Naturalist Lessons from the North: Human and Non-Human Animals in Niko Tinbergen's Eskimoland (1934) and Jac. P. Thijsse's Texel (1927)

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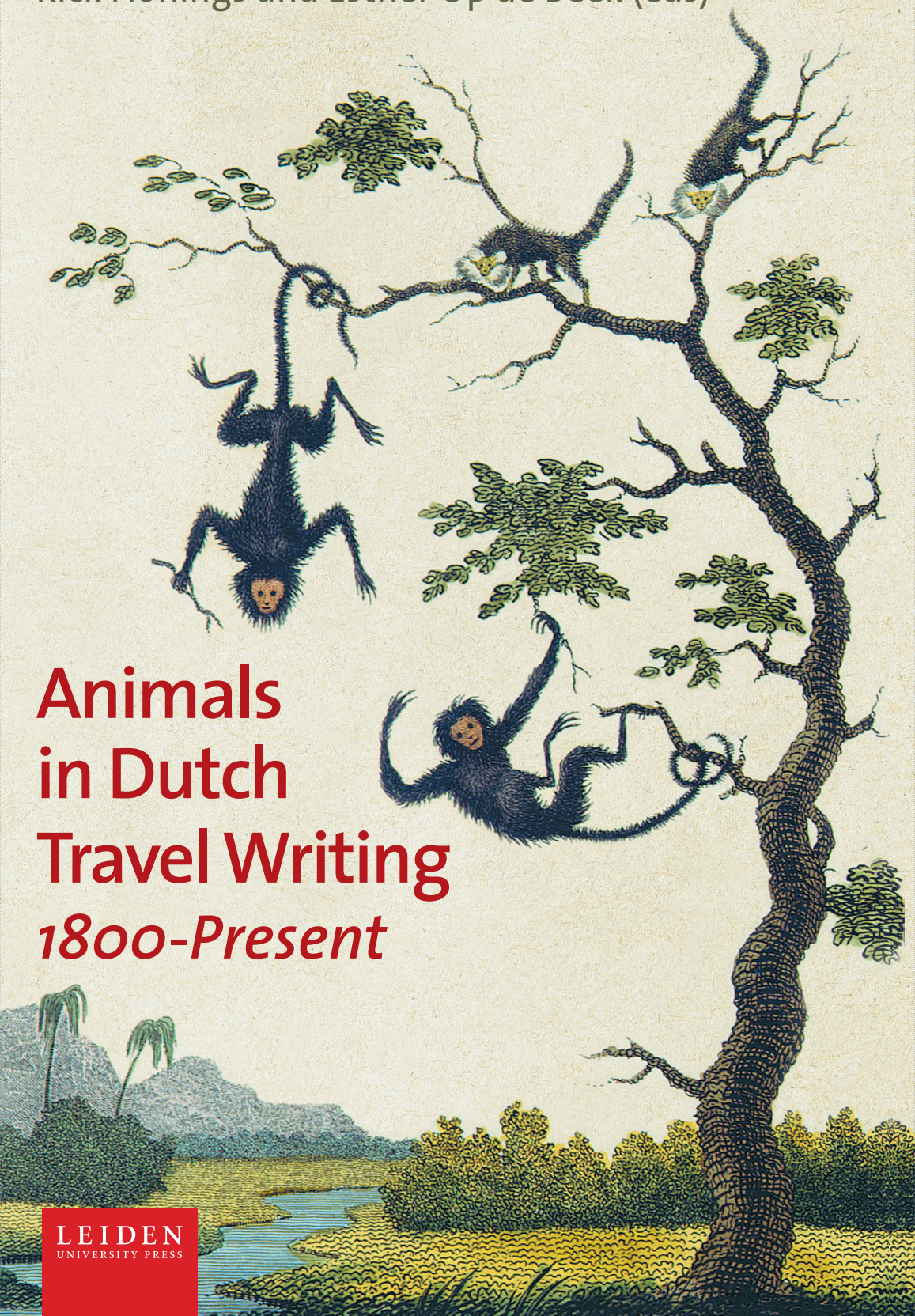
Rick Honings and Esther Op de Beek (eds)



Animals in Dutch Travel Writing

1800-Present

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ANIMALS IN DUTCH TRAVEL WRITING, 1800-PRESENT

Edited by

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and

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CHAPTER 8

Naturalist Lessons from the North

Human and Non-Human Animals in Niko Tinbergen's *Eskimoland* (1934) and Jac. P. Thijsse's *Texel* (1927)

Paul J. Smith

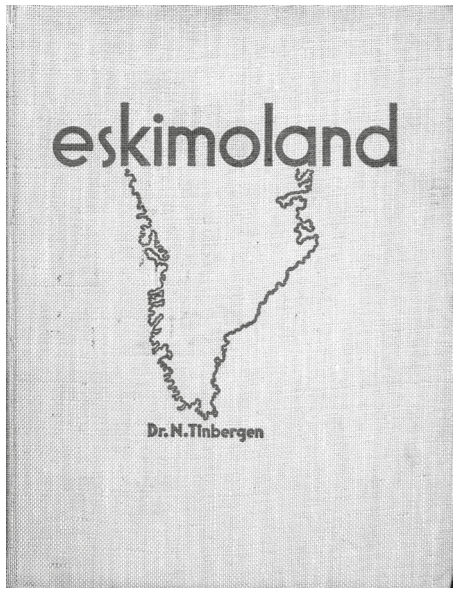
Abstract

This article examines the work *Eskimoland* (1934) by the Dutch biologist and (later) Nobel Prize winner Niko Tinbergen (1907-1988), in which he recounts his year-long research stay with the Inuit of Greenland as part of the Second International Polar Year (1932-1933). With this autobiographical travelogue, full of observations and reflections on arctic birds, seals, sledge dogs, and polar bears in relation to the Inuit, the young Tinbergen profiled himself, not only as a scientist-to-be, but also as a nature writer. In doing so, he follows the example of Jac. P. Thijsse (1865-1945), one of the founding fathers of nature conservation in the Netherlands. In order to contextualise *Eskimoland* and its ideas *in statu nascendi* about animal behaviour and human-animal relationships, in this chapter the book is juxtaposed with one of Thijsse's best-known works, *Texel* (1927), which Tinbergen, as a great admirer of Thijsse, undoubtedly read as a student, and to which *Eskimoland* bears unexpected similarities.

Keywords: Greenland Inuit, ethology, Texel, Verkade albums, arctic fauna

In recent years, the Dutch-language literary market has been flooded with books about nature. In this seemingly endless stream of books – both Dutch and translated – there is a growing interest in experiencing nature from a historical perspective. Works such as Hans Mulder's award-winning *De ontdekking van de natuur* (2021), Tim Birkhead's *The Wonderful Mr Willughby: The First True Ornithologist* (2018, Dutch translation 2019), Menno Schilthuizen and Freek Vonk's *Wie wat bewaart: Twee eeuwen Nederlandse natuurhistorie* (2020), and Gunnar Broberg's *Carl Linnaeus: De man die de natuur rangschikte* (2020) are illustrative of this new literary trend.[1]

This trend can also be seen in the second Dutch translation of the American cult book *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau (originally 1854), which had its first edition in 2006, yet was already in its sixth edition by 2019.[2] Another example – an author discussed in detail in this chapter – is Jac. P. Thijsse, probably the Netherlands' most famous naturalist. In 2021 the literary publisher Van Oorschot published Thijsse's



Front cover of Niko Tinbergen, *Eskimoland* (1934). Collection Museon, The Hague.

Front cover of Niko Tinbergen, *Eskimoland* (2017). Private collection.

