

George Kinzadah — Simoogit in His Times

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George Kinzadah was the nineteenth-century Nishga chief about whom the most information is available. The sources record his affairs over a period of almost fifty years, in a variety of different circumstances. Throughout his career he was both a chief — *Simoogit*, “a real or finished person” — and an innovator. From the 1850s to the late 1890s he was involved with most of the major public affairs of the Nishga: engaging in the land-based fur trade, initiating the coming of missionaries and Christianity, co-operating in the onset of government administration, participating in the rise of the land question, assisting in efforts at intertribal diplomacy, and functioning as a chief at Ankida and as Chief Councillor of Kincolith. Kinzadah’s life spanned an era of major changes for the Nishga. While changing, they nevertheless retained continuity with their past. He was an agent and an embodiment of the continuity and change experienced by his people.

The Fur Trade

George Kinzadah’s name first appears in the Hudson’s Bay Company post journal for Fort Simpson on 12 May 1857, although he is probably the “Cusitar” and “Casitar” who appeared in references of 30 April 1857.¹ Over time the spelling of this name changed, but the context suggests that it is the same man. Based on his baptismal records for 1878 he was about 24 years old in 1857. The use of his title indicates that he was already a chief: generally Nishga traders were chiefs, and the main chiefs were traders. He was one of several chiefs of the lower Nass villages who regularly traded at Fort Simpson between 1831 and 1834 on the site which is now Port Simpson, B.C. This post had been located on the north shore of the Nass estuary between the site of the immemorial Nishga fishery and the later site of the village of Kincolith, a spot once known as “Place of Skulls

¹ Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) Records. Reel #6M142, Fort Simpson Journal. Entries for 30 April 1857 and 12 May 1857.

or Scalps.” In 1834, Fort Simpson was relocated to its second and permanent site on the Tsimshian Peninsula.

Nishga traders had by the 1850s become a major factor in the resources traded at Fort Simpson. They brought potatoes, eulachon oil, prized marten pelts, and a variety of other skins as well. They were thus suppliers not only of pelts but of much-needed provisions. Indeed, in the mid-1850s the post commander, William Henry McNeill, wrote in the post journal that without Nishga trade, the fort’s trade would be poor. This was a time when ship-borne traders, dealing mostly in rum and other alcoholic beverages, according to their competitors in the Company, were cutting deeply into the Company’s usual pelt sources among the Tsimshian, Tlingit, and Haida.² One of the most important Nishga traders in the mid-1850s was Neshaki (Neshakigh), who was herself a chief and became McNeill’s second wife. She and her brothers were, like Kinzadah, residents of the lower Nass village of Ankida and members of the *Laxkibu* clan, the Wolf crest. In addition to trading at the Fort, the Nishga also engaged in active trading with ships of both the Hudson’s Bay Company and their competitors, which sailed up the river to Ankida and its co-village Quinwoch. These activities continued into the 1860s. The availability of pelts on the Nass and in its hinterland, and the energy of the Nishga in securing them, was underlined by the establishment in April 1866 of a small Hudson’s Bay Company post at Ankida, initially in Neshaki’s own house.

The Nishga did not produce a chief to match the wealth and influence enjoyed by successive chiefs of the Legaic dynasty of the Coastal Tsimshian. Instead, several chiefs of the lower Nass competed for pre-eminence in the 1860s, including Kinzadah and his ally NeeskinWaetk, Neshaki’s brother. On one occasion these two men collaborated to raise a crest pole to overtop and outdo their arch-rival Claytha (Kledach, Klaydach, Hladerh).³ Several other chiefs of Ankida also engaged in the rivalry of this era. This village complex was a major centre of lower Nass cultural and economic activity in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Located on an island in the Nass River, about twenty miles above the mouth, Ankida was part of a three-village grouping which also included Quinwoch and a minor village, Wilskihldemwilwilgit. Ankida was the home of several of the major

² *Ibid.* See entries for early months of 1863. On 23 February the journal says without trade of Neshaki’s relatives there would be little. On 9 April 1863 even the Nishga trade is threatened by rum ships. April 21 — Neshaki’s trade will boost the totals for the month. In April, May, and June 1863 the Nishga seem to have been the mainstay of the fur trade at Fort Simpson.

³ Marius Barbeau, *Totem Poles*. Bulletin No. 119 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1950).

traders of the *Laxkibu* clan, the Wolf crest, which apparently dominated the island village. In the 1860s there were twenty-seven wooden longhouse dwellings in Ankida, arranged to form a ring around the outer edge of the island. Of these houses, sixteen were of the *Laxkibu* clan, the Wolf crest. Nine were of the *Laxsik* clan, the Eagle crest, and two were of the *Ganada* clan, the Raven crest.⁴ On the river bank mainland was the village of Quinwoch (Kwunwoq). There the *Laxsik* clan had ten dwellings, the *Gispewudwade* clan (the Killer-Whale crest) had ten dwellings, and the *Ganada* one.⁵

Wealth and competition built on fur trading permitted a flurry of house building, crest pole raising, and potlatching. Although the competition often led to bloodshed and sometimes to murder, it also caused a period of artistic flowering for the Nishga. C. M. Barbeau asserted that the period saw the creation of the best poles on the Northwest Coast; the most outstanding carver of the time was Oyai, from an upper Nass village, perhaps Gitwinsilth.⁶ Ankida was enjoying a kind of "golden age" of creativity and status enhancement during the 1860s.

Kinzadah can be seen as both a product and a shaper of this "golden age" of Ankida, a role he shared with his chiefly peers; other outstanding chiefs of the village in the 1860s included Qwockshow, Neeshlishyahn, Akstaqhl, and Kadounaha, all of the *Laxkibu* clan, the Wolf crest. In nearby Quinwoch there lived, for some of this period, a senior chief of the *Laxsik* clan, the Eagle crest, Sakauwan.⁷ Sakauwan, erstwhile husband of Neshaki before she left him to marry McNeill, later resided at Gitiks, a village near the mouth of the Nass River and a centre of the Eagle clan.⁸ Sakauwan was joined at Gitiks by Claytha, a Wolf crest chief who had competed unsuccessfully for the pre-eminence on the lower Nass.

