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8 Cosmological Changes

Shifts in Human–Fish Relationships in Alaska’s Bering Strait Region

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Introduction

This chapter addresses human–fish relationships amongst Alaskan Bering Strait Eskimo people,¹ and some ways those relationships have changed over time. Many species of fish² have long been critical subsistence resources for Bering Strait Eskimo people.³ Fish are a valuable food source, provide important nutrition, are culturally preferred foods, and can be significant contributors to individual and community well-being and identity. One nineteenth-century explorer who traveled throughout the region and beyond even remarked that the Inupiat could be called “a nation of fishermen.”⁴

As an illustration of the importance of fish to contemporary Bering Strait indigenous communities, consider the following statements made by region residents. One Teller resident noted that “[f]ish [is] very, very, very important ... where my parents an’ grandparents came from, which is upriver. Fish was central [to] life basically,”⁵ and another stated the following: “If there was no tomcods, there’d probably be no Eskimos. Tomcods has pretty much saved a lot of Eskimos’ lives, I guess.”⁶ Further, a Stebbins resident stated that “If you know how to hunt and fish, you’re alright. You can live. You can survive. If you don’t know how, you don’t know nothing.”⁷ A Brevig Mission resident noted that “To us, [the fish are] the most important things we need to eat. The fish, we can’t go without fish, ah?”⁸ and an Elim resident noted that “I wouldn’t know how to describe who I am, without having that subsistence of salmon.”⁹

Despite their continued importance, fish are oft-ignored in discussions of highly marine mammal–dependent communities – such as many Bering Strait communities. While the relationship that many contemporary Bering Strait residents have with fish has undergone significant and disruptive changes over the last century, we think that analyzing human–fish relationships can provide important insights into Bering Strait Eskimo cosmology.

Alaska’s Bering Strait region is located just south of the Arctic Circle, extending from the southern shores of Norton Sound to the northern Seward Peninsula, including the northern Bering Sea islands. The region is the homeland for three distinct cultural groups – the Inupiat, Yup’ik, and St. Lawrence Island Yupik people.

The information presented here about contemporary beliefs and practices is derived primarily from interviews and discussions with elders and active fishers, and from participant observation of

fishing and other subsistence-related activities, carried out by the first author. The information comes from over 150 individuals in ten Alaskan Bering Strait communities.

There has been a shift in the main, dominant, standard beliefs and discourse about fish over time amongst the Indigenous People of this region from the early contact period, if not prior, to the present. These shifts have connections with broader cosmological shifts. We will discuss elements of early views about fish, contemporary views and major influences shaping these views, and examples of contemporary beliefs in practice, all of which show the shift in the dominant or standard beliefs and discourse over time as well as the complexities associated with this shift.

Earlier Beliefs about Fish

This chapter's focus is on a shift over time in indigenous views about fish and human–fish relationships in this region of Alaska. A precise moment cannot be pinpointed for this shift; rather, the shift has likely been uneven and occurred over time from what we know of earlier beliefs to how things are presently. A number of other terms might be applied to these earlier views – for example, “traditional,” or “non-western.” These terms would not be without problems, nor without merit either. It would be generally accurate to consider these earlier or older views to be what are often termed traditional and non-western, as long as one keeps in mind that tradition entails change, the field of social discourse evidences variety and heteroglossia,¹⁰ hybridity occurs, and these terms and that to which they refer to are constant sources of debate and meta-discourse. Nonetheless, we will generally avoid using these terms for the sake of clarity and maintain focus on the shift over time, and will use the rather unartful but perhaps more accurate term “earlier” (or “older”) views.

The following are likely key earlier Bering Strait Eskimo beliefs about fish, and thus what we take to be central elements of the earlier dominant or standard discourse about fish and human–fish relationships: (1) fish are persons, (2) fish are intelligent, (3) fish have agency, (4) fish have spiritual or other powers, (5) fish must be treated with respect, and (6) fish-persons have equivalence to human-persons.