1884-1887 and 1894-1898 nature diaries under the title *Nu ga ik er eens op uit*. The diaries describe Thijsse's nature walks around Amsterdam, with a specific focus on plants and animals.[3]

Amongst this stream of historically oriented, often sumptuously produced nature publications, emerged an apparently inconspicuous book entitled *Eskimoland*. The book, written by the Dutch biologist and (later) Nobel Prize winner Niko Tinbergen (1907-1988), originally appeared in 1934. However, it remained obscure and untranslated until republished by Van Oorschot in 2017, with its original black and white illustrations.[4]

In the work, Tinbergen recounts his year-long research stay in the polar wilderness of Greenland as part of the Second International Polar Year (1932-1933). Van Oorschot's new edition has garnered attention in the form of reviews in several leading Dutch newspapers (*NRC*, *Trouw*, *Volkskrant*) and two radio broadcasts.[5] The attention is certainly justified, because in *Eskimoland* we find *in statu nascendi* the ideas with which Tinbergen would lay the foundation for ethology, of which Desmond Morris, one of Tinbergen's former students, with his influential book *The Naked Ape* (1967),[6] and the Dutch primatologist Frans de Waal, with his *The Age of Empathy* (2009),[7] are the most famous proponents.

In this chapter, I contextualise *Eskimoland*, placing it in the Dutch tradition of popularising the knowledge of nature. Moreover, as this tradition can also be aptly illustrated in the work of Thijsse, I will further contextualise *Eskimoland* by juxtaposing it with one of Thijsse's best-known works, *Texel* (1927), which Tinbergen, as a great admirer of Thijsse, undoubtedly read as a student, and with which *Eskimoland* bears unexpected similarities.[8]

Eskimoland: An atypical travelogue

Eskimoland begins abruptly: 'July 14, 1932. Finally the time had come.'[9] Yet this opening sentence implies rather more than the average reader might at first think and is not simply a traditional narrative-rhetorical stimulation of the reader's expectation. Rather, especially for those familiar with Tinbergen's life, it represents a thinly veiled expression of relief. The journey to Greenland can be interpreted as an escape from the oppressive academic world inhabited by Tinbergen in search of freedom and security in an untouched and hitherto inaccessible realm. There are similarities here to the way in which the young Tinbergen withdrew from school and home, to the dunes of Meijendel near The Hague, the place where he was born in 1907, or lost himself in the inland dunes near Hulsthorst (where his parents' holiday residence was, and where he would later conduct his PhD field research). In order to make his Greenland journey, Tinbergen had to hastily complete his PhD research at the University of Leiden, which was thus not completed to his satisfaction. Indeed, Hans Kruuk, Tinbergen's biographer and former student, himself an authority on ethology, stated that the thesis, on the behavioural biology of the '*bijenwolf*' (literally 'bee-wolf', a bee-killing digging wasp, *Philanthus triangulum*), was the thinnest in the field (29 pages, published as an article)[10] and not of exceptional quality.[11] Tinbergen's doctoral defence took place in Leiden on 12 April 1932. Two days later, on 14 April, Tinbergen married Lies Rutten, and on 14 July of that same year together the young couple embarked on the expedition of a lifetime. They lived for a year with the Kalaallit – the Greenlandic Inuit (Tinbergen still uses the name 'Eskimos') – in order to carry out ornithological field research into the behaviour of selected Arctic bird species, collect zoological material for the National Natural History Museum in Leiden, and to gather anthropological artefacts for the Education Museum in The Hague (now called the Museon). For a year, the couple traversed the area around Angmagssalik in East Greenland 'by boat in summer and by sled and ski in winter'.[12] Tinbergen's Greenland trip is rightly seen by Kruuk as determining the rest of his life, because some of Tinbergen's later insights on animal behaviour are already discernible in this early writing.

In many respects, *Eskimoland* is an atypical travelogue, which makes it the 'odd one out' in the context of the present volume. *Eskimoland* is not a travelogue in the strict sense of the word because the journey itself to Greenland is only briefly (if aptly) narrated, and the treks within Greenland are often little more than dashes from one observation spot to another, from one field observation (and reflection on it) to the other. The book, therefore, does not fit well into the typologies that literary criticism has drawn up as definitive of the genre of travel writing. The term 'animal turn' is also problematic, especially if we assume Elizabeth Leane's tripartite typology of the animal in travel writing,[13] or the following definition of its meaning, one that can be read in a recent blog, according to which the animal turn can be defined as 'an increasing scholarly interest in animals, in the relationships between humans and other animals, and in the role and status of animals in (human) society. The animal turn is an academic focus on animals in new terms and under new premises.'[14]

Tinbergen would certainly have used the terms 'humans and other animals' in this quote, were it not for the fact that word combinations such as 'human animal' were out of the question at that time. One could call *Eskimoland* a precursor of the animal turn, because the book implicitly appears to be a plea for an identical scientific approach to human and animal behaviour – one to be investigated from specific research questions that Tinbergen would later specify for the study of animal behaviour.[15] Such questions would set the research agenda for years to come, not only in behavioural biology, but also in the social sciences and humanities. Simultaneously, however, the book assumes a non-scientific approach to human-animal relations, which Tinbergen gradually adopts from the Inuit. Therefore, one could also speak of an 'anthropologic turn' that breaks with a long natural scientific tradition that separates the study of man from the study of animals.

Indeed, the book is often more about people in relation to animals than it is about animals themselves. Much is said about the Inuit's complete reliance on animals for all aspects of life: food (seal, fish, bird eggs), clothing (fur and leather), construction (skin, bone, gut), fuel (whale oil), and transportation (sledge dogs). The interaction between humans and animals also receives attention, for example in the (to European eyes, cruel) way in which the Inuit treat animals. What is striking, and sometimes shocking, even for the modern reader, is the distant, observant way in which Tinbergen describes what we would now call animal suffering. In doing so, Tinbergen distances himself implicitly from the empathetic, exalting sentimentalism that is characteristic of romantic nature observation, of which the reputed French historian and naturalist Jules Michelet (about whom, more later) is a well-known exponent – also in the Netherlands. Also striking are the varying ways in which the author describes the Inuit: sometimes objectively from an anthropological point of view, as he describes animal behaviour as an ethologist,

Kârale Andreassen, 'Ûmitsoq and the Polar Bear'. Collection Museon, The Hague/Tinbergen Family.

then at other times from a certain sense of superiority (similarly to the amused way an adult looks at romping children). That sense of superiority, however, quickly turns to wonder, admiration, and self-reflection – in some ways similar to that in which, from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, the Brazilian Indians brought Europeans such as Michel de Montaigne, Jean de Léry, and Claude Lévi-Strauss to a point of self-relativisation.

Nevertheless, Tinbergen also has an eye for his personal contacts with the Inuit. The book contains a number of anecdotal and amusing passages about the interaction between the Inuit and Tinbergen and his wife that provide a light-hearted contrast to the more theoretical or descriptive passages. One of these entertaining passages concerns Tinbergen's skill in *kajakduikelen* (the kayak roll), illustrated with stills from a film by Frans P.J. Kooijmans, one of Tinbergen's colleagues.[16] The pages devoted to Tinbergen's Inuit host, Kârale – a shaman, who died of tuberculosis shortly after Tinbergen's departure, but who is still known in Greenland as a poet and an artist – are particularly special. Similar to a guru (a comparison made by Kruuk), Kârale guided Tinbergen through the Inuit's way of living, specifically their spiritual and mythical world – one haunted by half-human, half-animal creatures. Tinbergen also published some of Kârale's work in his book: He recounts Kârale's story of a man in a kayak who was attacked by a polar bear – a story illustrated

with a drawing by Kârale.[17] Later in the book there are four drawings by Kârale that tell a morbid story about a *tupilaq*, an evil spirit.[18] This story is summarised by Tinbergen and placed as captions with the drawings, giving the impression of a comic strip (see Appendix).

I discuss the role of animals and the relationship between humans and animals in the following paragraphs. However, it is first necessary to address my point of comparison: Thijsse's book *Texel*. I do this in some detail because unlike Tinbergen, although famous in the Netherlands, Thijsse is practically unknown abroad.