By the 1850s and 1860s the Nishga had been in direct contact with European traders at the Nass, though intermittently, for about sixty years, from the early or middle 1790s.⁹ The title held by Kinzadah presumably had

⁴ Marjorie M. Halpin, "The Tsimshian Crest System" (Ph.D. Thesis, Anthropology, University of British Columbia, 1973), 305.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 304. While the names of the *Laxkibu* clan and the *Laxsik* clan mean roughly the same as the names of their crests, which are, respectively, the Wolf crest and the Eagle crest, the names of the *Ganada* clan and the *Gispawadwada* clan do *not* mean "Raven" and "Killer-Whale," although these are the animals of their respective crests. Kinzadah was a member of the *Laxkibu* clan, of the Wolf crest.

⁶ Barbeau, *op. cit.*, 53.

⁷ Halpin, *op. cit.*, 304.

⁸ Barbeau, *op. cit.*, 10.

⁹ Prior to this the Nishga probably experienced Russian trade influences from Alaska as they were in close contact with the southern Tlingit. These influences likely began

previous holders who had already established themselves as traders, probably acting as intermediaries between the Europeans and upriver peoples including Gitksan and Tahltan. The wealth and prominence of Kinzadah is illustrated by a traditional story of his competition with Legaic, one of the dynasty of great senior Coast Tsimshian chiefs, in the destruction of property, including the prized and prestigious objects called “coppers.” According to the oral tradition, the contest — a battle of property — took place at the site of Kincolith, with Kinzadah standing on the shore and Legaic in a canoe offshore. As a gesture of his contempt for even the most precious symbols of wealth, Legaic threw several of his ceremonial coppers into the water from his canoe. Kinzadah, having gathered his own wealth for the contest, matched him copper for copper. Then Legaic tossed blankets into the sea. Again Kinzadah matched him. Legaic then began to throw out more coppers and Kinzadah was obliged to turn to his family and supporters for assistance. Trade blankets and goat horn spoons were thrown away. Kinzadah was down to his last copper when one of his party noticed that Legaic had thrown the same copper into the water several times. The copper had been attached to a line, made of kelp, which was tied to the canoe. Legaic’s cunning was thus exposed; he lost the contest and departed, defeated and shamed.¹⁰ Here Kinzadah is portrayed as both wealthy enough to compete in Legaic’s class and lucky enough to avoid being outwitted.

Kinzadah’s career as a trader at Fort Simpson apparently started out long before William Duncan, an Anglican lay missionary, appeared there in the fall of 1857. An intelligent, energetic, and aggressive young man of about 20, Duncan soon made himself competent in the Coast Tsimshian village. These settlers, including Legaic, were themselves major traders to the fort. Like most of the other Indian traders, they sold pelts, provisions, and their labour. Provisions which they provided included game, fish, oil, potatoes, berries, and eggs. They also traded with other Indians who came to the fort and acted as intermediary traders to interior Indians, especially those on the Skeena River. Each spring they camped at the Nass mouth to catch and process into oil the vast quantities of eulachon (“smallfish” or

at least as early as the mid-eighteenth century. See, for example, George F. Macdonald’s essay “The Epic of Nekt” in Margaret Seguin (ed.), *The Tsimshian: Images of the Past, Views for the Present* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

¹⁰ See George F. Macdonald and John J. Cove (eds.), *Tsimshian Narratives 2: Trade and Warfare*, Mercury Series, Directorate Paper No. 3 (Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1987), Narrative No. 29, 103-05; see also Michael Robinson, *The Sea Otter Chiefs* (n.p., B.C.: Friendly Cove Press, 1978), 78-79.

“candlefish”) which ran up the Nass River beginning about mid-March. They feasted and intermarried with the Nishga, their close cultural cousins, in whose territory the Nass mouth lay. The Coast Tsimshian had traditional fishing rights at the fishery there, and the area also served as an international market for Tlingit, Haida, and northern Kwakiutl. Generally on peaceful terms, these neighbours regularly traded and sometimes feuded.

Nishga and Tsimshian shared the same four clans, and invited each other to their ceremonies. Kinzadah, visiting Fort Simpson as he did, must have seen Duncan and heard him discussed by his Tsimshian hosts and acquaintances. He heard Duncan speak and knew that the young Englishman was conducting a school for Indians, teaching the English language and other skills that might be useful to the Indians in their relations with the white traders and whites generally. Duncan was also a religious teacher, a man of power.

Some of the sacred stories Duncan told resembled those of Nishga's own tradition. These elements included floods and catastrophes, the birth of the son or grandson of the Chief in the Sky, and the symbolism of light and sight and enlightenment. Nishga chiefs were the main bearers and transmitters of their people's cultural traditions. It was the responsibility of the Nishga chiefs to channel and adapt impending influences to the needs and purposes of Nishga society.

The Coming of the Missionaries

In April 1860, at the invitation of certain Nishga leaders, presumably including Kinzadah, Duncan arrived on a visit to Ankida. He was the guest of Kadounaha, a brother of Claytha, and a major chief and trader in his own right.¹¹ At Kadounaha's house sixty invited guests, “Chiefs and headmen” and others, totalling about one hundred persons, heard Duncan give an address.¹²

At Ankida Duncan was treated to a traditional Nishga friendly welcome. He and his baggage were carried from the beach to the house of his host. He was immediately feasted with about thirty men in attendance. The food included boiled fresh salmon and the new foods, rice and molasses, which became a staple part of the Nishga and Tsimshian feasting food. A larger meeting of one hundred people — including a leading chief and trader

¹¹ Barbeau, *op. cit.*, 236.

¹² Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) Records Reel #A105. Duncan's account of a trip to the Nass River, 20 April 1860. For an account of those visits by Duncan in another context see E. P. Patterson, “Early Nishga-European Contact to 1860,” *Anthropologica* XXV:2 (1983): 193-219.

from Fort Simpson, the Cannibal Chief — was held on Duncan's second day at Ankida. This assembly was more formal than that of the first day. Kinzadah, a kinsman of Kadounaha, must have attended both days' events.

