INDIGENOUS ORAL HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT ARCHAEOLOGY IN BARKLEY SOUND, WESTERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

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INTRODUCTION

In North America, Indigenous oral historical accounts of events in the distant past are regularly subject to the critique that such histories are contrived to suit practical political purposes and/or are qualitatively less robust than are textual or material forms of historical evidence (Mason 2000; McGhee 2008). A commonly cited reason for this is the conception that oral histories are considered to be vulnerable to "inherent" degradation over time (Vansina 1985), a viewpoint that closely parallels the widespread belief that Aboriginal cultures have been "degraded" due to cultural assimilation. In Canada, such pervasive scepticism helps explain the continued privileging of colonial historical accounts over Indigenous historical experiences, exemplified by the treatment of Indigenous oral history in courts of law (Martindale 2014; Miller 1992, 2011).

Archaeologists who seek to include Indigenous oral historical accounts in their interpretations are frequently charged with perpetuating a teleological (logically circular) account of history and/or cannot pass muster with scientific standards of evidence (Henige 2009; Mason 2006; McGhee 2008). However, a fundamental problem with such a critique is that it seeks to minimize consideration of oral history as a legitimate and relevant source for archaeological insight and thus further displaces the narration of Indigenous history from Indigenous peoples (Atalay 2008; Cruikshank 2005). It also posits an imbalance between Indigenous oral history and archaeological interpretation, neglecting to foreground how both represent incomplete sources of information that attempt to narrate and assign causality to human history (Martindale and Nicholas 2014; Wylie 2014).

Archaeological research that seeks to be attentive to Indigenous oral narrative addresses two important aspects of human history that are often poorly investigated in conventional archaeological research: (1) an Indigenous perspective and narration of the historical phenomena represented in archaeological data; and (2) a focus on the intergenerational timescales spanning the lifetimes of individuals that fall between the broad millennial-scale of the *longue durée* (Ames 1991) and the "event-based" scale of conventional history (Fogelson 1989). Oral history can be a robust repository for intergenerational knowledge due to its embedded cross-linked narrative chronology and its use of geographically grounded place names and named actors. It is therefore a logical source for archaeological comparison.

On the Northwest Coast, archaeologists and Indigenous scholars have increasingly identified the considerable potential for examining parallels between Indigenous oral histories and archaeological histories (Atleo 2004; Crowell and Howell 2013; Cruikshank 2005; K̲ii7iljuus [Wilson] and Harris 2005; de Laguna 1960; Martindale and Marsden 2003; McMillan 1999; Reimer 2011). Researchers have focused on the correspondence between geological events, particularly earthquakes and tsunamis, and Indigenous oral histories (e.g., Hutchinson and McMillan 1997; Ludwin et al. 2005; McMillan and Hutchinson 2002). Others have identified intergroup conflict and political alliances and amalgamation as a significant event-scale temporal marker regularly recounted in Indigenous oral histories (Angelbeck and McLay 2011; Huu-ay-aht First Nations 2000; Martindale and Marsden 2003; Swadesh 1948). Surprisingly, however, Indigenous oral histories have not been broadly integrated with or evaluated alongside conventional archaeological chronologies (but see Martindale and Marsden 2003; McLaren 2003; and McLaren et al., this volume). Following the principle of narrative sequential ordering (Martindale 2006), this article examines Nuu-chah-nulth oral histories in an archipelago on the exposed west coast of Vancouver Island, as well as the place names embedded within them, to evaluate Indigenous timelines of sequential and overlapping historical events alongside archaeological sequences of settlement. I specifically compare these distinct datasets in order to evaluate the ages of occupation in settlements in close proximity to each other as well as temporal trends within these large settlements. I observe oral historical sequences and the archaeological settlement chronology to show overlapping and complementary patterns that document the growth, expansion, and dynamically shifting residence patterns at multiple village sites over the past twenty-five hundred years. I argue

that this comparison adds historical detail and an Indigenous perspective to an archaeological settlement history at an intergenerational scale and enriches interpretations of the relationships between spatially associated archaeological sites within a contact-era Nuu-chah-nulth local group territory along the outer coast of British Columbia.