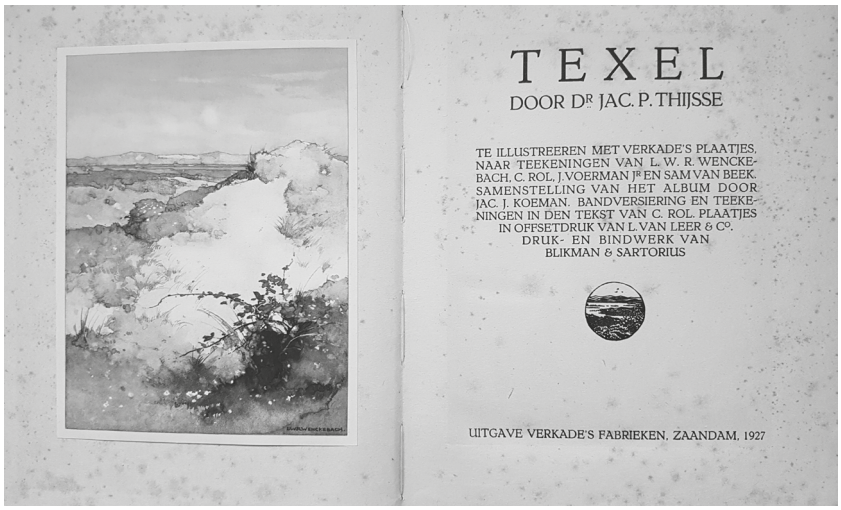
Thijsse's *Texel*: Nature education through walking

Jac. P. Thijsse (1865-1945) is considered one of the founding fathers of nature conservation and nature education in the Netherlands. He founded the magazine *De Levende Natuur* (Living nature, first issue published in 1896), in which, to this day, biological field research is presented to a non-scientific readership. Amongst other subjects, Thijsse authored professional publications in the field of botany, however, he is perhaps best known as the author of a large number of popular scientific articles and books written in a pleasantly readable, accessible style. These works can be seen as a rather sober Dutch variant of the exalted style of the aforementioned Jules Michelet (1798-1874), whom Thijsse greatly admired. When Thijsse was asked for advice on natural history works for the well-known series *Wereldbibliotheek*, he recommended Michelet's *L'oiseau* (1856). This book, which had already been translated in 1859, was retranslated by Martha van Vloten (1856-1943). In his introduction, the publisher L.S. (Leo Simons) warns the reader

> that here he has before him a work from an earlier period, a work not of science in the first place, but of emotion and revelation of insight into nature, in which feeling and imagination (more than rigorous research) guided the writer, but which precisely because of these qualities it will not fail to arouse the reader's love for nature and to captivate him by the descriptive art of the poetic prose writer.[19]

Thijsse checked the proofs of Van Vloten's translation before it was printed.

Thijsse's writing style is less exultant and more educational/descriptive than that of Michelet, resembling more the style of Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), whose famous book *Walden* was translated in 1902 on the initiative of Frederik van Eeden (1860-1932), a great admirer of Thoreau, and the former husband of Martha van Vloten. The difference between Thijsse and Thoreau, however, is that Thoreau's descriptions of nature resulted in self-contemplation and philosophical thought experiments, which, incidentally, led Van Eeden to set up a social



Jac. P. Thijsse, *Texel* (1925). Titlepage and illustration by L.W.R. Wenckebach. Private collection.

experiment, called *Walden*, which existed from 1898 to 1907. Thijsse usually steers clear of self-contemplation: He observes and enthuses more than he philosophises.

Thijsse was an example to the young Tinbergen who had already written articles for *De Levende Natuur* about field research that he conducted, first as a schoolboy, and later as a student. Tinbergen's early writings were produced based on the conviction that scientific research should always be presented to the general public – a conviction he would later express via a professional journal.[20] Tinbergen asked Thijsse to write a foreword for his first book publication, *Het Vogeleiland* (Bird island, 1930), for which, at the age of only 23, he was the lead author.[21] The book was based on field research on the renowned bird island De Beer (which no longer exists) near Rotterdam. Kruuk suggests that Tinbergen's PhD research into the behaviour of the bee-wolf was in fact inspired by Thijsse's interest in digging wasps.[22]

Thijsse was (and remains) best known to the general public for the contribution he made to the series of so-called *Verkade albums* – very popular picture card albums on the subject of nature that were issued by Verkade, a Dutch biscuit manufacturing company. One of these albums is of special interest to us, namely *Texel* (1927), richly illustrated with engravings and with stick-in colour pictures that were based, amongst others, on watercolours by L.W.R. Wenckebach.

In this work, Thijsse looks back at an important moment in his life: his appointment in 1890 at the age of 25 as head of the 'French School' on the island of Texel, one of the Wadden Islands in the north of the Netherlands – at that time an area relatively unknown to most Dutch people. At the beginning of the book, Thijsse

has a rare moment of introspection. He underlines his relatively short stay on the island as a marker in his life: 'All my life I will continue to rejoice that I chose Texel, and – even though I only have lived there for two and a half years, I will remain a *Texelaar* until the end.'[23] The opening chapter briefly describes the boat trip to Texel and his first steps on the island. The way in which his first meeting with the pupils is told, is remarkable: 'The next morning I went to that school and arrived just as the tallest boy, a 16-year-old giant, put one of the children in the gutter – that boy was that tall and the gutter that low.'[24]

The chapter emphasises the natural open-mindedness of the pupils and how familiar they were with the nature of the island. This is aptly illustrated in lapwing egg collecting – a Northern Dutch and especially Frisian tradition – which, if not prohibited, is very strictly regulated for reasons of nature conservation today. Egg collecting requires physical skill, as it involves jumping over ditches with poles. Thijsse went with the boys and so, according to Thijsse, 'we became very good friends, all the more because I walk tirelessly and could jump over wider ditches with a run-up than the best of them. They overcame me with the pole stick.'[25] In this way, in order to limit the unbridled egg collecting, Thijsse managed to persuade the boys to amass a joint school egg collection.

Later in the chapter, Texel is described on the basis of a two-day walk of 60 kilometres around the island, and in the following chapters descriptions are made based on the many bicycle trips via which Thijsse would later crisscross the island with his school classes. The description of the nature of the island was thus presented to the reader in an unsystematic, natural way through the walks and bicycle rides described. It is in the same unsystematic way, this time determined by the narrative of the encounters with animals, that the natural history information in Tinbergen's *Eskimoland* is also presented.

Thijsse proceeds cautiously in these descriptions of nature, in a way that might be considered rhetorical. Probably in order to achieve a *captatio benevolentiae*, the reader is gradually introduced to the description of nature whilst the author walks and rides his bicycle. An overabundance of information is avoided. Therefore, in order not to appear pedantic, Thijsse recounts, in a varied and enthusiastic way, his first encounters with bird species he had never encountered in his hometown of Amsterdam. The reader is thus invited to identify with the narrator's initial wonder at the richness of the island's bird life. What is striking in this charm offensive is the importance of the naming of the birds. As with his first encounter with the grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*):

> Along the water walked a number of birds the size of a lapwing, but with longer legs and their necks higher. They seemed like animals from another world. Neck and back silver grey with dark spots. I had never seen such birds in Amsterdam and so I was very pleased

> with these 'golden lapwings'. In the books they were called that, but we are in the process of forgetting this name and replacing it with *zilverplevier* [grey plover], a name that gives a better understanding of the appearance and relationship of those beautiful birds.[26]

Similar descriptions can also be found of the turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*) and the '*sprinkhaanrietzanger*' (grasshopper warbler, *Locustella naevia*). Thijsse noted they would have preferred to give the grasshopper warbler a different name:

