home Rule.

If the attitude towards the bi-ethnic identity in Greenland got rather relaxed in Greenland in the 1980's, it might be because the Kalaallit for many years were glad of the Danish cross-flag and found it suited for their Christianity. Today, it is allowed to use it beside the Greenland flag. Many Kalaallit are very fond of the Danish Royal family, who have demonstrated an interest in Greenland and the Kalaallit on many occasions. Only within the last two years, has a special Greenlandic passport been created. These, partly contradictory phenomena expressing signs of both sympathy and accepted separate identity indicate, that the character of the question of identity in Greenland is still changing. To blur the picture a little more, I can say, that a common identity with Denmark was clearly demonstrated when Denmark participated in the international football championship, both when Denmark won the matches and lost them.

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