Eskimo, Inuit and other indigenous groups from around the North share similar traditional beliefs about how animals are perceived and interacted with.¹¹ While there are few published ethnographic sources relating to earlier belief systems for the Bering Strait region, based on these sources,¹² it is reasonable to conclude that earlier Bering Strait Eskimo beliefs related to human–animal relationships were similar to those held by groups directly to their north and south (that is, in northwest and southwest Alaska), for whom we have more extensive ethnographic documentation on this matter.¹³

The earlier beliefs about fish noted above would have been in effect prior to the widespread introduction and later adoption of Christianity in the Bering Strait region (circa 1887),¹⁴ and are similar to beliefs of other indigenous groups found across the North. These characteristics, which people associated with fish (and other animals and features of the environment), effected a particular kind of relationship which was, and in some cases still is, expressed through reciprocal relationships, based around ideas of respect. This relationship dictated human thought and behavior, and was possible because of the mutual intelligence, agency, and power of human-persons and non-human-persons.

Personhood is attributed to animals, including fish, in western Alaska Eskimo traditional belief systems. Agency is additionally an important characteristic of fish in these belief systems. Agency, as the term will be used in this chapter, can be attributed to a person if they have consciousness, intentionality, and decision-making ability. In the traditional belief system, fish possessed all the requirements necessary to be considered to have agency. While the above definition of agency has

been developed fully here by the authors, our approach fits within a rich northern anthropological tradition addressing that and related concepts, where these elements of personhood and agency have been discussed extensively with regard to the ways many northern Indigenous People think about animals.¹⁵

For example, Fienup-Riordan has extensively documented the Yup'ik attribution of personhood and agency to fish and other animals. For instance, Chinook salmon could choose whose net to enter based on treatment they previously received from human fishers.¹⁶ The remains of salmon were also never to be “left lying around or be thrown into the river,” because if other fish saw them, “they would not continue upstream but return to the sea”; additionally, humans should avoid arguing about fish in season because fish hear discord amplified and become displeased.¹⁷

Contemporary Beliefs about Fish

We argue that Bering Strait Eskimo beliefs about the characteristics of fish, and proper or acceptable behavior towards fish, has significantly shifted since the introduction and widespread adoption of Christianity and other Western ideas and practices. The contemporary dominant or standard set of such beliefs can be outlined as such: (1) fish are not persons, (2) fish are sentient but not very intelligent, (3) fish have limited agency, (4) fish do not have spiritual or other powers, (5) fish must be treated with respect, and (6) fish are an economic and cultural resource. It is, however, important to remember that there is complexity in this field of belief and discourse, for example, as evidenced in variety and hybridity, including elements of earlier beliefs being seen.

For example, the majority of Bering Strait Eskimo residents interviewed do not think that fish and humans have any real equivalence or that fish have agency. Fish are considered by most to be sentient, but generally not very intelligent and to be operating mostly instinctually. Fish are also very much viewed as economic as well as cultural resources. Concurrently, people still feel that fish must be treated respectfully – the most common expression of which being dicta to not waste fish and to share fish with others.

The cultures and economies of Bering Strait communities have experienced many changes since earlier times. Wage labor, commercial goods, commodification of animal and fish resources, and other introductions have had various impacts on the region's indigenous residents. In terms of fish and human–fish relationships, three of the largest changes – all being related – are: (1) the Western rationalization of the local conceptualization of fish, (2) the commodification of fish (particularly through the introduction of commercial fishing), and (3) the Christianization of the conceptualization of fish and human–fish relationships.

What is meant here by the “Western rationalization” of the local conceptualization of fish is that the means by which fish operate as a logical entity in the local cosmology have shifted to the discursive grounds of Western thought. Several key modes in which this is accomplished are by metricalization, regulation, secularization, and biologizing. Fish and harvests are enumerated, tracked, permitted, and allocated; they are managed and regulated (especially in regard to addressing population “depletion”); and they are reduced to a finite set of Western scientific biological characteristics that amount to little more than behaviorally simple swimming matter. This new way of viewing fish fits well within the colonial culture's and economy's vision for Bering Strait region resource use, and in many ways is internalized in the everyday practices and perceptions of indigenous residents, reinforced in the many ways in which the simple act of harvesting a fish always, necessarily, and often traumatically involves not just fishers and fish but also the actors, such as wildlife enforcement staff, and texts, such as harvest regulations and reporting forms, of colonial management.

