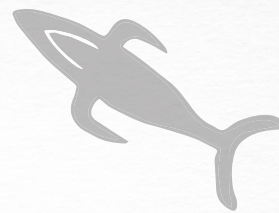


Quliyanguat – STORIES



Quliyanguiciiqaken. – I WILL TELL YOU A STORY.

At day break a whale came to the surface and swam towards the shore. The tide was low and the waterfall was up some ways from the sea. The boy wondered how it could get up there to drink. As he watched, the whale slowly shoved its head up the beach and opened its mouth and a little man, with a leather bucket in each hand, came out and went up to the waterfall. He filled the buckets with water and went back down and into the whale's mouth. The whale closed its mouth and turned out to sea and disappeared.

Story collected from Ralph Demidoff, from Desson 1995:39.

Among societies without a written language, storytelling is an important way to record history. Events, accomplishments, values, spiritual beliefs, and even survival techniques are passed from generation to generation through people rather than books.

Traditional Alutiiq/Sugpiaq tales held many lessons. Stories (*quliyanguat*) recounted the pursuits of ancestors, explained unusual events, and discussed community history. Legends (*unigkuat*) explained the cosmos—the origin of people, the stars, and the animals. The Man of Winter, a story told to noisy children, warned that those who misbehave may cause bad weather. Children learned that poor behavior can have consequences for an entire community. The Thirsty Whale story reveals the Alutiiq belief that every creature has a human-like consciousness, represented by a small person that lives inside of it. Whalers told such stories when training their apprentices.

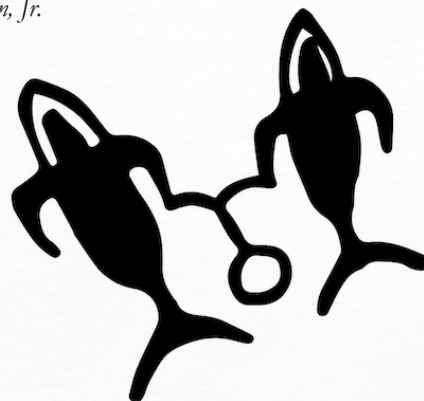
LEARN MORE:

Unigkuat—Kodiak Alutiiq Legends, 2018, edited by Dehrich Chya and Amy F. Steffian, Alutiiq Museum, Kodiak.

Although many people practiced storytelling, in the past, each Alutiiq community had at least one ritual specialist. Known as a *kas'aq*, this person had an expert knowledge of stories, songs, and dances. He led traditional ceremonies and helped to educate children.



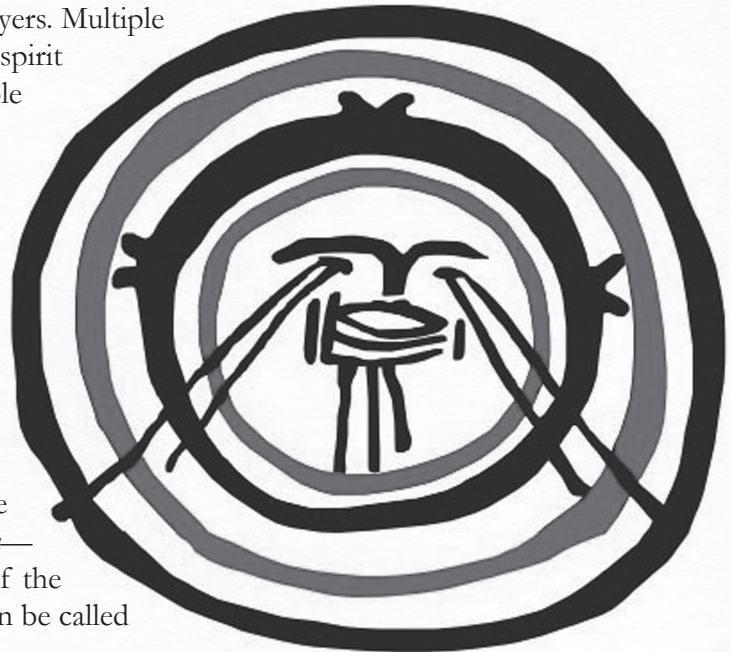
Petroglyphs from Cape Alitak, Kodiak Island. From a drawing by Sven Haakanson, Jr.