After the large meeting, when most of the guests had left, Duncan taught and sang to a smaller company who stayed on. Drumming, dancing, singing, and pageantry were staged by Kadounaha for Duncan. All these were a sign of welcome. After his main address Duncan met a chief who had been lately shot in the arm for "overstepping his rank." Possibly this was Sispagut, a Killer Whale crest chief, who was a rival of Claytha. Barbeau gives this account of an incident which may have involved the man Duncan met. A large red cedar was floated upriver to Ankida and carved by the master carver Oyai. Sispagut issued a publicly sung invitation to the pole-raising event, and "As he passed in front of Hladerh's house, the door opened, and a gun was fired at him. He fell down, wounded in the arm."¹³

In early September 1860, Duncan arrived for a second visit to the Nass, accompanied by Hamilton Moffett, son-in-law of McNeill and commander of Fort Simpson from 1859 to 1861. On this occasion Kinzadah was the host. He was about 27 years old at this time. After a visit to Ankida, Kinzadah took Duncan upriver to Gitwinsilth, located near the site of modern Canyon City. While travelling on the river, Kinzadah expounded to Duncan the Nishga great flood tradition, in the context of remarks Duncan had made in a sermon. Kinzadah told how the Nishga forbears had fled to a high mountain on the Nass River. They were saved, but many others were not, and still others were scattered. This event explained the distribution of people and the similarity of their traditions and customs, and showed they were one people, Kinzadah concluded. As a chief, he was sharing this special knowledge with his guest, a man whom he evidently expected to be interested in these matters.

Just as he had during his April visit as Kadounaha's guest, Duncan resisted his host Kinzadah's desire to stage a ceremonial occasion in his honour. Kinzadah explained to his reluctant guest that this was a form of greeting.

Kinsahdah assured me it was their only way of showing their good will to a stranger. Our performance said he is the same as your book referring to a practice of Whites here of giving any native Indian a kind of character paper. . . . that if we wish to express our good feeling to any individual and desire to honor him, we give him a paper, but the Indians, for the same ends would meet together and perform before him.¹⁴

¹³ Barbeau, *op. cit.*, 30.

¹⁴ C.M.S. Records, *op. cit.* Duncan's account of a second visit to the Nass River, early September 1860.

Kinzadah gave Duncan still another lesson on Nishga culture on the trip between Ankida and Gitwinsilth. He recounted for his guest the tradition of the volcanic eruption in the upper Nass valley. Some children, he told Duncan, had been torturing a salmon while others watched with enjoyment. A supernatural being or spirit (Noknok) felt "ashamed," as did a nearby mountain. That night the mountain "issued from its bosom a tremendous fire which made its destructive way toward the Indian village [where the torturers lived]. Soon the bed of the river and the immediate adjoining country boiled and burned." The inhabitants fled, but the fiery lava followed them. The people tried to discover the cause of the calamity. They burned dogs as a sacrifice, but this did no good. Finally after resisting the idea, the desperate people burned the guilty children. The fire stopped and the ground cooled. Kinzadah showed Duncan the lava plain created by the eruption.¹⁵

On 8 September the party of travellers were at Gitwinsilth, a site overlooking the lava plain. Kinzadah introduced Duncan to the people, including the prominent Eagle crest chief of the village, Agweellakkah. Agweellakkah had living with him at that time his nephew and heir, Tacomash. Several years later this lad became the Reverend R. R. A. Doolan's first convert among the Nishga. Tacomash later recounted to Doolan his memory of seeing Duncan at this visit. Duncan also met Thkahteen (Skoten) of Gitlakdamiks, a very old man and senior chief there of the Wolf crest chiefs. A "Skutten" traded at Fort Simpson in June 1855 and an "Old Skoten" in September 1856.

On his return trip from Gitwinsilth Duncan was introduced to several other chiefs whose names he recorded, including Akshetan, Nagahhon, and Peecap. Chief Akshetan is likely the Akshetan written about by missionaries Doolan and Tomlinson. He was an active trader, and Tomlinson thought he was more interested in trade than religion. He may be the Caxetan of the Fort Simpson Nass period — 1831-34 — or his heir. The name Old Kastetan appears in the fort journal as a trader in 1856.¹⁶ Chief Negwa'on, Long Arm, was a *Laxkibu* clan chief, from a village upriver from Ankida. He was of the same sub-clan as Skoten of Gitlakdamiks.¹⁷ The name Negwa'on was sufficiently prestigious that it was taken by neighbouring Carrier Indians.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ H.B.C. Records. Reel # 1M142, Fort Simpson Journal. Entry for 20 May 1856.

¹⁷ Barbeau, *op cit.*, vol. II, 435.

¹⁸ Diamond Jenness, *The Carrier Indians of the Bulkley River*. Anthropological Papers no. 25. Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin No. 33 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1943), 490ff.

During this visit to the upper Nass, the Nishga requested of Duncan that a missionary be stationed among them. It seems reasonable to suppose that Kinzadah, as his escort, was among the requesters or agreed with the proposal.

Kinzadah continued to trade at Fort Simpson through the late 1850s to the mid-1860s, as did his fellow chiefs. The journal records, in November 1863, the death of Chief Neeskinwaetk (Neskinwaet), Neshaki's brother. In early January 1866 the news of the death by drowning of the Ankida Chief Kadounaha is also mentioned. Kinzadah thus survived his fellow host, Kadounaha.

In the late fall of 1864, the Nishga request for a missionary met with success when the Reverend Robert R. A. Doolan arrived to take up his post at *Quinwoch*. Doolan remained at this post off and on until the summer of 1867. He reported from time to time on the activities of Kinzadah and on the contact he had with him. Assisting Doolan was another recent arrival to the area, Robert Cunningham. Cunningham took up residence in Ankida and became well acquainted with the fur-trading scene in the village.

Kinzadah's initiatory role in inviting the missionary to the Nass led Doolan to anticipate his becoming a follower. When Kinzadah did not establish a close relationship with Doolan, this was interpreted as rejection and resistance. In the mid-1860s Kinzadah was very active in raising his status; this effort is the probable basis for his participation in the invitation to the missionary. He gave a major potlatch in early November 1864, only a few days after Doolan settled in at *Quinwoch*.

After complaining of the rain penetrating his leaky house (into which snow would be sifting a few weeks later) Doolan added in his journal:

Two of my regular scholars returned from a village up the river. They tell me a large feast is being held and much property has been destroyed. I hear they bring into the house a canoe full of berries and grease and set to gormandise. The more a man can eat, the more he is thought of — one chief named Kinzarda, a very bad man [Doolan saw him as "bad" because he kept native customs], much opposed to us has destroyed by throwing into the fire three coats, two blankets, and a gun. . . .

The following day Doolan wrote of "medicine work" at Kinzadah's house and of a threat made against those who might inform the missionary about these activities. Doolan's two protegés were torn between pressures from the missionary to refuse participation in Kinzadah's ceremonies and the pressures of Kinzadah and the community to join in.

Doolan considered Kinzadah to be hostile,¹⁹ but this evaluation can be questioned; within a week of the alleged hostility, Kinzadah was appealing to Doolan for refuge as a result of a local rivalry. The active young chief was planning to raise a crest pole in front of his house tall enough to overtop that of a rival. Threats had been made against him and he sought Doolan as an ally. Chief Sispagut had been already shot by Chief Claytha in a similar competition.