These processes have quite pervasive and deleterious effects. For example, metricalization entails not just a means to enumerate fish but also a technique by which fish is allocated inequitably to commercial over local subsistence fishers. Further, these processes indicate a powerful cosmological shift operating at a much deeper level. Sahlins' characterization of the juncture of Western ontology and epistemology in Judeo-Christian cosmology is most apt here: a "knowledge of natural things ... reduced to sensory experience of the obdurate matter on which humanity was condemned to lay waste its powers."¹⁸ This view of nature – human and otherwise – permeates Western fish and wildlife biology and management regimes. We therefore see, for example, the biological concern that more fishing or hunting results in less fish and animals, instead of the view from indigenous elders that "when you quit hunting animals or mammals, they'll just decrease in number. The more you hunt them they'll multiply."¹⁹ We thus have the singularly Western view that, as Sahlins has cleverly put it, humans are basically beasts, rather than the view held in many cultures throughout human history (including, at least in earlier times, Bering Strait Eskimo cultures), that beasts are essentially human.²⁰

This "Western rationalization" of fish is interconnected, and reinforced, by the second major force: the commodification of fish. Fish have always been an economic resource to Eskimo communities, whether through trade or through sale on a small scale. Commercial fishing, on the scale it is seen today, however, is a relatively new activity for indigenous Bering Strait residents,²¹ and one which has taken on substantial importance for many families. Commercial fishing has become an integral part of the yearly cycle of resource harvesting, and income from fishing can facilitate participation in subsistence activities. Participation in a market economy surrounding fish – an economy that extends far beyond the local and into the global – has led to a necessary adoption, reinforcement, and incorporation of Western concepts about what kind of things fish are and can be, and how human beings relate to them – all as part of the necessary process of trying to operate within the current colonial regime.

The third and final key force we consider is an explicit Christianization of conceptualizations of fish and human–fish relationships. Whereas what we have characterized as the earlier views of fish are marked by, among other things, an animistic quality, there has been a shift in that many now understand fish as being either (Christian) God-directed or motivated through what might be called a "Christian animatism," that is, fish as part of God's blessing on earth. We will now turn to how some of the above is manifested in everyday life.

Beliefs in Practice

As noted, one key cosmological shift has been from a more animistic worldview – where all things were part of a broader interconnected system and the various entities contained within (for example, people and fish) had spirits and personhood – towards one which revolves more around a Christian God. This also entails a concomitant loss of particular kinds of agency in conceptualizations of fish, and extends not only to ideas about fish but also ideas about human–fish relationships. This Christian God-centered view sometimes manifests as what could be called a Christian animatism via the notion of "God's blessing." For example, one individual noted that

Salmon is a blessing from God, because God created everything. And He's our creator. He created the salmon. It's a blessing from God because he gave it to be part of our food. God created the salmon to be part of our way of life.²²

Another interviewee noted, “God gave us these fish, so you got to take care of ‘em, not play with them. Because some day you might starve to death or whatever, if there’s no fish. Just don’t play with what God gave you – fish,”²³ and another stated that “People say I’m lucky to catch fish. I’m very lucky to catch fish. Yeah, lucky. Yes, but who gave it to us? God did.”²⁴

The Christian God-centered view also sometimes manifests as a more “God-directed” notion. Many individuals expressed a belief that it is not a fish that makes a conscious decision or choice to come to your net or hook, but rather that God is directing the fish to you, or you to the fish. For example, an Elim fisher noted that “He [God] just directs us to [the fish]. He directs us to know where it’s at.”²⁵