ANALYSIS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ORAL HISTORICAL SEQUENCES

This article focuses on the Indigenous territories in the Broken Group Island archipelago in Barkley Sound on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island, an area that is today managed as a National Park Reserve in the recognized territory of the Tseshaht First Nation. These islands and the surrounding area are the focus of an extensive corpus of Nuu-chah-nulth oral histories detailing how a large number of politically distinct Nuu-chah-nulth groups occupied Barkley Sound during and prior to the contact era (Golla 1987; Huu-ay-aht First Nations 2000; Inglis and Haggarty 1986; McMillan and St. Claire 2005; St. Claire 1991). This exposed coastline has also been subject to considerable archaeological survey, including the documentation of numerous large shell midden settlements (Haggarty and Inglis 1985; McMillan 1999; McMillan and St. Claire 1982). In this article, I evaluate oral historical information alongside archaeological data at two spatial and temporal scales specific to the Broken Group Islands. At the first scale of analysis, I draw on oral historical accounts of contact-era (ca. AD 1774-1860) Indigenous territories and place names within the archipelago identified in narratives compiled by Edward Sapir and his Indigenous collaborators and later synthesized by Denis St. Claire (1991). This information is compared with archaeological site locations and settlement sizes throughout the archipelago,[1] as documented through previous survey efforts (Haggarty and Inglis 1985) to evaluate the relationship between archaeological settlement locations and Indigenous place names and territorial boundaries. Second, I review oral historical information specific to individual archaeological study sites within a portion of the archipelago to determine how the sequence of occupation, growth, and disruption of settlement recounted in oral histories compares to the chronological sequences of archaeological settlement history. I focus this comparison on an

[1] To calculate archaeological site size, I used geographic information software to determine the horizontal extent of settlements from geo-rectified copies of original hand-drawn archaeological survey maps, where site size reflects the extent of shell-bearing site deposits in square metres.

individual group territory on the outer Broken Group Islands (Figure 1), where I conducted archaeological fieldwork – including radiocarbon dating, surface mapping, and percussion coring – as part of the Hiikwis Archaeological Project (McKechnie 2010, 2013).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Nuu-chah-nulth peoples on the outer coast were among the first Indigenous communities in British Columbia to make contact with European explorers during the late eighteenth century. The trade and exchange that took place between Nuu-chah-nulth peoples and visiting European explorers/traders initiated a geopolitically significant period of colonial expansion in the Pacific, and the impact of this trade reverberated in communities along the outer coast of British Columbia (Clayton 2000; Fisher 1977; Harris 1997; Lutz 2008; McMillan 1999). This intensive period of trade sustained relationships between particular Nuu-chah-nulth chiefs and European and eastern North American ship captains and merchants over a thirty-year period, but it rapidly collapsed after sea otter pelts became scarce and trading ships such as the *Boston* and the *Tonquin* were attacked and ransacked by Nuu-chah-nulth groups in the early nineteenth century (Clayton 2000, 143; McMillan 1999, 188). Prior to this, exchanged European goods and weapons were widely and rapidly circulated throughout coastal communities and overland through an elaborate set of intermediaries who built on existing social relations, alliances, and exchange patterns (Galois 2004; Harris 1997). During this time, Nuu-chah-nulth groups underwent a series of political and territorial amalgamations, whereby formerly autonomous groups amalgamated into larger polities through confederation or as a result of competitive conflict and demographic change (Clayton 2000; Drucker 1951; Golla 1987; Green 2014; Huu-ay-aht First Nations 2000; Inglis and Haggarty 2000; Kenyon 1980; Marshall 1993; McMillan 1999; St. Claire 1991; Swadesh 1948). For Nuu-chah-nulth peoples, the early maritime fur trade marked an initial but stalled process of engagement with colonial powers that was greatly diminished throughout the early nineteenth century following the collapse of maritime fur trade on the outer coast of Vancouver Island.

Colonial presence was sharply amplified fifty years later, during the mid-1850s and 1860s, when foreign settlement expanded rapidly, bringing with it introduced infectious diseases and loss of life, violent military attacks from British authorities and American visitors, and missionary efforts that incrementally reduced and displaced communities from much

of their former territories (Clayton 2000; Cote 2010; Harris 1997; Marshall 1993; Sellers 2013). Nuu-chah-nulth peoples persisted throughout these difficult and extended periods of political and cultural change. Today they are strongly represented by the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and comprise fourteen individually recognized and politically autonomous First Nations whose territories span the west coast of Vancouver Island.