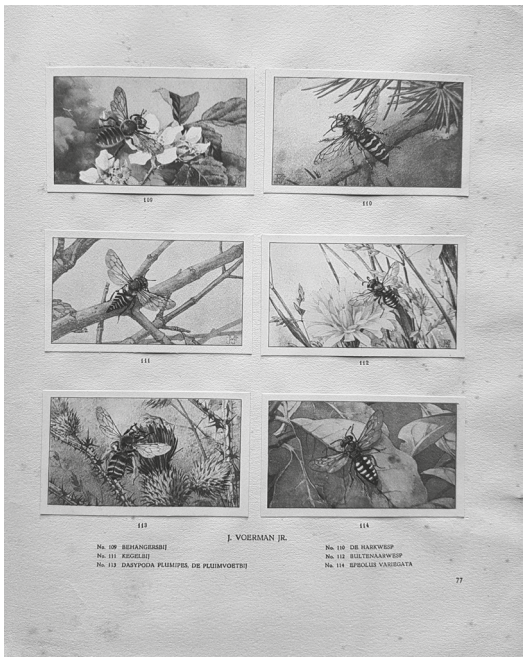
> [The Dutch biologist] Jan Verwey wanted to call him *Duinsnor* [*snor* is the Dutch term for *Savi's warbler*; *duin* signifies *dune*], which is a nice name, but the animal is also common in Brabant and Gelderland on the humid heathland. I came up with the name *Krekelzanger* [literally cricket warbler], but I do feel that it will not be used, perhaps because of Bilderdijk.[27] So it will remain five syllables.[28]

The black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*) is assigned a string of adjectival qualifications: 'the long-necked, long-beaked, long-legged, noisy waders, who can scream so plaintively'.[29] Those animals that can be seen from the boat to Texel are also listed:

> Large seagulls glide here and there, and when we look over the railing into the water, we see the beautiful translucent large jellyfish, light green, blue and brown, carried by the current or moving with rhythmic tension and relaxation of their swimming bell. […] In the meantime we are also on the lookout for harbour porpoises. They are hardly ever missing on the Texelstroom, and it does not take long before we see a pointed dorsal fin cleave through the water, and soon the greasy shiny back turns above the waves.[30]

The animals described, and especially the birds, thus serve as an introduction to the somewhat drier enumerations of the plant world. The narrator also takes time to elaborate on animal behaviour, such as the strange courtship behaviour of ruffs (*Philomachus pugnax*) on their 'lek'. At the end of *Texel*, the narrative comes to a near standstill as the narrator settles into a sand pit and gives an enumerative description of the different bee and wasp species, 'a real natural insectarium',[31] which can be seen in the sand pit. It is these kinds of observations that inspired the young Tinbergen to conduct field research, and eventually his PhD research on the bee-wolf. From a rhetorical perspective, it is perhaps better not to start with such detailed descriptions, which might put off the reader. However, the 132 numbered illustrations, to which the text refers continuously, ensure that even the drier descriptions remain pleasantly readable.

The above thematic and narrative-rhetorical aspects can be found, often to a greater extent, in Tinbergen's *Eskimoland*, as is shown in the following paragraphs. The same fascination for the 'other world' of the far north,[32] so characteristic of



Jac. P. Thijsse, *Texel* (1925), p. 77. Illustrations of bees and wasps by J. Voerman Jr. Private collection.

Eskimoland, is noticeable, albeit implicitly, in *Texel*. This is especially true of migratory birds from the north – the previously mentioned grey plover and turnstone, but also the snow bunting (*Plectorophenax nivalis*), the shore lark (*Eremophila alpestris* ('they […] breed on the tundras, where they also resound their song'),[33] the bar-tailed godwit, and so on. Similarly on the mudflats, fascination is expressed for the 'Auks and Guillemots, a single Northern Gannet, Phalaropes, Gulls of all kinds and also many diving ducks and mergansers'.[34] It is these northern bird species, especially the snow bunting and the red-necked phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*), that play such an important role in *Eskimoland*.

Narrative rhetoric in *Eskimoland*

Although the content of *Eskimoland* differs enormously from that of *Texel*, there are remarkable similarities in their vision and rhetorical structure. The most obvious similarities lie in the chosen genre – the autobiographical travelogue – and in the age of both narrator-characters (in narratology known as the 'narrated I'): 25 years. Both cases concern a period that determines the rest of the authors' lives, although these periods are presented very differently in terms of narratology. In *Texel* the author goes back 37 years in his life. The story is thus teleological – the present is

explained from the past. However, *Eskimoland* deals with the very recent past, from which it is hardly possible to distance oneself. The travelogue, distilled from a diary of more than 300 typed pages[35] and put into writing immediately after arrival, can be interpreted as a self-positioning of the young writer in an uncertain future.

Just like in *Texel*, Tinbergen's travelogue starts with the boat trip to the north. Whilst Tinbergen is sensitive to the overwhelming character of the Arctic, as a biologist his attention soon turns to the area's wildlife. Thijsse's indefinable 'large seagulls' and porpoises are being replaced, as it were, by the spectacular representatives of Arctic fauna. The porpoises become whales, about which Tinbergen tells the following anecdote with his typical sense of humour:

> Sailing out through the narrow fjord we encountered large whales. We heard the 'spouting' on board and saw the grey-blue backs plough through the water in all their awesomeness. The chief mate, a former whaler, stood looking at it with a certain eager connoisseur's eye. When asked what species these whales belonged to, the answer was promptly: 'Finn Whales.' My innocent curiosity made me wonder how that could be seen so quickly. To this probably somewhat stupid question, the chief mate looked at me for a long time and finally only said, 'I *know* they are!'[36]

Naming is therefore important, but just like with Thijsse, the standard names of the animals are not immediately given. The reader is gradually introduced to ornithological naming. For example, certain birds are not immediately referred to by their official name, but first with a description: 'odd fat-headed *mallemoks* (fulmars)' (*Fulmaris glacialis*).[37] Often it remains unclear to a reader not well versed in ornithology whether an adjective, such as '*klein*' ('little', 'small', or 'lesser') and '*groot*' ('large', 'big', 'great') belongs to the standard name of the species or merely to the personal description of the specimens seen. This is the case, for example, with '*slanke kleine mantelmeeuwen*' ('slender little [or lesser] black-backed gulls'), the official species name is '*kleine mantelmeeuw*' (lesser black-backed gull; *Larus fuscus*); '*kleuterige kleine alkjes*'; and '*dwergachtige kleine alken*' (literally: 'toddler-like small auks' and 'dwarfish, little auks'), the official name being '*kleine alk*' – i.e., 'little auk' (*Plautus alle*). At one point, however, Tinbergen seems to tire of this popularising paraphrasing and gives a long list, with the correct standard names, of 23 bird species that are kept in the Copenhagen Natural History Museum because they are either European or North American vagrants in Greenland.

Before addressing the way in which the reader is taken into the more scientific aspects of the Greenland sojourn, it is important to look at how the initial encounters with the Inuit are described. In a strange way, this is reminiscent of Thijsse's first meeting with the Texel boys, albeit on a grander scale. The wild open-mindedness, the Texel boys' physical condition and their connection with nature, which the

narrator admires and with which he tries to compete, are all elements that come back in Tinbergen's descriptions of the Inuit.