Sometimes what is seen with these cosmological shifts is that many contemporary practices have superficially remained the same as older ones, but deeper engagements with people often reveal that those practices’ underpinnings differ from what we know of older ones. In earlier times, an important reason why people shared their food widely and did not waste food was because of their close personal, reciprocal relationships with animals. Both practices – sharing and not wasting – were pleasing to animals and were two of many acts that would help ensure the return of animals for harvest in future seasons. For example, a harvested animal would, in death, still be aware of how it was being treated by humans; if treated properly, for example, shared, this would please the animal and it would be more likely to return the next year to offer itself to humans for harvest. Rather than trying to please the animal, a view many hold today is that sharing *pleases God*, and that the relationship is now between humans and God rather than between humans and animals. For example, one Shishmaref elder expressed some of his views on the agency of fish and why a fisher might be successful:

I always think that it’s mostly God. You know ... God knows, the Heavenly Father above. If you’re not stingy or anything, the more we give, the more you get back. In some way. And that would make you feel good too, you know – to give.²⁶

Another elder from Shishmaref stated:

The old saying is, long ago, is that the more you give away, the more you’ll get back. An’ sometimes, they’re always right. If you give away fish, the next day your net for some reason just happens to be a little bit fuller. I didn’t know if somebody’s watching us, but it seems to be true that the more food you give away, it’ll always come back. So we aren’t afraid to give away food.²⁷

This elder implies that there is some kind of higher power involved, and many region residents now specifically assign that power to a Christian God, such as is described by this Elim resident:

I would not consider it the animal or a spirit. I would consider it God watching out for his people. If He sees our actions, He sees what’s in our heart and He sees if we give grudgingly. But, if we share, or we get our catch and we take care of it ..., you get blessed for giving, and for caring for your own. But I would say it’s God, it’s not the spirit of the animal.²⁸

In order to participate in contemporary subsistence and small-scale local commercial harvests, Bering Strait residents necessarily become enmeshed in processes of metricalization. This is, indeed, the grounds of discourse with managers and enforcement actors. One result of this is a shift in discourse at the local level. People must keep tallies of harvests for managers, debate the merits

of escapement counts and counting technologies, engage in policy debates over allowable fish bycatch, and so on. While this does manifest in some ways with the adoption of these new grounds for thinking and talking about fish and human–fish relationships, it also offers examples of the complexity of relationships between “tradition” and “modernity,” and between different ways of thinking, knowing, and talking. As elsewhere, of course, we see hybridization of “traditional” and “non-traditional” positions at conscious (for example, pushback against the importance of metricalization) and unconscious levels. We must also not assume that participation in this process is simple agreement. Local residents are in many cases forced by the indecency of others²⁹ into situations where certain values are pitted against each other, for example sharing versus protecting resources, regulation versus local management. Given the importance of these fish-related activities to nutrition, culture, identity, and personal economics, participation in these processes of metricalization can hardly be seen as a choice, and is one of the strongest examples of the ways raw power enters into cosmological interfaces.

In earlier times, all animals, including fish, were considered to have agency, which included consciousness, intelligence, and decision-making ability. Many Bering Strait residents today, however, view fish as sentient but not very intelligent. Fish are seen as operating primarily on instinct, and are sentient in that they are able to find their natal rivers and avoid visible obstacles, but are no longer seen as having complex intelligence. For example, when asked if fish have an awareness of people and their actions, a Wales resident replied:

I think so ... Yes, I do.... Because you have to keep your net clean, like I said. Fish can tell when their cousins are sitting there an' not moving. Then they know.... They'll swim, long as they don't see it. But if they see it, they see lot of their cousins hanging there, [they say] “I don't think I wanna swim that way.”³⁰

A Shishmaref interviewee noted:

I think we're the smart ones, and they're [fish] still developing. ... We keep improving on our lifestyle. Learn to do a lot more things. And they're still fish, they still do the same thing. But they get smart too, if there's too much disruption someplace they move or die off.³¹