It may have been at this time that Kinzadah joined with Claytha's nephew and heir, Narawd-zae'ee, to erect his famous Crane and Grizzly pole,²⁰ one of the three or four tallest on the northwest coast, and the tallest at Ankida, which stood at its site into the twentieth century. It was carved by the master carver of Gitwinsilth, Oyai, with the aid of two assistants, from a huge red cedar brought from the Portland Canal. The pole, created by the man Barbeau regarded as the best carver on the Nass, was thus one of those Nishga poles he regarded as the best on the north Pacific coast.²¹

This gigantic historic pole consisted of six figures. Uppermost in the heraldic display was the Crane, a figure linked to Kinzadah and his family. Below it was a Wolf, then a small Grizzly Bear Mother with her Cub's face peeping over her head between her ears. The fourth figure from the top is interpreted as depicting a tree monster or sun monster, or both; these beings were also linked to the traditions of the *Laxkibu* clan. The fifth figure was the Grizzly Bear, standing for the legendary nobleman's title, Prince Grizzly. At the base, the Grizzly Bear Mother appeared again, this time with her Cub in front of her. The pole supported a carved box coffin.²²

Barbeau describes the jealousy and anger of Claytha (Hladerh) toward Kinzadah for erecting this magnificent challenge to his prestige. Claytha's power was in decline by this time, and Kinzadah was encouraged, with Narawdzae'ee's partnership, to complete and install the pole. Doolan, speculating upon these events, attributed Claytha's decline to the death of his brother Kadounaha, and also to his own missionary influence. These views recorded by Doolan were in part derived from Claytha himself.²³ Stephen McNeary says that after his unsuccessful bid for pre-eminence on the lower Nass, Claytha attached himself to a prominent Eagle Chief to continue his rivalry against Killer Whale crest chiefs.²⁴

¹⁹ C.M.S. Records. Reel # A105. Doolan's journal entries for 16 and 17 November 1864.

²⁰ Barbeau, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 233 ff.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 11, 13.

²² Barbeau, *op. cit.*

²³ C.M.S. Records. Reel # A105. Doolan's journal entry for 10 May 1866.

²⁴ Stephen McNeary, "Where Fire Came Down" (Ph.D. Thesis, Anthropology, Brynmawr, PA, 1976), 141.

As a result of his status-raising activity, aided by trading with Fort Simpson and doubtless with other Hudson's Bay Company outlets and those of their rivals, Kinzadah became the second highest Wolf crest chief at Ankida, after Chief Qwockshow. Kinzadah's prominence in the village is attested by the references to him in Doolan's journals.

February 12 1865 — Sunday — Forty attended service, altho Kinzarda had a great feast. Mr. Cunningham spoke to him on his persisting to have his feasts on the Sunday; His excuse is, that the people are clean and have their best clothes on — He is determined to do all he can to oppose us, but the Lord will restrain him.

February 28, 1865 — This night Kinzarda had his grand feast and entertainment. He invited us but we firmly refused. On all sides of his house he had galleries erected and in the middle a sort of stage for the players. The women could come into our house first. I suppose to show off their finery; all their faces painted and dressed in blankets tastefully decorated with small mother of pearl buttons. I am sorry that some of our scholars were induced to sing some of the hymns taught them at our house . . .²⁵

Evidently some of Doolan's young male students were participating in the selective borrowing and adaptive behaviour so characteristic of the Nishga and their chiefly leadership; Kinzadah incorporated their newly acquired songs (of power?) into his traditional ceremony. Doolan's exclusivist approach was not the Nishga way.

The Nishga seem to have had no hard feelings toward their earnest young missionary, a man in his early thirties. Kinzadah may have hoped and expected that Duncan himself would come to the Nass; if so, Doolan's appointment would have been a disappointment. Kinzadah and other chiefs may have taken a "wait and see" attitude, giving them time to assess their newcomer and form an idea of what contribution he could make to them.

In mid-June 1865 Kinzadah returned to the Nass from a visit to Fort Simpson with a "fleet of canoes." They came up the river with flags flying. Kinzadah carried a letter and papers to Doolan from the fort commander, Hamilton Moffett. In this way Doolan and Tomlinson learned that Abraham Lincoln was dead. Chiefly traders to Fort Simpson were often employed to carry letters, papers, and other communications between the whites stationed variously in the area. This incident illustrates the trust and responsibility the Hudson's Bay Company vested in Kinzadah. Even this far-flung post of British trade was aware of the historical event, which may

²⁵ C.M.S. Records. Reel # A105. Doolan's journal entry for 28 February 1865.

have been regarded as having bearing on British/American trading competition. The Nishga were part of a wider international world.

Kinzadah's ceremonial activity continued through June of 1865. By Sunday, 25 June, he had gathered together a sufficient quantity of property from the supporters "of his Crest" to begin to distribute them. Doolan was certain that the choice of Sunday to open the ceremony was a calculated insult. Cunningham questioned Kinzadah about holding his feasts on Sunday, and the chief again replied that on that day people were better dressed than on other days. In the next four days Kinzadah gave away 900 blankets — "240 are his own, 200 from his brother, the rest from his tribe," Doolan reported.²⁶

One of Kinzadah's young nephews, Cowdaeg, was also sought by Doolan as a prospective convert. This young man was in the canoe which capsized and drowned Chief Kadounaha, as well as another of Cowdaeg's uncle's four other passengers. Because of this accident Cowdaeg had to have a frostbitten big toe amputated. Doolan performed the operation, attended the wound and thereby became close to Cowdaeg and his family. This friendliness and appreciation by the family led the missionary to hope for greater influence with the young man. A kind of tug of war for Cowdaeg developed. Kinzadah's influence was very strong and was interpreted by the missionary as part of the chief's resistance to the influences Doolan was trying to introduce.

Kinzadah continued to have encounters with Doolan, who reported in 1867 that the chief drank heavily and that he had discussed alcohol consumption with him (or lectured him on drinking). The Nishga chiefs were foolish to kill themselves with drink, Doolan told Kinzadah. Doolan noted that while the chief had heard Duncan speak, and was more "instructed" than some of the other chiefs, he was killing himself with alcohol.²⁷ Kinzadah did not kill himself, however. Instead, he lived another thirty years and steadily increased his leadership role.