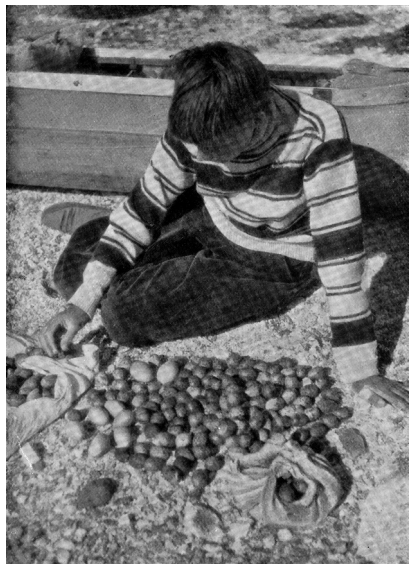
The Inuit are presented as '*dit vrolijke, vredige volkje*'[38] ('this cheerful, peaceful little people'), with '*hun onbezorgde leventje*'[39] ('their carefree little life'; one notes the use of the pejorative diminutive suffix '*-(t)je*' of the Dutch nouns), cheerful 'short brown fellows' with a 'good-natured disposition and […] innate cheerfulness of the little Eskimo people'.[40] However, this initial feeling of European superiority quickly turns into admiration:

> At first it seemed strange to us to see the Greenlanders roll over the deck like little children roaring with laughter, struggling for the pancake the cook threw them from the galley, but after living amongst these people for a few months we were so accustomed to their good-natured, in our view childish nature that we tended to find the attitude of Europeans blasé in such circumstances.[41]

Similarly, regarding their handiness with tools, and their disdainful attitude towards Western technology, Tinbergen states: 'The more we learned about the everyday life of the Eskimos, the more we were impressed by the wide variety of utensils, and their sophisticated efficiency, based on many generations.'[42] Indeed, Tinbergen continues at some length:

> All these objects were made by the hunters themselves. The European who thinks he can impress an Eskimo with a nice rifle, a beautiful pair of binoculars or a complicated camera, is sadly mistaken. The Eskimos, while appreciative of such marvels of engineering, the first thing they ask is, 'Did you make it yourself?' and when the answer is again in the negative on every occasion, the admiration turns, through amazement, into a kind of shrug of pity.[43]

In saying this, Tinbergen undoubtedly did unconsciously puts his own twist on the age-old *topos* of the *bon sauvage* that, through philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, goes back, amongst other authors, to Michel de Montaigne's chapter *Des cannibales* (1580). Montaigne, widely read in the Netherlands at the beginning of the twentieth century,[44] was impressed by the 'primitive' Brazilian Tupinamba, their connection with nature, their artistry and poetry, and their courage. He tried to speak to them (through an interpreter), collected their objects, and tasted their food and drink.[45] Montaigne's essay was widely read trough the ages. In the 1930s, in the same period *Eskimoland* was published, another young and soon to be world-famous scientist – the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, who was deeply influenced by Montaigne – would arrive by boat in Brazil to conduct research amongst the same Tupinamba people.[46] Montaigne ends his essay with some examples of the 'wild' Indians' relativistic criticism of the 'civilized' Europeans. The



Lies Tinbergen collecting eggs. Photograph: Niko Tinbergen, in: *Eskimoland* (1935), facing p. 137. Collection Tinbergen Family/ Van Oorschot, Amsterdam.

critical attitude of Tinbergen's Inuit towards the 'odd inconsistencies in the way of life of the Europeans' seems to be almost a direct echo of Montaigne's Tupinamba: 'When the conversation turned to the conditions of the civilized world "where men and nations are always angry with one another" (as the Eskimos said with a sharp sneer), we had little better to do than to be ashamed.'[47]

Unlike Montaigne, Niko and Lies Tinbergen could of course not suffice with superficial tastings of indigenous food. They were forced to adapt as much as possible to the life of the Inuit and, to some extent, assimilate. They learned the Inuit language, dressed in seal fur, and ate seal meat, whale meat, fish, and birds. That said, there were limits to their assimilation. Niko and Lies reluctantly ate the bloody, foul-smelling 'raw frozen flesh' of a bearded seal, which their host had captured three months earlier and kept in the ground.[48]

Just as Thijsse went on an egg hunt with his Texel boys, so too did Tinbergen learn egg collecting. A photograph shows Lies display their bounty: 'eggs of terns, long-tailed ducks and mergansers', so the caption states.[49] Further, fishing for salmon (with a rifle!) is also photographed by Tinbergen ('Salmon shooting in Qingorssuaq, August 1932').[50] Tinbergen also accompanies the Inuit on a seal hunt – an activity that is also extensively described and photographed.

Tinbergen's fascination with the hunting aspect of Inuit life is noteworthy. The different fishing techniques and the hunting of polar bears, whales, and various species of seals are described in detail, sometimes from his own observations and with his own photographs, sometimes from the explanations of the Inuit themselves. Some of the details are quite gory and probably would have failed to gain the approval of the (then) emerging animal protection movement, which at the time mainly focused on the atrocities of the Arctic seal hunt.[51] I quote here a Dutch book review of an American book about seal hunting: Henry Wood Elliott, *An Arctic Province: Alaska and the Seal Islands* (1886), with passages addressing the endangered life of the Northern fur seal (*Callorhinus ursinus*). A Dutch reviewer

Inuit seal hunting. Photographs: Niko Tinbergen *Eskimoland* (1935)., facing p. 80. Collection Tinbergen Family/Van Oorschot, Amsterdam.

remarked: 'the slaughter of these animals is so horrible, that many a lady will wear no seal fur anymore, after reading this description in Elliott's book'.[52] Newspaper readers were horrified by the cruel details given by experts, such as the Norwegian Carsten Egeberg Borchgrevinck: 'It is easier to skin a seal which is half alive. In the utmost agony the wretched beast draws the muscles away from the sharp steel'.[53] Indeed, around 1900, Dutch readers as far away as in the colonies realised with a shock that seals were often skinned alive.[54]

The intended readers of these newspaper articles would certainly not be happy with Tinbergen's bloody description of the killing of a large Greenland shark:

> When the shark is well and truly on dry land, it is culled in a strange way. The many jabs through his brain do not make the movements much less, and soon one of the men takes a knife and cuts an opening in the skull; he grabs the brain with his hand and pulls it out with a large part of the spinal cord. Then the large fish is cut open, and the gigantic livers, for which it is especially popular, are immediately carried home on a sleigh.[55]

In this and other descriptions, two things emerge that are atypical of nature-educational writings of the time, including those of Thijsse. First, there is Tinbergen's fascination with the hunting techniques of both humans and animals. Indeed, in addition to the hunting techniques of the Inuit, Tinbergen focuses on the hunting techniques of gyrfalcons (*Falco rusticolus*) preying upon ptarmigans (*Lagopus mutus*), and one also thinks of his earlier research into the hunting techniques of the bee-wolf and the hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), and of his prey research into the long-eared owl (*Asio otus*), about which he published in German in international ornithological journals (*Ardea*, *Journal für Ornithologie*, *Beitrage zur Fortpflanzungsbiologie der Vögel*). Tinbergen himself later admitted that this research on hunting techniques, and also his predilection for bird photography, can be regarded as 'surrogate hunting'.[56]

A second point that emerges from the hunting descriptions is a certain objectification of the hunt: The Inuit feel no empathy with the animal hunted, and this absence of empathy is reported by Tinbergen without emotion. Indeed, Tinbergen and Lies feel little compassion towards the animals, except for a single moment, at the beginning of the travelogue. After they complained to the Inuit about the 'scarred dogs [that were like] walking skeletons', who had feasted on the bird skins that had been collected and prepared for the National Natural History Museum at Leiden, the animals were transferred by the Inuit to another place: 'Like pieces of wood, the unfortunate animals, too weak to walk properly, were thrown into the boat and brought home with great pleasure.'[57] Generally speaking, there is space in the numerous descriptions given for scientific curiosity about the animal, and often for the animal's beauty, but not for empathy with the animal.