THE BROKEN GROUP STUDY AREA

The Broken Group Islands on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island (Figure 1) are in an exposed coastal area where there is a detailed corpus of intergenerational community knowledge described in Indigenous oral histories and encapsulated in Indigenous place names, a thorough archaeological survey (Haggarty and Inglis 1985),[2] and large-scale excavation projects at the major village site of *Ts'ishaa* (McMillan and St. Claire 2005) and at *Hiikwis* in Sechart Channel (McMillan, this volume; Sellers 2013). I have conducted further research at a cluster of sites in the southern quadrant of the archipelago (McKechnie 2010, 2013), which is the pre-contact territory of the Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u> (a Nuu-chah-nulth polity, or "local group"),[3] which amalgamated with Ts'ishaa7at<u>h</u>, the present-day Tseshaht First Nation, in the mid- to late eighteenth century (McMillan and St. Claire 2005).

A large corpus of oral histories provided by Nuu-chah-nulth elders in the early twentieth century has been transcribed by Edward Sapir and his Nuu-chah-nulth collaborators Alex Thomas and Frank Williams, which was subsequently edited and published by Morris Swadesh and, later, by Susan Golla, Eugene Arima, Denis St. Claire, Katherine Robinson, and others (Arima et al. 1991, 2000; Arima, Klokeid, and Robinson 2004, 2007; Arima et al. 2009; Golla 2000; Sapir 1910-14, 1922; Sapir and Swadesh 1939, 1955; St. Claire 1991). These narrative accounts were transcribed in the original Barkley Sound dialect of the Nuu-chah-nulth language through a practical orthography developed by Thomas, Williams, and Sapir and subsequently translated into English.[4] This work occurred in the first few decades of the twentieth century, when the majority of the Tseshaht

[2] This study area is further bounded by extensive research conducted in the adjacent but politically distinct territories to the south (Mackie and Williamson 2003) and north (McMillan 1999).

[3] "Local group" is an anthropological term for autonomous Nuu-chah-nulth polities (Drucker 1951) that are the historical antecedents of today's individual Nuu-chah-nulth nations.

[4] This differs from practical orthography used in this article, which follows McMillan and St. Claire (2005, 2012), according to which the symbol "7" represents a glottal stop (a "catch in the throat"), an apostrophe indicates that the preceding sound is "strongly exploded," and underlining indicates that the sound is produced toward the back of the mouth.

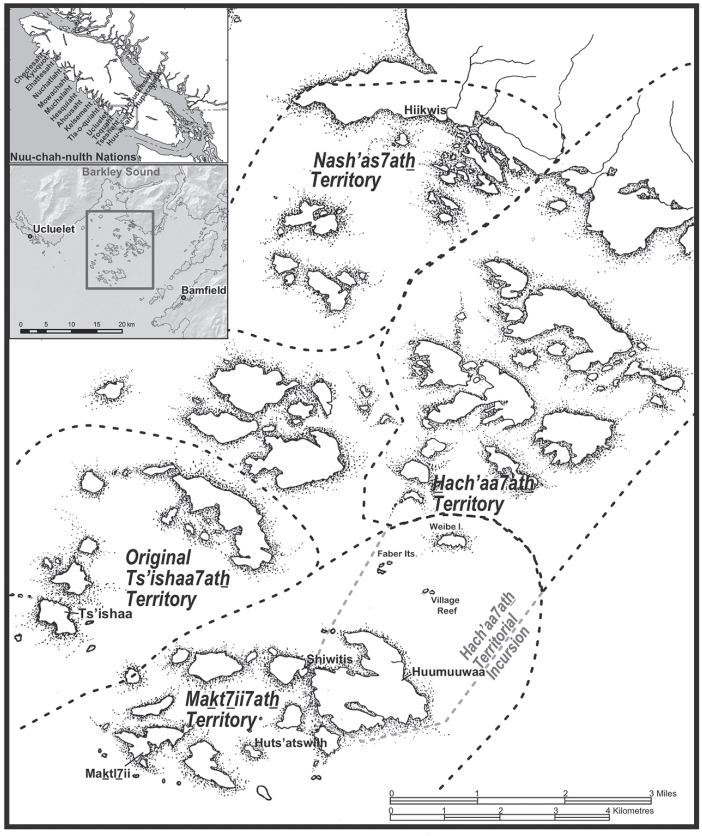

Figure 1. Territorially bounded local group areas in the Broken Group Islands during the eighteenth century as described in oral historical accounts synthesized by St. Claire (1991) and McMillan and St. Claire (2005). Map modified from St. Claire (1991).