Llarpet – OUR ALUTIIQ UNIVERSE



The Alutiiq/Sugpiaq universe contains many layers. Multiple sky and undersea worlds form a continuum of spirit realms that influence life on earth. Alutiiq people traditionally believe that all things—creatures, objects, places, and natural phenomenon like the wind—have a spirit with a human conscience. The word for spirit—*sua*—literally means “its person,” illustrating the humanness of all things. To have a spirit is to have a person inside, and this spirit can take human shape. For example, animal spirits can peer out from their bodies or remove their skins to show their human form. In addition to the spirits of earthly things, there are also two supreme spirits on earth, *Imam Sua*—Person of the Sea—and *Nunam Sua*—Person of the Land. These beings control all creatures and can be called on for luck in hunting and fishing.



Above the earth are five sky worlds. *Llam Sua* (The Universe’s Person), the invisible spirit of all things, lives in the fifth and purest sky world. *Kas’arpak*, the spirit who created all birds and animals, lives in the third sky world and assists shaman by relaying the wishes of *Llam Sua* to earth. The first sky world, closest to earth, contains the moon, the stars, and the northern lights. Like earth, this world has forests, rivers, and animals. Stars are believed to be the eyes of spirits, peering down through holes in the sky world, and the moon is the spirit of a man who wears a different mask each night.

LEARN MORE:

The Chugach Eskimo, 1953, by Kaj Birket-Smith. Nationalmuseets Skrifter, Etnografisk Raekke, VI. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Ukgwepet – “Our Beliefs,” 2001, by Aron Crowell and Jeff Leer. In *Looking both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*, edited by A. Crowell, A. Steffian, and G. Pullar, Pp. 189-121. University of Alaska Press, Fairbanks.

LLAM SUA: Painted image from a prehistoric, wooden box panel (AM197.95:859, Karluk One Site, Koniag, Inc. Collection, ca. AD 1700). Painted in red and sparkling black pigments, this image may depict *Llam Sua*, the Alutiiq supreme being, in the fifth sky world. Lines extending from the eyes may represent the spirit’s penetrating vision, or possibly rays of light. The Alutiiq people believed that *Llam Sua* could see and hear everything, and sometimes identified this spirit with the sun. Drawing courtesy of the Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center, Looking Both Ways project.

Qik'rtarmiut Sug'ucirpet KODIAK ALUTIIQ/SUGPIAQ VALUES

nuna

place – physical sphere

nunapet

*Ties to our Homeland
"our lands"*

*nunapet
carlia'arluki*

*Stewardship of animals, land, sky & waters
"taking care of our lands"*

unguwacirpet

*A subsistence lifestyle respectful &
sustained by the natural world
"our way of being alive"*

anerneq

spirit – emotional sphere

agayumaukut

*Faith and spiritual life from ancestral
beliefs to the diverse faiths of today
"we are prayerful"*

englarstaisngukut

*Humor
"we like to laugh"*

suuget

people – social sphere

suupet

*Our people: we are responsible for each
other & ourselves
"our people (community)"*

cuqllipet

"our Elders"

ilaapet

*Our family and kinship of ancestors
& living relatives
"our family"*



*Walter Simeonoff teaching his son to shoot an arrow.
Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.*

keneq

fire; process – cognitive sphere

*Sugt'stun
niuwacipet*

*Our heritage language
"our ways of speaking like a Sugpiaq"*

liicirpet

*Learning by doing, observing & listening
"our way of learning"*

*piciipet
uswituu'uq*

*Traditional arts, skills & ingenuity
"our ways are wise"*

lla

conscience – ethical sphere

ilakuisngukut

*Sharing: we welcome everyone
"we favor sharing"*

sugtanartukut

*Trust
"we trust"*

ling'aklluki

*Respect for self, others & the
environment is inherent in all values
"we respect them"*

LEARN MORE:

Liitukut Sugpiaq'stun (We are learning to be Real People): Exploring Kodiak Alutiiq Literature Through Core Values. 2012, by Alisha Drabek. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

http://ankn.uaf.edu/Curriculum/PhD_Projects/Alisha_Drabek/