This brings us to the educational component of the work, which is much less developed than is the case with Thijsse's rhetorical management of his readership. Tinbergen suffices with an apology in his foreword: '[I have] not failed to elaborate on a few biological subjects here and there; I have, however, endeavoured not to present too indigestible food to the non-biologically oriented reader.'[58] A little later, Tinbergen writes, more or less apologetically: 'During the whole winter I had a wonderful opportunity to indulge my biological lust for the sled dogs.'[59] There then follows a long, rather technical reflection on the pecking order in sled dogs. Incidentally, it is astonishing to note that, for reasons known only to himself, Tinbergen never developed this part, with innovative insights, into a scientific or popular scientific article.[60]

It is also striking that the reader is told only later (and rather unsystematically) the assignments for which Tinbergen had travelled to Greenland. As previously mentioned, he was tasked with the collection of bird skins for the Natural History Museum in Leiden, and artefacts for the Education Museum in The Hague (objects to which an exhibition was devoted in 1999, entitled 'Eskimoland').[61] According

to Kruuk, the plan was also to conduct research on the breeding behaviour of Greenlandic glaucous gulls compared with Dutch herring gulls (*Larus argentatus*), and some other research projects.[62] However, the book makes no mention of these ambitious yet unrealised research plans, which is of course perhaps wise for a book that seems to focus on self-positioning. Of the planned studies, only the territorial behaviour of the snow bunting was studied, and one gets the impression that the intensive three-week study into the breeding behaviour of the grey phalarope (upon which Tinbergen elaborates for several pages) was conceived whilst there. Be that as it may, these investigations, as was the case with Thijsse's *insectarium*, are only addressed towards the end of the book.

This brings us to a final point in which Thijsse and Tinbergen both resemble each other and differ, namely the use of illustrations. Illustrations play an important role in the narrations and descriptions of both authors and tempt the reader to read on. The black-and-white photographs, most of which were taken by Tinbergen himself, are perhaps less beautiful from the viewpoint of contemporary aesthetic standards than the beautiful Verkade watercolours, but they are much more intriguing: They make the reader curious and compel him to read carefully. There is a great variety of subjects, from the photographic portrait of Kârale[63] to the details of seal hunting and of the birds studied, for example, the snow bunting and phalarope. These illustrations also reveal what the text usually conceals, namely, the difficult circumstances in which Niko and Lies conducted their research. Only once, when Niko and Lies forgot to bring their mosquito masks, is there a complaint about mosquitoes, and once Tinbergen mentions a wrist infection, which made paddling difficult for him. This again reminds us of Thijsse, who also does not elaborate on physical discomfort, except when, sitting in his *insectarium*, he is stung by the common horse fly, which in turn leads to a brief consideration of this insect species.

Conclusion

Thijsse's sand pit brings us to the end of *Eskimoland*, and to the conclusion of our argument. Tinbergen is completely absorbed in his field research, just like Thijsse in his sand pit on Texel. Only at the end of *Eskimoland* does Tinbergen come out of his pit via a message from the outside world: 'While we were thus, gradually forgetting the world, paying all our attention to salmon, phalaropes and snow buntings, one day at the end of July we were suddenly surprised by the visit of a kayaker.'[64] It is as if Tinbergen awakens from a dream: This kayaker brings news from the Netherlands, thus heralding the beginning of the end of the Greenland stay.

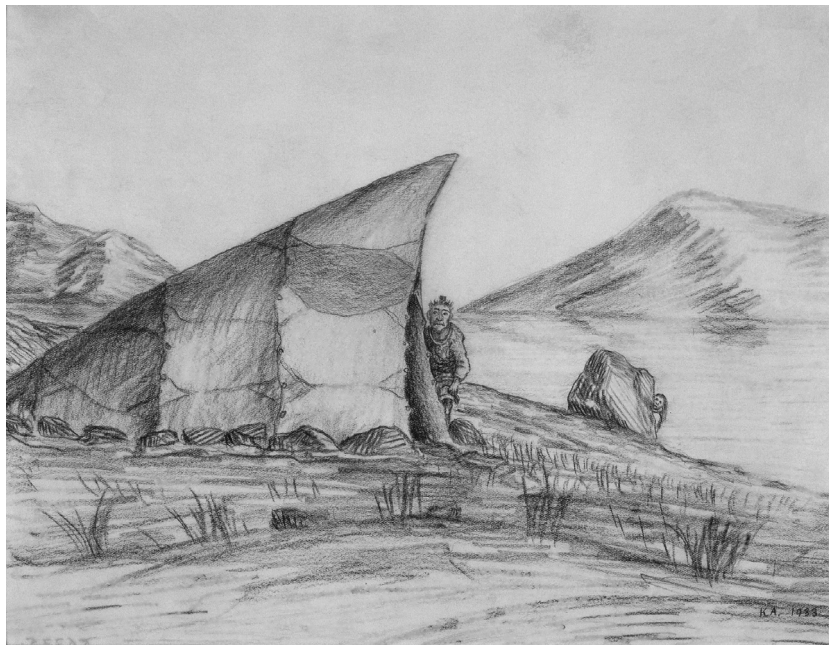
So what was Tinbergen trying to achieve with his travelogue? He probably wanted to position himself amongst as wide a readership as possible. Self-positioning, and subsequent self-fashioning, was of course essential for a young researcher who had just obtained a PhD, and who was absent from the Dutch academic world for a whole year. Academic self-positioning is also visible on the title page of the original 1934 edition, which bears his name and title: 'Dr. N. Tinbergen'. His travelogue can indeed be read as a scientific plea for field research as an essential element of research into animal behaviour. Without Tinbergen mentioning any names (he would later do so), this plea was directed against laboratory research with white rats or monkeys (such as the research of the American behaviourist J.B. Watson), or behavioural research on wild animals in captivity (for instance the very popular Dutch researcher Frits Portielje, another popular author of *Verkade albums*, who worked at the Amsterdam zoo Artis), or research on domestic animals (such as the research of Tinbergen's later fellow Nobel Prize winner Konrad Lorenz, with whom Tinbergen would become good friends). Moreover, he suggested, albeit without explicitly stating it, that the behaviour of humans and animals is comparable, and should therefore also be studied in a similar way. The fact that Tinbergen never explicitly expressed this idea in his travelogue has much to do with the taboo nature of the subject at the time. Only years later would this taboo be broken by Tinbergen's former student Desmond Morris. He also touched on problematic concepts, such as instinct and the nature-nurture relationship, about which he would publish extensively. Tinbergen seemed to be hedging his bets: With his book he profiled himself, not only as a scientist-to-be, but also as a nature writer, following the example of Thijsse. He showed that he had literary talent.[65] Above all, Tinbergen wanted to make his Dutch readers enthusiastic about all aspects of living nature in Greenland, and the place of humans in it. Yet reading between the lines one discovers a modern voice: awareness about the disappearance of what we now call biodiversity and indigenous culture, as could also be heard in Thijsse's *Texel*.

Appendix

Kârale Andreassen produced four original drawings illustrating the story of the *tupilaq*. Andreassen presented these drawings to Niko Tinbergen, who included them in *Eskimoland*, adding the explanatory captions given below. The drawings are now in the Museon in The Hague. I thank the Museon for the photographs and both the Tinbergen family and the Museon for their permission to publish them.

Drawing by Kârale Andreassen. Collection Museon, The Hague.