The individuals above, like others, have a view of fish that allows for a degree of intelligence. Their avoidance, however, is not premised on higher level intelligence that would include information such as *whose* net they were avoiding, or for what particular reason they were avoiding it, for example. Interestingly, some other animals are viewed as being highly intelligent. When asked if he thinks fish are smart, another Shishmaref elder replied:

Like humans, some are smarter than others. ... The [animals] with experience, other than fish, like seals, they've been hunted before an' they know the habits of the hunter. An' they're very, very smart.³²

One interviewee from Stebbins stated that:

They can be smart, they evade invaders. When they're being chased by another predator, their first instinct is ... take off. Go to a sheltered area. So that's one way they could be smart. If they weren't intelligent in their own way, they wouldn't survive, right?³³

And another Stebbins resident remarked:

I'm glad they ain't too smart [laughs]. If they [fish] were too smart, the sea mammals would have a hard time getting their daily food – if they were smart. They have a purpose, you know, so that's where they are.³⁴

On the whole, for indigenous region residents, fish are, by and large, seen as being not very intelligent. A diminished sense of fish intelligence compared to earlier views is one key characteristic of the contemporary main, standard set of beliefs and discourse on fish. The examples immediately above express beliefs that many indigenous region residents hold – fish are able to recognize some human activities (for example, net fishing) as something to be avoided, but they lack a higher-order, complex intelligence – one that might be comparable to human intelligence – some other animals are thought to possess. It is possible there is a relationship in this to the fact that fish are the most commodified of all the animals in the Bering Strait Eskimo environment, and those animals that are largely not commodified are still often portrayed as more intelligent, as giving themselves to hunters, that is, with more traditional views. One might argue that fish are also some of the least “individualistic” animals, and given the high value placed in Western cosmology on individualism for rationality, this may be connected with the better intellectual status of more solitary animals, such as moose or beluga whales, are accorded compared to fish. The ease of harvest may also be connected to this differential; fish are largely seen as easy to catch, whereas harvesting other animals takes more effort. There is (even evident in some examples above) some variation within such views, as well as views that diverge from this standard. These illustrate variety and hybridity at the social and individual level regarding various discourses and beliefs such as the co-existence or blending of old and new, and indigenous and non-indigenous, discourses and beliefs. Nonetheless, a shift in the main, standard discourse and set of beliefs is clearly evident.

The importance of commodification to shifting beliefs is likely quite important. For example, a commonly held older belief noted above is that “when you quit hunting animals or mammals, they'll just decrease in number. The more you hunt them they'll multiply.”³⁵ Another region elder who held many older beliefs (for example, regarding proper ritual treatment of harvested seals, the function of sharing, and of animals giving themselves to hunters) noted that, “[a]s far as I know we have a pretty healthy run for [that river], although it is a small run, it sustains itself even though we do harvest a few by seining or rod and reel.”³⁶ The “even though” in the preceding quote is notable in that it indicates a divergence away from the view that harvesting results in population increases towards the more Western notion that harvesting causes population depletion. This particular interviewee was heavily involved in commercial fishing, and was particularly concerned about the impact of commercial fishing on salmon populations due to personal experience. It is hypothesized here that this encounter with this Western mode of economic action pushed a shift at the individual level with this interviewee away from traditional views to Westernized ones, while other traditional views regarding other subsistence resources and activities were maintained.

Another example of a different type of hybridization and complex mixing of beliefs surrounding fish and human–fish relationships pertains to subsistence versus small-scale commercial fish harvests. These activities are regulated differently in Alaska, and the former is understood as being a traditional activity for providing food for people, families, sharing, and bartering, while the latter is seen as means for providing income – in many cases, income which goes towards costs of conducting subsistence activities. In practice, however, there is often very little from a “technical” or “mechanical” perspective which separates the two activities, which in many cases are even done at the same time.³⁷ Yet, it is a common sentiment in the region that selling subsistence foods is a bad thing, while selling small-scale commercial harvests is acceptable. In these cases, we can see

here how the fish itself becomes ontologically different (for example, sacred versus profane) depending on the mindset and intentionality of the fisher at the exact moment of its harvest. That this is possible is most likely a result of the broader shifts which we have discussed in this chapter having occurred.