concentrated their year-round settlement along the lower Somass River at the head of Alberni Inlet. Alex Thomas and Frank Williams had both been pupils at the Alberni Indian residential school and later worked with Sapir, who was then associated with the Anthropological Division of the Geological Survey of Canada (Arima et al. 2000; Darnell 1990). An early student of Franz Boas, Sapir built on the model of anthropological collaboration between Boas and George Hunt, whereby, after a period of initial fieldwork, Sapir initiated regular correspondence with Thomas and Williams who worked to further compile oral histories, as dictated by Nuu-chah-nulth elders, for over thirty years (Darnell 2000). These narrative histories detail events in the Broken Group Islands and in outer Barkley Sound before and during the contact-era fur trade (ca. AD 1778-

1805) and the fifty-year period following its collapse, at which time there were particularly striking changes in the political landscape of Barkley Sound, albeit in the absence of extensive European colonial presence (ca. AD 1805-60). Rather than detailing the periodic contacts with explorers and colonists, these narratives are overwhelmingly concerned with the history of Nuu-chah-nulth individuals and local groups, including conflicts, alliances, and ceremonies. This voluminous literature provides a wealth of historical details relevant to archaeological interpretation.

Indigenous Place Names

Within the Broken Group archipelago and Sechart Channel (Figure 1), there are at least 134 documented place names (Figure 2). The majority of these (73 percent) were transcribed and translated during the early twentieth century. An additional thirty-six names were added through the ethnohistoric research of Denis St. Claire (1991), who affirmed and refined each translation through interviews with Nuu-chah-nulth elders in the Alberni Valley in the 1970s and 1980s. Thirty-five of the 134 place names (26 percent) were not translated, leaving open the possibility of future linguistic analysis.

Taken together, the geographic density of Indigenous place names in the Broken Group and Sechart Channel study area is estimated to be 1.3 names per square kilometre. This greatly exceeds (by orders of magnitude) the density of Indigenous place names recorded in other studies elsewhere in North America (Hunn 1994), and it complements other place name syntheses on the Northwest Coast (e.g., Boas 1934; Hilbert, Miller, and Zahir 2001; Thornton 2012). This comparatively high density may be a reflection of the relatively small and tightly bounded study area, but it is also an indication of the extensive and sustained research effort to record Indigenous place names, making this dataset a significant research contribution as well as a valuable place-based cultural archive. It is also a reflection of the detailed familiarity that generations of Tseshaht peoples had with this landscape, its features, and its history as well as an indication of a high pre-contact settlement density (see archaeological information described below).

Archaeological Site Locations in the Broken Group

The archaeological landscape of the Broken Group Islands contains at least seventy-three shell midden sites with a very broad geographic distribution throughout the archipelago (Figure 3). The islands also have a large number and variety of intertidal sites, including fish traps,