Caption by Tinbergen: 'The old woman in the foreground is jealous of the young couple, whose husband is a great hunter, and with whom she lives in the tent. The man is just coming back behind the kayak with three large seals and his wife is walking towards him from the tent. The old woman, seated at a child's grave, prepares two evil means: in her hand she holds a piece of flesh from the corpse, on the right is the skull that must serve for a tupilaq.'[66]

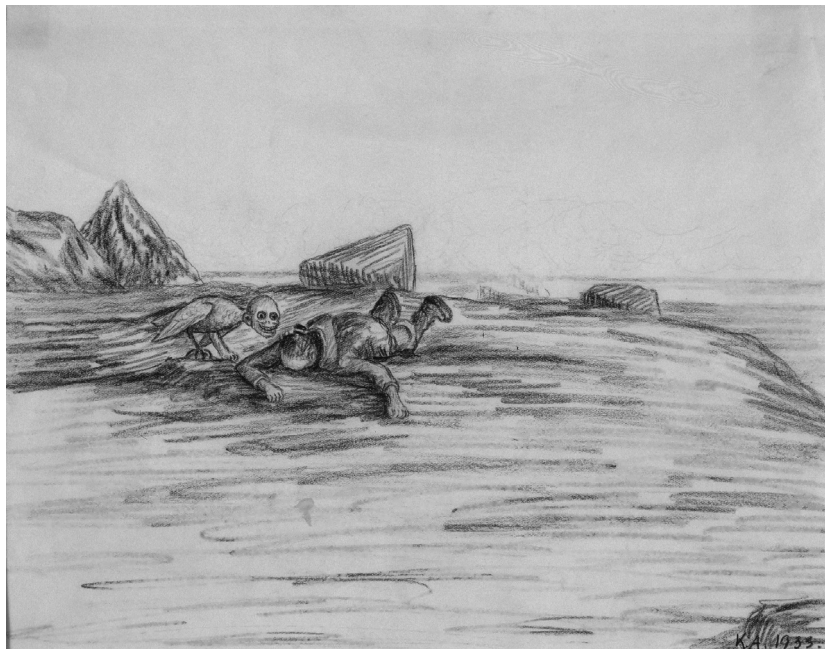


Drawing by Kârale Andreassen. Collection Museon, The Hague.

Caption by Tinbergen: 'The old woman puts a piece of flesh under the entrance of the tent, so that if the hunter enters, he must step on it, which will bring him bad luck, perhaps death. He himself, however, watches unnoticed from behind the stone on the right.'[67]

Drawing by Kârale Andreassen. Collection Museon, The Hague.

Caption by Tinbergen: 'The *tupilaq*, in the foreground, a creature made by the woman from a human skull, a seagull's body, with one raven's foot and one dog's foot. In the background, the young couple, who no longer feel safe here after the man's discovery, can be seen leaving. The small horn on the hood of the man's anorak means that he has certain *angakoq* [medicine man] qualities and thus has a certain power over supernatural beings, such as the *tupilait*. Because of this, the *tupilaq*, so the story goes, cannot see him and thus looks the other way.'[68]



Drawing by Kârale Andreassen. Collection Museon, The Hague.

Caption by Tinbergen: 'When a *tupilaq* encounters an opponent that is too strong, as is the case here, it turns against its maker, who is then irretrievably lost. Pictured here is the dramatic conclusion: the *tupilaq* killed the lonely old woman left behind.'[69]

Notes

1 Birkhead, *De fantastische Mr. Willughby*; Broberg, *Carl Linnaeus*; Mulder, *De ontdekking van de natuur*; Vonk, *Wie wat bewaart*.

2 Thoreau, *Walden.*

3 Thijsse, *Nu ga ik er eens op uit*.

4 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*. My references are to the 2017 edition. All translations into English are mine.

5 www.bnnvara.nl/vroegevogels/artikelen/eskimoland and https://nos.nl/artikel/2163746-hoe-bioloog-niko-tinbergen-een-beetje-eskimo-werd, last accessed 10 December 2021.

6 Morris, *The Naked Ape.*

7 De Waal, *The Age of Empathy.*

8 Thijsse, *Texel.*

9 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 15: '14 juli 1932. Eindelijk was het zover.'

10 Tinbergen, 'Über die Orientierung des Bienenwolfes'.

11 Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 56.

12 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 12: 'per boot in de zomer en per slee en ski in de winter'.

13 Leane, 'Animals', 305-317. See also the introduction to the present volume.

14 https://verfassungsblog.de/the-animal-turn-what-is-it-and-why-now/, last accessed 23 June 2022.

15 These research questions are known as Tinbergen's 'Four Whys', according to which the researcher should focus his research on the causation (mechanism), development (ontogeny), function (adaptation), and evolution (phylogeny) of animal behaviour. See Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 218; Tinbergen, 'On Aims and Methods of Ethology'.

16 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 191.

17 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 110.

18 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 120-121.

19 Michelet, *De vogel*, v: 'dat hij hier een werk voor zich heeft uit een vroeger tijdvak, een werk niet van wetenschap allereerst, maar van aandoening; openbaring van inzicht in de natuur, waarbij het gevoel en de verbeelding den schrijver leidden meer nog dan streng onderzoek, doch dat juist door die eigenschappen niet zal nalaten des lezers liefde voor de natuur aan te wakkeren en hem te boeien door de beschrijvingskunst van den dichterlijken prozaïst'.

20 Tinbergen, 'Over de waarde van het populariseren van de biologie'; see also Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 105, n. 95.

21 Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 44; Van Beusekom et al., *Het Vogeleiland.*

22 Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 27, 49-50.

23 Thijsse, *Texel*, 5: 'Mijn leven lang zal ik er mij over blijven verheugen, dat ik Texel had gekozen, en – al heb ik er maar twee en een half jaar gewoond, Texelaar zal ik blijven tot het eind.'

24 Thijsse, *Texel*, 6-7: 'Den volgenden ochtend ging ik naar die school toe en kwam net aan op het oogenblik dat de grootste jongen, een zestienjarige reus, een van de kleineren in de dakgoot zette, zoo lang was die jongen en zo laag die dakgoot.'

25 Thijsse, *Texel*, 7.

26 Thijsse, *Texel*, 12: 'Langs het water liepen een aantal vogels zoo groot als een kievit, maar met langer pooten en ze hielden hun hals hooger. Het leken dieren uit een andere wereld. Hun onderkant en keel en wangen waren pikzwart en daar ging een spierwitte streep doorheen. Nek en rug zilvergrijs met donkere vlekken. Zulke vogels had ik bij Amsterdam nog nooit gezien en ik was dus met deze 'goudkieviten' niet weinig in mijn schik. In de boeken heetten ze zoo, maar we zijn bezig dezen

naam te vergeten en hem te vervangen door zilverplevier, een naam die een beter begrip geeft van het uiterlijk en de verwantschap van die mooie vogels.'

[27] Thijsse's reference is to *Krekelzangen*, a collection of poems by the Dutch poet Willem Bilderdijk (1756-1831). Today, the name *krekelzanger* is used for a related species, the river warbler (*Locustella fluviatis*).

[28] Thijsse, *Texel*, 28: 'dien we liever een anderen naam wilden geven. Jan Verwey wilde hem Duinsnor noemen, wat wel een heel aardige naam is, maar het diertje komt ook veel voor in Brabant en Gelderland op de vochtige heiden. Ik heb den naam Krekelzanger bedacht, maar voel wel, dat die niet erin zal komen, wellicht wel wegens Bilderdijk. Zoo zal hij dan wel vijflettergrepig blijven.' Today the bird is called a '*sprinkhaanzanger*': four syllables.

[29] Thijsse, *Texel*, 15: 'de langhalzige, langsnavelige, langbeenige, luidruchtige steltloopers, die zoo klagelijk kunnen schreeuwen'.

[30] Thijsse, *Texel*, 22: 'Groote meeuwen glijden her en der en als we over de verschansing in 't water kijken, dan zien we er de mooie doorschijnende groote kwallen, lichtgroene, blauwe en bruine, meegevoerd door den stroom of zich voorbewegend met rhythmische spanning en ontspanning van hun zwemklok. […] Ondertusschen zijn we ook op den uitkijk naar Bruinvisschen. Die ontbreken haast nooit op den Texelstroom en het duurt dan ook niet lang of we zien een spitse rugvin in het water doorklieven en weldra draait ook de vettige glimmende rug boven de golven uit.'

[31] Thijsse, *Texel*, 89: 'een echt natuurlijk insectarium'.