When Kinzadah had heard the comments made by the Nishga hosts of Duncan in the visits of 1860, he, like the other hearers, would have been sensitive to the influences of the Carrier prophet Beni, whose teachings had penetrated to the Nass and Skeena River peoples by the mid-nineteenth century.²⁸ Beni had prophesied great changes to come; the upper Nass chief and trader Gieksqu was influenced by him. In 1860, Kinzadah had

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 23 April 1867.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 23 April 1867.

²⁸ See Diamond Jenness, *op. cit.*, and David Mulhall, *Will to Power: The Missionary Career of Father Morice* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986).

told his guest Duncan that old Thkateen (Skoten), a very prestigious nobleman, “wanted to hear [Duncan] sing before he died.” Kinzadah had heard the various chiefs tell Duncan that they wanted “the Book” and wanted Duncan to stay with them. He would have been with Duncan when the chiefs told him that a great new epoch had arrived and God was sending them “good news.” It was in Kinzadah’s own house that an orator had called Duncan a “maker of good” and hailed him as having come from Heaven; shamans and prophets visited heaven in travels and out-of-body experiences. Duncan had already made others “good” and he would make the Nishga good, according to Duncan’s report of this oration. The influences of Beni are implied by some of these statements, which would have formed part of Kinzadah’s own impressions of the mission and significance of the missionaries.

The Nishga did not sharply differentiate between the religious and supernatural life and other spheres. For them, there was no religious/secular dichotomy. Although Kinzadah did not act in ways which satisfied the missionary, he was clearly accepting Doolan’s influences selectively. The new ideas and customs were not being dismissed, but neither were they being accepted wholesale. They were being fitted into Nishga traditions, including those of Beni, the Carrier prophet.

The Nishga had long been in contact with other cultures, which were in varying degrees of similarity and difference from their own. Earlier, they had taken up the secret societies borrowed from the northern Kwakiutl. European influences, especially technology and material culture, had been in the process of dissemination for decades by the 1860s. Metal tools, weapons, and utensils were already in use. Cloth, clothes, and food — such as potatoes, rice, and molasses — were already accepted. The fur trade itself was by mid-nineteenth century a long-accepted part of their lifestyle; trips to the fort were a regular event for traders. The chiefs were the main traders and, as such, conduits and conductors of the objects and influences of the fur trade. They were the cosmopolitan diplomats and business managers of their culture. They were the economic — as well as the political, social, religious, and artistic — leaders of the community. Kinzadah was one of these, and a prominent one. He more than some others had taken the initiative in liaison with the Hudson’s Bay Company and with the missionary, Duncan.

Kincolith

In June 1867 about thirty young people, who constituted several families, moved from their home villages on the lower Nass to a new site, Kin-

colith. Under the influence of two missionaries, Doolan and a recent arrival, the Reverend Robert Tomlinson, the site was chosen near the old Fort Simpson and at the place associated with Nishga-Haida warfare, the Place of Skulls (or Scalps). It was located in the vicinity of the temporary village of the Coast Tsimshian chief of the Raven Crest, Haimas, and the scenes of his freebooting adventures in the early nineteenth century.²⁹

Between 1867 and 1877 the new Christian village of Kincolith gradually gained a firm base, although it grew slowly. Resisting both Nishga traditionalists' attempts to win back some of its settlers, and Tsimshian attacks, it was aided by one or more British warships and by the imposition of peace among the coastal tribes. With the creation and settlement of this new village, the Nishga had secured a firm hold on the territory while still sharing its resources with neighbours.

The violence which led to the coming to the north coast of the H.M.S. *Sparrowhawk* in May 1869 was linked to an event which took place in Kinzadah's house in the previous spring, 1868. Chief Nislaganos, a Tsimshian chief who married Payiku, daughter of the prominent Nishga Wolf Chief Claytha (Hlaidex, Hladex, Kledach, Klaitock), was living in the house of Kinzadah at Ankida. A whisky feast was given to which Kinzadah's house was invited. The party got out of hand and some shooting occurred, beginning when Legaic, a guest at the event, shot a Nishga man.

Nislaganos was wounded by a Tsimshian and then killed his assailant, Ligwanh, who was identified by Kinzadah's mother, Neetslawts. Niswaks, Ligwanh's brother, was slightly wounded. Agwilaxha (Agwillakkah), an Eagle chief of Gitwinsilth and uncle of Doolan's first convert, Tacomash, later shot Niswaks dead. The next year further retaliations occurred, again involving Agwilaxha, Nislaganos, and Claytha (Hlaidex). Nislaganos, resident at Kinzadah's house, joined a retaliatory attack against the Tsimshians, who were encamped at the fishery. More shootings followed, and several persons were killed.

William Duncan and Robert Tomlinson, at this time respectively the resident missionary pastors at Metlakatla and Kincolith, requested naval assistance to suppress the violence. The *Sparrowhawk* was sent. It arrived at Kincolith 30 May 1869 and sent a small boat up to Ankida and the lower Nass villages, with Joseph Trutch, British Columbia Commissioner for Lands and Works, on board. The chiefs were called together, lectured, and told to reconcile their differences with the Tsimshian. If Kinzadah was not present at this meeting, he would have soon been told of it. On

²⁹ Franz Boas, *Tsimshian Mythology*, Bureau of American Ethnology, 31st Annual Report (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1916), 365.

2 June Nishga and Tsimshian chiefs met on the deck of the *Sparrowhawk* and made a lasting peace. The navy took credit for the new peace. However, Tsimshian oral tradition gave credit to Legaic for initiating a settlement of the dispute.³⁰

Most of the settlers at Kincolith were former residents of Ankida-Quinwoch, though a few came from other downriver settlements and others from upriver. Gradually others joined the community, including some Gitksan and, in the 1880s, some Tsetsauts. But primarily and predominantly, Kincolith was a new settlement of Nishga on the north shore of the Nass estuary, and especially it was a colony of Ankida-Quinwoch. The incumbent missionary at Kincolith from 1867 to 1878 was Robert Tomlinson.

The village grew slowly in its first decade, from about 35 or 40 in 1867, to about 200 by 1878. Some of its population was temporary; these came to visit, to trade, but especially to receive medical attention, at the hospital built by the people under Tomlinson's direction. Others came to be with their sick. In 1878, for a variety of reasons, Tomlinson was reassigned to the upper Skeena to expand mission work there.