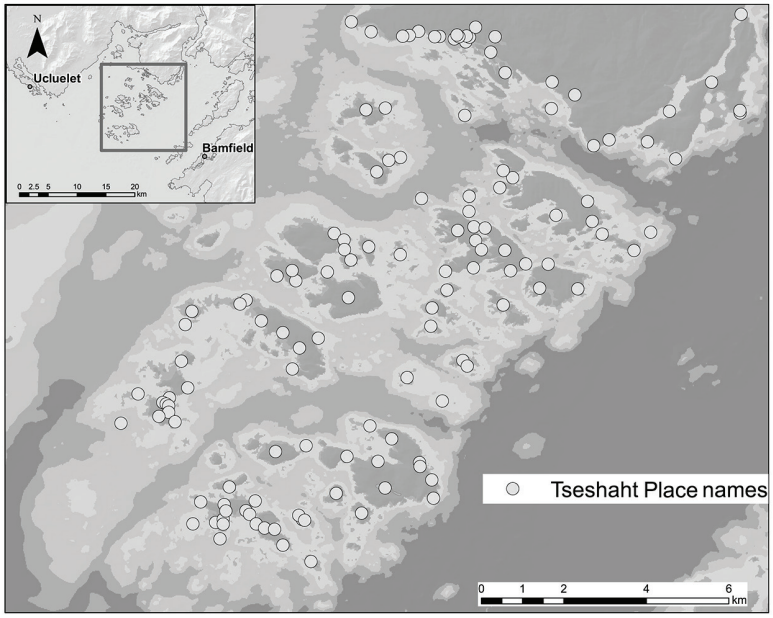

Figure 2. Tseshaht place names as detailed in oral historical accounts shared by community knowledge holders transcribed and translated by Sapir, Thomas, and Williams and later synthesized by St. Claire (1991), who affirmed each translation through interviews with Tseshaht elders in the 1970s and 1980s.

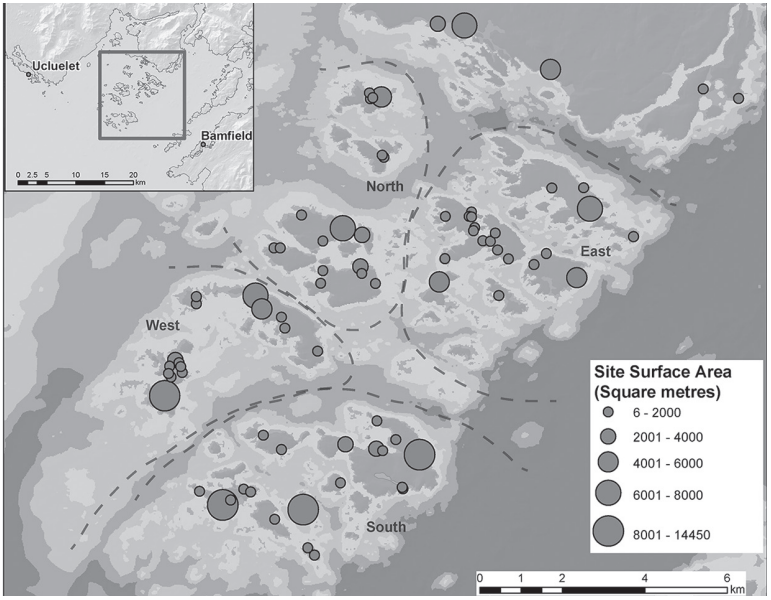

Figure 3. Archaeologically recorded shell midden sites in the Broken Group Islands and Sechart Channel. The size of each circle represents the horizontal settlement surface area determined by geo-rectifying original site maps in ARCGIS. Dotted lines represent quadrants of the archipelago in Figure 4.

garden features, and canoe runs. The ubiquitous distribution of shell midden settlements, and particularly their range of sizes and proximity to one another, demonstrate an extensive history of human occupation and use throughout the archipelago. The shell midden sizes range from over fourteen thousand square metres to six square metres. Notably, all of the fifteen largest shell midden sites have surficial evidence of houses, terraces, and/or constructed ridge landforms, and all but one are directly associated with Indigenous place names that were recorded in oral histories and that were described as villages occupied during the contact era (Table 1).

Within the archipelago, the four bounded autonomous local group territories described in oral histories (Figure 1) occur in geographically distinct clusters of islands (Figure 2). A comparison of the number of archaeological sites and the distribution of site sizes within these spatially distinct island groups (Figure 3) shows similar distributional patterning (Figure 4), with each quadrant of the archipelago having a similar number of sites, proportion of site sizes, and "large" sites (greater than two thousand square metres). This demonstrates the occurrence of repeating subunits of archaeological site distributions and site size distributions, which accords with the centralized use of geographic space widely observed in archaeological settlement pattern analysis (Kanter 2012). Given the assumptions that (1) larger sites reflect larger numbers of site occupants over greater time periods, (2) a range of site sizes reflects a diversity of use, and (3) the sea level history chronologically constrains sites near the modern shoreline to within the past two thousand years, this suggests the contemporaneous use of the archipelago by multiple communities. This is consistent with oral historical accounts describing the presence of at least four autonomous groups in this small region (Figure 1).