[32] From the third quarter of the nineteenth century, this fascination for the far north is noticeable amongst the general public, both in Europe and in the Netherlands. This is apparent from an unpublished newspaper survey that I conducted on Dutch public opinion on the seal: Smith, 'Public Opinion on Seals in Dutch Newspapers 1725-1900'. I quote from this article: 'Frequent were the travel reports, often in feuilleton form, to northern areas (see for instance *Provinciale Overijsselsche en Zwolsche courant*, 15 August 1883). There are detailed descriptions of seal hunting by the Inuit, invariably called "Eskimos" (*Rotterdamsch nieuwsblad*, 14 March 1887). The newspapers reported extensively on the great ethnological exhibitions, in which also seals were exhibited. These exhibitions were to be seen at Paris, Brussels, and Cologne, and had a huge success. It was stated that the Paris exhibition at the afternoon of All-Saints Day alone drew more than 20,000 visitors. *De Gooi- en Eemlander*, 11 November 1877.'

[33] Thijsse, *Texel*, 47: 'zij […] broeden op de toendra's, waar ze ook hun lied laten weergalmen'.

[34] Thijsse, *Texel*, 47: 'Alken en Zeekoeten, een enkele Jan van Gent, Franjepooten, Meeuwen van allerlei soort en ook vele duikeenden en zagers'.

[35] Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 60.

[36] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 19-20: 'Uitvarend door de smalle fjord kwamen we grote walvissen tegen. We hoorden aan boord het "spuiten" en zagen de grijsblauwe ruggen in al hun geweldigheid door het water ploegen. De eerste stuurman, een oud-walvisvaarder, stond er met een zekere begerige kennersblik naar te kijken. Op de vraag tot welke soort deze walvissen behoorden kwam prompt het antwoord: "Finn Whales." Mijn onschuldige leergierigheid deed me vragen hoe dat zo gauw te zien was. Op deze waarschijnlijk enigszins domme vraag keek de stuurman me lang aan en zei ten slotte slechts: "I *know* they are!"'

[37] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 18: 'zonderlinge dikkoppige mallemokken (Noorse stormvogels)'.

[38] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 28; see also p. 167.

[39] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 12.

[40] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 29: 'korte bruine kerels', 'goedmoedige aard en […] aangeboren opgewektheid van het eskimovolkje'.

41 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 29: 'In het begin deed het ons vreemd aan te zien hoe de Groenlanders als kleine kinderen schaterend van de lach over het dek rolden, worstelend om de pannenkoek die de kok hun vanuit de kombuis toewierp, maar toen we enige maanden onder deze mensen gewoond hadden waren we zo gewend aan hun goedige, in onze ogen kinderlijke aard dat we een zekere neiging hadden de houding van Europeanen in zulke omstandigheden blasé te vinden.'

42 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 58: 'Hoe meer we het dagelijks leven van de eskimo's leerden kennen, hoe meer we geïmponeerd werden door de grote variatie van gebruiksvoorwerpen, en de op ervaringen van vele generatie berustende geraffineerde doelmatigheid ervan.'

43 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 58-59: 'Al deze voorwerpen werden door de jagers zelf vervaardigd. De Europeaan die meent een eskimo met een mooi geweer, een prachtige kijker of een ingewikkeld fototoestel te kunnen imponeren, vergist zich dan ook deerlijk. De eskimo's zijn weliswaar vol waardering voor zulke wonderen van de techniek, maar het eerste dat ze vragen is: "Heb je het zelf gemaakt?", en als het antwoord daarop dan bij elke gelegenheid weer ontkennend luidt, gaat de bewondering via verwondering in een soort schouderophalend medelijden over.'

44 See Smith, 'Traduire Rabelais et Montaigne aux Pays-Bas'.

45 See Smith 'Naked Indians, Trousered Gauls'.

46 See Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes tropiques*.

47 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 123: 'als de gesprekken op de toestanden in de beschaafde wereld kwamen "waar de mensen en volkeren altijd boos op elkaar zijn" (zoals de eskimo's met een scherp spotlachje zeiden), hadden wij niet veel beters te doen dan ons te schamen'.

48 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 92.

49 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 179.

50 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 40.

51 See Smith, 'Public Opinion on Seals in Dutch Newspapers 1725-1900'.

52 *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 03-04-1887.

53 *Rotterdamsch nieuwsblad*, 27-11-1899.

54 *Rotterdamsch nieuwsblad*, 27-11-1899

55 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 89-90: 'Wanneer de haai goed en wel op het droge ligt wordt hij op een zonderlinge manier afgemaakt. De vele prikken, dwars door zijn hersens, maken de bewegingen niet veel minder, en al gauw neemt een van de mannen een mes en snijdt een opening in het schedeldak; hij grijpt met de hand de hersens en trekt die met een groot deel van het ruggenmerg eruit. Dan wordt de grote vis opengesneden en de reusachtige levers, waarom het vooral te doen is, worden dadelijk op de slee naar huis vervoerd.'

56 Kruuk, *Niko's Nature*, 52.

57 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 36: 'Als stukken hout werden de ongelukkige dieren, die te zwak waren om behoorlijk te lopen, in de boot geworpen en onder groot plezier naar huis gebracht.'

58 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 12: '[Ik heb] niet nagelaten hier en daar over enkele biologische onderwerpen uit te wijden; ik heb er echter naar gestreefd de niet biologisch georiënteerde lezer geen al te onverteerbare kost voor te zetten.'

59 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 71: 'Gedurende de hele winter had ik een prachtige gelegenheid mijn biologische lusten op de eskimohonden bot te vieren.'

60 Except for the chapter 'Arctic Interlude' of his autobiographical work *Curious Naturalists*, 41-45, which gives an English abstract of the original Dutch text.

61 See Bettenhoussen & Kerkhoven, *Eskimoland.*

62 Kruuk, *Nico's Nature*, 64.

63 Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 38.

[64] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 201: 'Terwijl we zo, de wereld langzamerhand vergetende, al onze aandacht besteedden aan zalmen, franjepoten een sneeuwgorzen, werden we op een dag aan het eind van juli plotseling verrast door het bezoek van een kajakman.'

[65] Later he would write a much-read children's book, *Klieuw* (1948). The English version came out first: *Kleew: The Story of a Gull* (1947).

[66] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland,* 120: 'De oude vrouw op de voorgrond is jaloers op het jonge echtpaar, waarvan de man een groot jager is, en bij wie ze in de tent woont. De man komt juist met drie grote zeehonden achter de kajak terug en zijn vrouw loopt hem vanaf de tent tegemoet. De oude vrouw maakt, bij een kindergraf gezeten, twee onheilbrengende middelen gereed: in de hand houdt ze een stuk vlees van het lijk, rechts ligt de schedel die voor een tupilaq moet dienen.'

[67] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 120: 'De oude vrouw brengt een stuk vlees onder de ingang van de tent, zodat de jager, als hij binnengaat, erop moet stappen, wat hem onheil, misschien de dood, zal brengen. Hijzelf ziet echter onbemerkt toe vanachter de steen rechts.'

[68] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 121: 'De tupilaq, op de voorgrond, een wezen door de vrouw gemaakt van een mensenschedel, een meeuwenlichaam, met één ravenpoot en één hondenpoot. Op de achtergrond ziet men het jonge paar vertrekken, dat zich hier na de ontdekking van de man niet meer veilig voelt. Het kleine hoorntje op de kap van de anoraq van de man betekent dat hij zekere angakoq-eigenschappen heeft en dus een bepaalde macht heeft over bovennatuurlijke wezen[s], zoals tupilait. Hierdoor kan de tupilaq, zoals het heet, hem niet zien en kijkt dus de andere kant uit.'

[69] Tinbergen, *Eskimoland*, 121: 'Wanneer een tupilaq een te sterke tegenstander ontmoet, zoals hier het geval is, keert hij zich tegen zijn maker, die dan reddeloos verloren is. Hier is het dramatische slot afgebeeld: de tupilaq heeft de alleen achtergebleven oude vrouw gedood.'

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