The above examples demonstrate some of the complex ways in which broader cosmological constructs manifest themselves in terms of various aspects of conceptualizations of fish and human–fish relationships. These manifestations play out in everyday life, speaking to extremely locally important processes of history, politics, and identity felt at both the individual and social levels.

Concluding Remarks

Much of the above has focused on the overall shift in the dominant, or standard, discourse and set of beliefs about fish. We have additionally stressed the also-evident variety and complexity related to this domain as well, for example, in the field’s heteroglossic nature and in instances of hybridity. In these final comments, we would like to highlight the historical complexities and profound interconnections with broader sociopolitical realities associated with these discourses and beliefs, and their shifts.

As we have intimated, there are complex relationships, interweaving discourses, and hybridized realities about, between, and emanating from practices, beliefs, meanings, history, and values which are involved in the actual lived reality of the human–fish relationships discussed in this chapter and the cosmologies in which they are situated. While space has constrained us to broad outlines, our contribution should not be taken to imply that history is writ from outside, even if the dominant views today are strongly influenced by forces historically external to indigenous communities. The authors feel that history’s reality and meaning must be understood through local generative processes. History, we feel, is not writ from the outside, and we concur with Sahlins in seeking to understand modernity as indigenized, as well as with his view that the confrontation between the West and the Rest in colonial history is best seen “as a triadic historical field, including a complicated intercultural zone where the cultural differences are worked through in political and economic practice.”³⁸

How people relate to animals and the environment is critical to food security, physical and mental health, and the formation and maintenance of cultural identity. There have been many changes to Bering Strait Eskimo life that have resulted in a variety of new forms of belief and practice regarding fish which, in addition to their historical contexts, need to be acknowledged in order to have a fuller understanding of contemporary indigenous life. The attendant shifts in cosmology and their complex manifestations in a generally under-examined aspect of region life (views on fish and human–fish relationships) have great importance for the ways in which Bering Strait people interact with animals and the environment and engage with – and are engaged by – the wider world.