Of the seventy-three recorded shell midden sites in the archipelago, the two largest sites are also the oral historically named "origin" locations for the Ts'ishaa7at̲h and Ma k̲tl7ii7at̲h local groups, respectively, each of which held adjacent territories in the outer Broken Group archipelago. Similarly, the Indigenous names for these political groups literally translate as: "the people of *Ts'ishaa*" and "the people of *Mak̲tl7ii*" (Golla 1987, 84). The archaeological observation that the two largest sites are named origin villages and are associated with numerous smaller sites in close proximity further supports the hypothesis that these sites were villages that were occupied year-round and not simply seasonal migratory destinations. This also indicates a potential relationship between site size and antiquity of occupation, which is consistent with the five-thousand-year-long record of occupation at the village of *Ts'ishaa* and

TABLE 1

The fifteen largest shell midden sites in the Broken Group Islands and their associated place names and archaeological features. Bolded sites are those mentioned in the text.

No.	Place name, Location	Site* parks # & borden #	Surface area** (m^2)	House Platforms	House depression	Back-ridge	Radiocarbon data	Zooarch data
1	***T̓s'ishaa*** **Benson Island**	**204T&205T DfSi-16&17**	**14,450**	X	X	X	X	X
2	***Maḵtl7ii*** **Wouwer Island**	**206T&215T DfSi-19& 30**	**10,040**	5		X	X	X
3	***Huumuuwaa*** **Village Island**	**304T DfSh-4**	**9110**	15	X	X	X	X
X	N. Turret Island No place name	198T DfSi-10	6660	X	X	X		
4	*Tl'iḥuuw'a* Nettle Island	305T DfSh-5	6630	X	X	X	X	X
5	*Aalhachmakis* Dodd Island	72T DfSh-19	6150	X	X	X	X	X
6	*Muk'waa7a* Turret Island	195T DfSi-7	4690	X	X	X		
7	***Huts'atswilh*** **Dicebox Is.**	**83T &129T DfSh-31&79**	**4520**	32	X	X	X	X
8	*Ḵakmaḵimilh* Keith Island	306T DfSh-17	4840	X	X	X	X	X
9	*Aasimilh* Hand Island	187T DfSh-101	4030	X	?	?	X	
10	*T'um'aktli* Gibraltar Island	80T DfSh-47	3560	X	X	X		
11	*Tlakiyamilh* Chalk Island	73T DfSh-20	3490	X	X	X		
12	*Hats'aat'iml* Turtle Island	156T DfSh-111	3300	X	?	X		
13	***Shiwitis*** **Gilbert Island**	**82T DfSh-29**	**2,470**	X	?	?	X	X
14	*Tl'atl'inkuuwis* Effingham Bay	DfSh-28	2060	NA	NA	NA		

* Sites with two numbers are in close proximity but separated by bedrock promontories.

** Shell midden surface areas calculated using ARCGIS 10.

the twenty-five-hundred-year-long record at *Maḵtl7ii* described in the sections below (see also McMillan et al. 2008; McMillan and St. Claire 2005). It is also consistent with the similarly named and chronologically overlapping origin village of *Huu7ii*, situated in the Deer Group Islands approximately seven kilometres to the southeast across Imperial Eagle Channel (McMillan and St. Claire 2012).