At this time, Kinzadah and several of the other leading chiefs of Ankida-Quinwoch decided to move to Kincolith and be baptized. Acting together, apparently, these prestigious converts included Kinzadah and Qwockshow, the two leading Wolf crest chiefs of Ankida, and Kinzadah's former rival Claytha. After having resided in the village for more than a year, Kinzadah was baptized George Kinsada in March 1878 — the first settler at Kincolith to keep his noble title as a surname — and took a prestigious baptismal name which bore associations with St. George, the patron saint of England, and with several kings. Qwockshow became Robert Qwockshow, thus sharing a name with the first missionary incumbents of the Nishga, and Claytha became Paul Claytha, perhaps influenced by Legaic having become Paul Legaic after his baptism. (The prominent southern Tsimshian chief, Sebassa, became Paul Sebassa.) Perhaps this was a form of taking the prestigious name of St. Paul.

The baptisms were performed by the Bishop of Athabasca, William C. Bompas, who had come from his diocese across the mountains to help heal the divisions and dissensions rending the mission work of the Church Mis-

³⁰ For complementary accounts of these events see George F. Macdonald and John J. Cove, *op. cit.*, 219-21, 236-38, and, from the perspective of the navy, Barry M. Gough, *Gunboat Frontier* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984), 196-98. Kinzadah, in oral tradition, was regarded as the most powerful and wealthiest of the Nishga Wolf chiefs (Macdonald and Cove, 103).

sionary Society on the north Pacific coast.³¹ The serious divisions continued through most of the 1880s and led to the defection from the Church Missionary Society of both Duncan and Tomlinson. The Nishga, though peripheral to the main events of these quarrels, did experience some ripples of the explosion.

At the new village of Kincolith, Kinzadah and his fellow relocated chiefs became the leaders, continuing their chiefly positions and reflecting the fact that their influence had been felt in the village even before they moved to it. Tomlinson's evangelistic disappointments between 1867-77 are in part related to the influences which emanated from the old home villages. Wishing to bypass these resisters, he had extended his work to the upper Nass and upper Skeena. Some of his work led him to choose the upper Skeena as his new mission field in 1878.

Some of the factors influencing Kinzadah and the other chiefs to make their move in 1877-78 can be surmised. The village of Kincolith had survived its first decade, and its peaceful existence had been assured. It was readily accessible to the Nass fishery, to Fort Simpson, to Nishga territory on the Portland Canal, and to its hinterland. It had a hospital and a store, and it offered some of the economic advantages of the Tsimshian Christian village of Metlakatla within the territorial area of the Nishga. Many Tsimshians had chosen to go to Metlakatla to improve their quality of life; these Nishga chiefs and their families were making the same gesture by moving to Kincolith. The pioneer settlers were, after all, their relatives and friends.

The census of 1881, enumerated by David Leask, a Tsimshian-Scots protégé of William Duncan from Metlakatla and short-term lay missionary at Kincolith, records the presence of George Kinzadah (spelled Kinsadah), aged 57, a fisherman, as one of 182 people living in the village. He lived with his second wife Hannah, 40 years old, and three children, Rebecca, 19, Betsy, 18, and Charles, 15. Charles and Rebecca attended school. George and Hannah Kinsada had married on 19 March 1881, a few months before the census. The entire family was listed as Protestant Episcopal, an American usage, rather than as Anglican or Church of England. Indeed, the entire village was Protestant Episcopal, according to Leask. Kincolith parish records of the time contradict Leask's census record that every person resident in the village was an Anglican, and suggest that Leask's population figure is too high.

By 1886 George Kinzadah was again widowed and remarried. His bride

³¹ Anglican Archives of Canada. Diocese of Caledonia Parish Records. Reel # 1. List of Baptisms, Marriage, Burial, and Service Register. Kincolith # 9-14.

was Lily Allen, aged 20; Kinzadah was probably between 55 and 60. The marriage record gives his age as 60 years; however, in 1878 he was listed as 45, at his baptism.³²

The period from 1874 to 1884 was an unsettled one as far as the importance of white missionary leadership at Kincolith was concerned. Tomlinson, though no longer resident at the village, still visited there to give medical aid and retain some influence. He sided with Duncan in the disputes with the Church Missionary Society and the federal government's Indian administration. However, in early 1884 a new missionary, the Reverend William Henry Collison, came to Kincolith. The chiefs were cool at first; they did not give Collison the traditional welcome of carrying him and his baggage from the beach. Within a short time, however, Collison won the friendship and support of the community, and in fact stayed at Kincolith until his death in 1921.

The Land Question

The middle and late 1880s was a period of land protest among the Nishga. The Indian administration and the government of British Columbia were attempting to resolve the issue of reserve allotments, a contentious issue which had begun at the official level as a contest between the Indians and the British Columbia government. With the coming of federal government responsibility for Indian affairs after the adhesion of British Columbia to Confederation in 1871, the land question became a three-sided issue between Indians, the province, and the national government.

On 17 October 1887, Kinzadah addressed C. F. Cornwall and J. P. Planta when they visited Kincolith. They were "the Commission appointed to enquire into the state and condition of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast of British Columbia." Cornwall represented the Dominion government and Planta the provincial government; they had come to interview the Indians in order to find out about Indian claims and opinions on the question of land, including the allotment of land for reserves.

George Kinzadah gave a greeting to the Commissioners and an assertion that his people had legitimate grievances.

"Gentlemen, friends, you have seen our village, and I hope that we will talk together under the flag of our Queen. We thank God that he has shown his mercy to us in bringing you here that we can talk with you. We wish to let you know the hearts of myself and people, the people living in this village. We are

³² *Ibid.*

very thankful to God, and thankful to you for coming to hear our grievances. That is all I have to say now."³³

Chiefs Adam Kishni and Samuel Seymour also greeted the commissioners. The broader statement of Kincolith views was made by Frederick Allen, the Nishga school teacher who presumably spoke fluent English. Arthur Gurney also testified and was questioned. The interviews revealed that Kinzadah had been one of the persons who advised Peter O'Reilly, the land commissioner, when the latter visited the Nass and gathered information preparatory to assigning reserves. Kinzadah had been involved in debates with the Port Simpson Tsimshian about their claims to fishing rights on the lower Nass.³⁴

Gurney testified that Kinzadah told the Tsimshian he wanted no fighting and wished for a peaceful resolution of their differences about the land. The Tsimshian had told the Nishga "the land was . . . not the Nishkars' or Nass peoples." The Nishga chiefs asserted that they were going to let the government resolve the problem. This, Gurney said, greatly upset the Tsimshian, who feared the issue would go against them (p. 428). These interviews suggest that the Nishga felt they had a strong hand and could be confident that the government's decision would favour them. They had co-operated in accepting the Indian Advancement Act and keeping the peace during the Metlakatla troubles. Now they expected to reap their reward.