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Notes

- 1 In Alaska's Bering Strait region, many Indigenous Peoples and organizations use the term "Eskimo" (or more specific designations such as "Inupiat," "Yup'ik," or "St. Lawrence Yupik") as opposed to "Inuit" for self-identification. We acknowledge the term is not widely used outside Alaska.
- 2 This chapter focuses on fish harvested by Bering Strait Indigenous Peoples, i.e., the five Pacific salmon species as well as non-salmon fish, for example, tomcod, herring, and smelt.
- 3 Raymond-Yakoubian, *Climate-Ocean Effects on Chinook Salmon*; Raymond-Yakoubian and Raymond-Yakoubian, "Always Taught Not to Waste"; Raymond-Yakoubian "When the Fish Come"; Burch, *Social Life in Northwest Alaska*; Ray, "Nineteenth Century Settlement"; Nelson, "The Eskimo about Bering Strait."
- 4 Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage*.
- 5 Raymond-Yakoubian, "When the Fish Come," 83.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., 105.
- 8 Topkok and Raymond-Yakoubian, *Food for the Soul*, 47.
- 9 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian on May 17, 2011.
- 10 See, for example, Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination* and also Sahlins, *Waiting for Foucault, Still*.
- 11 See, for example, Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*; Brightman, *Grateful Prey*; Hallowell, "Ojibwa Ontology"; Nadasdy, *Hunters and Bureaucrats*; Nelson, *Make Prayers to the Raven*; Tanner, *Bringing Home Animals*; Wenzel, *Animal Rights, Human Rights*; Willerslev, *Soul Hunters*.
- 12 For example, Fitzhugh, Kaplan, and Collins, *Inua*; Kingston, *Traditional Ecological Knowledge*; Michael, *Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels*; Nelson, *The Eskimo about Bering Strait*; Oquilluk, *People of Kauwerak*; Ray, "Nineteenth Century Settlement"; Ray, *Ethnohistory in the Arctic*; Ray, *The Eskimos of Bering Strait*; Raymond-Yakoubian, "When the Fish Come"; Raymond-Yakoubian and Raymond-Yakoubian, "Always Taught Not to Waste."
- 13 E.g., Burch, *The Eskimos*; Burch, *The Iñupiaq Eskimos*; Bodenhorn, "The Animals Come to Me"; Fienup-Riordan, *The Nelson Island Eskimo*; Fienup-Riordan, *When Our Bad Season Comes*; Fienup-Riordan, *Eskimo Essays*; Fienup-Riordan, *Boundaries and Passages*; Fienup-Riordan, "Yaqulget Qaillun Pilartat"; Fienup-Riordan, *Hunting Tradition*; Hensel, *Telling Our Selves*; Kawagley, *A Yupiaq Worldview*; Lantis, *Alaskan Eskimo Ceremonialism*; Nelson, *Hunters of the Northern Ice*; Spencer, *The North Alaskan Eskimo*.
- 14 Almquist, *Covenant Missions in Alaska*; Burch, "The Inupiat and the Christianization of Arctic Alaska"; Olsson, *By One Spirit*; Savok, *Jesus and the Eskimo*; VanStone, "Alaska Natives."
- 15 E.g. Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*; Brightman, *Grateful Prey*; Fienup-Riordan, *Boundaries and Passages*; Fienup-Riordan, *Hunting Tradition*; Nadasdy, *Hunters and Bureaucrats*; Nelson, *Make Prayers to the Raven*; Tanner, *Bringing Home Animals*; Wenzel, *Animal Rights, Human Rights*; Willerslev, *Soul Hunters*.
- 16 Fienup-Riordan, *Hunting Tradition*, 52.
- 17 Fienup-Riordan, *Boundaries and Passages*, 120.
- 18 Sahlins, "The Sadness of Sweetness," 411.
- 19 Brevig Mission resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, May 21, 2008.
- 20 Sahlins, *The Western Illusion*, 2. To put it more explicitly, Sahlins here counterposes a particularly Western (for example, Hobbesian) view that humans are seen as having a primordial unruly "animalistic" inner nature to overcome with the view in many other cultures that animals are basically human in their nature.
- 21 Commercial fisheries with a reasonable semblance to what is seen today in terms of their regulation and structure have been in place in the region since the early 1960s.

- 22 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, May 31, 2011.
- 23 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, July 2, 2011.
- 24 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, June 12, 2011.
- 25 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, June 15, 2011.
- 26 Raymond-Yakoubian, “*When the Fish Come*,” 135.
- 27 Shishmaref resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, January 31, 2012.
- 28 Elim resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, June 12, 2011.
- 29 For example, large-scale commercial interests removing enormous amounts of fish from the oceans, politicians who do not recognize the status of Indigenous Peoples, scientists who do not recognize the value of traditional knowledge, and resource managers who inequitably enforce regulations on indigenous communities while permitting gross violations by non-indigenous people. Raymond-Yakoubian, “Participation and Resistance;” Raymond-Yakoubian, Raymond-Yakoubian, and Moncrief, “The Incorporation of Traditional Knowledge into Alaska Federal Fisheries Management.”
- 30 Wales resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, August 30, 2011.
- 31 Shishmaref resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, January 31, 2012.
- 32 Shishmaref resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, October 11, 2011.
- 33 Stebbins resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, January 26, 2012.
- 34 Stebbins resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, January 26, 2012.
- 35 Brevig Mission resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, May 21, 2008.
- 36 Golovin resident interviewed by J. Raymond-Yakoubian, April 18, 2009.
- 37 See also Reedy-Maschner, “Entangled Livelihoods” and Raymond-Yakoubian and Raymond-Yakoubian, “*Always Taught Not to Waste*.”
- 38 Sahlins, “Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*,” 486, 495.

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Ethnographic Material

All audio and transcripts of the interviews are in the possession of the author.

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