Governmental Administration

In the late 1880s Kinzadah emerged as the senior political figure and a senior layman in the church, a combination of jurisdictions consistent with the role of the chief in Nishga tradition. Duncan and Tomlinson were not alone in thinking that some of the northern coastal people were acculturated enough to have more autonomy than Indian administration was willing to allow: Dr. Israel W. Powell, Indian Superintendent for British Columbia in the 1880s, thought that some of the tribes were ready for "municipal" government.

The Indian Advancement Act, passed in 1884, facilitated such a transition. The act's title indicates its purpose as "An Act for conferring certain privileges on the more advanced bands of the Indians of Canada, with view of training them for the exercise of municipal power." Reserves were to be

³³ *Report of the Commission on Northwest Coast Indians* (Victoria: Government Printing Office, 1888), 425 ff.; see also E. P. Patterson, "Nishga and Tsimshian Land Protests in the 1880s," *Journal of Canadian Studies* (Fall 1983): 40-54.

³⁴ *Report* (1888), 427-28.

divided into voting “wards” with one or more councillors to be elected from each. Elections were to be held annually, and all councillors were to hold office for a one-year term. Councillors were to elect a chief from among themselves.³⁵

The petitioners requesting that Kincolith come under the Indian Advancement Act included George Kinzadah, Robert Qwockshow, Adam Qushkine (Kishni?), Paul Klaitok (Kledach), Samuel Seymour, and Moses Bailey. An election was held at Kincolith on 25 April 1888. Indian agent Todd wrote to Ottawa on 1 May 1888: “I established a council at Kincolith on April 25th according to directions, with the oldest chief, George Kinsada, as chief councillor. I drilled the council in their work for two days and two nights and got them into fair working order. They adopted a number of bylaws.”³⁶

In 1888 a public issue arose calling for action by Chief Councillor Kinzadah. The Kincolith missionary pastor, W. H. Collison, whom the people preferred to think of as their teacher, was on furlough, and they feared he might not be sent back to them. This absence occurred shortly after the defection of the majority of Metlakatlangs to Alaska. Two letters sent to C.M.S. headquarters, Salisbury Square, London, were signed by “George Kinsadah.” They were transcribed by the interim missionary, the Reverend Thomas Dunn.

The first letter is dated 30 January 1888.

Christian Friends —

We are now take an opportunity to send you this note stated about our trouble and we leave it to your judgement and wisdom to see and act about it. You been sent one of your teacher Rev'd Rob Doolan [*sic*] for last 24 years ago to teach us the ways of God, but he did not get his work done. He went away. Rev'd Tomison [*sic*] take his place and we are always had peace as long as he live here in our villages and now the Bishop of Caledonia came up and live in the village of Metlakatla. From this out we commenced to be in trouble. The Bishop sent Rev'd H. Schutt he also did not finish his work. He went away, but we did not care about him as he did not act right towards us and towards God. Then the Bishop send Rev'd Thos. Dunn to take Mr. Schutt's place and we promised to build a church house in this our village here. He also did not get his work done, as the Bishop take him off from our village. He also send Rev'd W. H. Collison to take Rev'd Thos. Dunn's place so as W. H. Collison could hardly get in our Village here. As the Bishop keep

³⁵ Wayne Daugherty and Dennis Madill, *Indian Government Under Indian Act Legislation 1865-1951* (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1980), 15-16.

³⁶ Public Archives of Canada. Indian Affairs. Black Series, Red Group 10, vol. 3747. D. C. Scott to W. E. Collison, 26 March 1920.

his Teachers changed all the time so as we don't want W. H. Collison to be take off again. As now the Bishop want to take him off again if he take W. H. Collison off we might broke up the same as Metlakatla. This is all we have to tell you. And we send our kind love to you all.

From the people and council of Kincolith

Yours faithfully

George Kinsadah

The second letter is dated 19 May 1888.

Christian friends

We drop you these few lines to ask you exactly whether you tell Mr. W. H. Collison to remove at Metlakatla before he come home here. We want to know exactly if you say so and we want to know that we don't want him to move at Metlakatla for he is kind to us. That's the reason we don't let him go, but if you take him off by force why we might broke up the same as Metlakatla city. That's the reason we don't want you to take him off. We expect you friends to make us happy and not to disturb us. All we want in the world is to live in peace. So we hope you listen what we have said.

Yours loving friends

From the people and council of Kincolith

Geo. Kinsadah³⁷

Collison in fact returned to Kincolith after spending a year at Metlakatla while Bishop Ridley took a leave in his turn.

The village of Kincolith was still without a church building in the early 1890s. As a result, the erection of a church became a public issue. About 1893 a building fund was created and villagers made contributions which were public knowledge. The first two names on the list of contributors were those of Chief George Kinzadah and Philip Latimer, an early convert and assistant to the missionary. Other names on the list of contributors included Mountain, Quockshow (Quaksho), Tkatquokash and Kledak (Klaitok, Kledach).³⁸

Intertribal Diplomacy

In 1897, the village leaders of Kincolith made a public demonstration of declaring peace with the Taku people, a Tlingit group of nearby Alaska.

³⁷ C.M.S. Records. Microfilm Reel # A121. Kincolith Christians to C.M.S., London, 30 January and 19 May 1888. Some alterations have been made in the quoted text for clarity.

³⁸ Document in parish records, Kincolith. Shown to the author by the then parish priest, the Reverend John Hannen. Hannen later became bishop of Caledonia, the Anglican Church jurisdiction for the area in which the Nishga live.

Kinzadah had played an important part in earlier contact which had led to hostility; he was one of the five Nishga chiefs who addressed a letter to the chiefs of the Taku, 19 August 1897, indicating their desire for peace.

We are no longer in the darkness as our fathers were, but the light has come and we desire to make peace. We want to see your faces, and grasp your hands. We want to spread our food before you that we may all eat together. We wish to scatter the swan's down over you, the sign of peace, and to make your hearts glad. We desire to return the property which was taken from you at that time. The eyes of many who were engaged in that quarrel have long been closed . . .

Some time later the Taku sent a deputation, headed by Chief Anetlas, and peace was formally established. He was given a letter to take back to the other chiefs and people of Taku. The letter read:

We are glad that Anetlas has come. We welcome him as your Chief and representative. He came to us as the messenger of peace. We have long been anxious to make peace, because we have changed from the old ways. We have put away the spear and the gun and we have scattered the swan's-down. We desire to walk in the way of the Great Spirit. That way is the way of peace. The Great Spirit is our Father and your Father. We are all brothers, because we are all his children. And therefore we wish to love all our brethren. And now we open the way to our river to you. We will always welcome you our friends, when you come, and you have opened the way that we may visit you. Anetlas came in time to hear Kinzadak's last words. He came in time to grasp Kinzadak's hand. Kinzadak gave Anetlas his word of peace for you. We all join our words to his. We send you an offering of peace. We have written a list for you of the property we are sending you. Anetlas, your Chief and our brother, accepts our gifts for himself, and for you. They are as the blossoms on the tree of peace. The fruits will follow to us and to you. We invite you our brothers, to gather the fruits of peace with us, and we send our united greeting.

(Signed) Albert Gwaksho, Chief
F. A. Tkakquokaksh, Chief
Kagwatlane, Chief
Klaitak, Chief
Allu-Ligoyaws, Chief³⁹

As the letter indicates, Kinzadah was near death, but was able to participate in the peace-making.

On Saturday evening, before Whitsunday, the feast of Pentecost, 1897, Kinzadah asked Collison to come to his house and give him Holy Communion. Collison was reluctant, saying that the Communion would be given on the next day at Church, but Kinzadah insisted: "I am tired. I desire to arise and go to my Father in Heaven; I shall not be here tomorrow.

³⁹ William Henry Collison, *In the Wake of the War Canoe* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1915), 80-81.

I desire to partake of the Sign now," he declared, according to Collison's recollection. Collison asked "a faithful old Christian, a veteran in Christ's Army," probably Philip Latimer (Cowcaelth), Doolan's convert, to join them, and the three men celebrated Holy Communion together. Kinzadah shook Collison's hand and said "goodnight." He died in his sleep,⁴⁰ at the age of about 75 years.

Conclusion

For a variety of reasons, an examination of the career of Kinzadah provides a valuable perspective on the history of the Nishga generally. His life illustrates and embodies the continuity of Nishga leadership, both before and after the arrival of the missionary, and of government administration, and portrays the multiple roles played by a Nishga chief. He was a leader in the political, economic, religious, diplomatic, and artistic life of his community, and conducted his people through physical, political, and cultural change.

Although he was not among the original settlers who founded the new village of Kincolith in 1867, his leadership continued during the ten-year period between its founding and his conversion and settlement in 1877-78. His long leadership at Kincolith, following his chieftaincy at Ankida, indicates that his capacities were recognized and desired by his people, his fellow chiefs, the missionaries he had helped to invite, and the government administration he had helped to establish. The missionaries were incorporated into the leadership of the community, but they did not displace the native leadership; the Nishga leaders were not the missionary's underlings, dependents, or dupes. On the contrary, he was their teacher and liaison; when they became Christians they were still Nishga and were not subordinated by this step.⁴¹

While the founding of Kincolith was probably interpreted by Kinzadah and his fellow leaders of the lower Nass as being the result of their initiative rather than that of the missionaries, the missionaries had a contrary view. They saw themselves as a dynamic force acting upon a more or less inert, backward culture and people. Franz Boas, who visited Kincolith in 1894, opined that some of the Tsimshian tribes were the result

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

⁴¹ Margaret Seguin, "Interpretive Contexts for Traditional and Current Coast Tsimshian Feasts" (Ottawa: National Museum of Man Museum Series. Canadian Ethnology Service Paper #98, 1985), 67ff. For an introduction to the early history of Anglican and Methodist missions to the Nishga, see E. P. Patterson, *Mission on the Nass* (Waterloo, Ont.: Eulachon Press, 1982).

of a breaking up of older communities, made necessary by population increase.⁴² In the case of Kincolith, however, increased numbers may not have been a factor; instead, both social experiment, encouraged by the missionaries, and a desire on the part of native leaders for territorial, and therefore economic, advantage were motivators. Boas says that when a village was thought to be too large, the chief would assign part of his people to a nephew and they would found a new village. Several of the young Ankida-Quinwoch founders were linked to the chiefs, especially to the Wolf chiefs of Ankida, and to the Eagle and other chiefs as well. Even with new motivations, the traditional pattern was thus followed.

Kinzadah was both representative and unique. He fitted the tradition of the *Simoogit*, and was an innovator in that he made the adaptations necessary to fit with the missionaries and the federal Indian agents as the first Nishga elected chief councillor. His election and his tenure in that office were probably due to his ability to combine the traditional with the new. His career demonstrates the importance of the survival of the chiefly system as a basis for Nishga cultural cohesion. Despite the loss of secret societies and of crest poles, and the alteration and partial suppression of the potlatch, the chiefly system remained intact, as Stephen McNearly has shown.⁴³

John Cove has suggested that taking up of the secret societies by the chiefs had been a way of resisting a challenge to their power by shamans.⁴⁴ If so, such a way of meeting a challenge would have provided knowledge for further adaptive change during the missionary and government administration eras. Missionaries and government bureaucrats made use of the chiefs and the chiefs made use of them. Both missionary and administrators could be interpreted as themselves part of a chiefly group, exercising spiritual and economic power and bringing to the people medical aid and educational assistance, in addition to their restrictive and destructive roles. Both of these categories of whites emphasized change, not continuity, in their relation with the Indians.

A pattern of adaptive and selective change characterized Kinzadah's life, and this change meant neither discontinuity with the past nor its rejection. The new was actively incorporated and synthesized to become part of Nishga tradition, accepted in ways congenial to the Nishga people and at their initiative. The invited missionary was to be a teacher and helper, not

⁴² Franz Boas, *op. cit.*, 487.

⁴³ Stephen McNearly, *op. cit.*, 32.

⁴⁴ John Cove, *Shattered Images* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1987), 229-45.

a ruler or violator of the culture. As such, the missionary would act in a way consistent with the leadership role of Kinzadah and his fellow chiefs.

The collegial action of Nishga chiefs on public issues is consonant with their traditional leadership. From the invitation to Duncan and his introduction to the chiefs by Kadounaha and Kinzadah, to the group conversion and baptism of Kinzadah, Qwockshow, and Claytha in 1878, to the demand for Collison's return and the peacemaking with the Taku, both undertaken under Kinzadah's name, the collegial pattern is preserved. Throughout his life, Kinzadah's career was consistent with and part of the indigenous tradition of the Nishga.