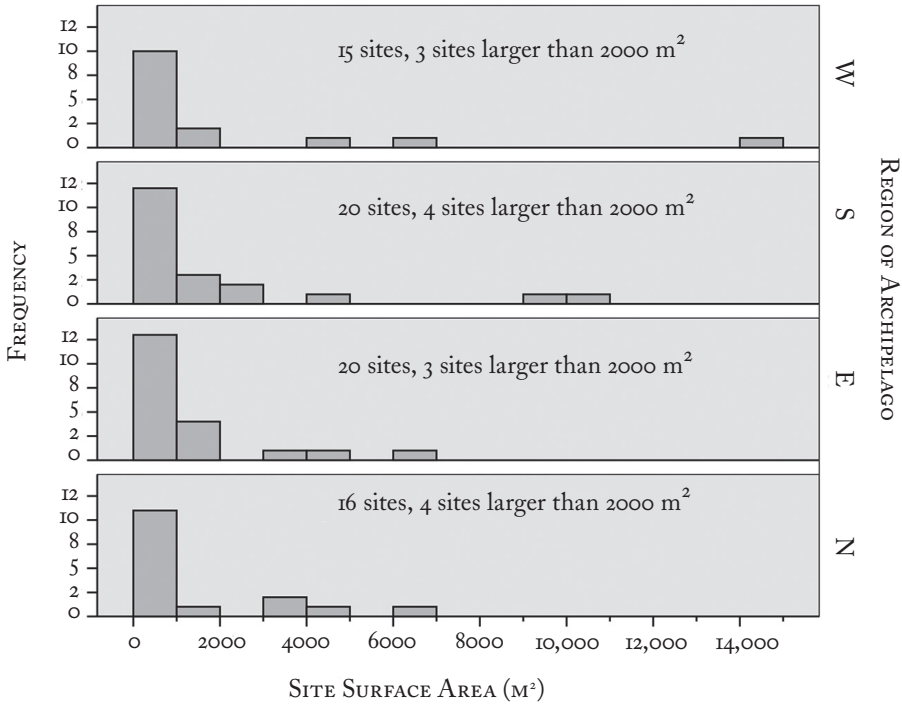

Figure 4. The size and number of shell midden sites in different quadrants of the Broken Group Islands (see Figure 3). Data obtained from site maps submitted to the provincial archaeology branch by Haggarty and Inglis (1985).

Settlement History of Ts'ishaa, *the Ts'ishaa7ath Origin Village*

As mentioned, the archaeological site of *Ts'ishaa* is the oral historically named "origin place" for the Ts'ishaa7ath, the present-day Tseshaht First Nation, and has an archaeological settlement history that spans the past five thousand years (McMillan and St. Claire 2005). The documented occupation from approximately five thousand to three thousand years ago is associated with higher mid-Holocene sea levels (McMillan 2003) and is small in comparison to the massive lower elevation deposits, which date to the late-Holocene (ca. 2000 BP) and contain house platforms and midden terraces that were occupied into the early twentieth century (McMillan and St. Claire 2005). A host of radiocarbon dates from multiple site areas provides strong evidence that a village-sized settlement existed at this location from at least eighteen hundred years ago (McKechnie 2007, 212; McMillan et al. 2008, 218-19).

Oral historical accounts provided by Sayach'apis to Sapir describe the first Ts'ishaa7at̲h woman and man being "created" at *Ts'ishaa* by the "Day Chief," a transformer/creator who also created a river and a channel for Tseshaht but then "scattered the river and the channel everywhere. That is why the [Broken Group] islands are scattered about now" (Sapir and Swadesh 1955, 52). Thereafter, the oral narratives describe the population of *Ts'ishaa* expanding to the point at which "the tribe became numerous, reaching to the other end of the village" (ibid.). Additional recounted details about the village include the locations of four lineage households (*ushtak̲imilh*), their political rankings relative to one another, and the architectural details and descriptions of the figures painted on the housefront of the highest ranked *ushtak̲imilh*. The lineage-based households and the individuals who resided in them held various rights to select resources (*tuupati*) within the Tseshaht local group territory (*h̲ah̲uulhi*), which was owned and managed by the head chief (*Taayii Hawilth*). The relative order in which the *ushtak̲imilh* were ranked reflects the sequence in which they were established, a ranking that was codified in the potlatch seating orders, as is detailed in several oral accounts (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 9-10). For instance, various accounts mention the lowest ranking *ushtak̲imilh,* located on the southern margins of the village (Figure 5), as the last to be established (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 9). This area was initially occupied by slaves and low-ranking members of the other *ushtak̲imilh* but later acquired the status of an independent *ushtak̲imilh* (Inglis and Haggarty 1986, 126; McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 9; St. Claire 1991, 45).

As part of the Tseshaht Archaeological Project, all four of these named *ushtak̲imilh* locations were subjected to archaeological excavation and radiocarbon dating down to basal beach sediments (McMillan 2009, 628; McMillan et al. 2008, 218-19). This research demonstrated that the oral historical sequence of village growth parallels the sequence of growth documented archaeologically (Figure 5). The archaeological chronology in these four named areas follows the oral historically recounted sequence of village expansion, whereby the first-ranked and "oldest" *ushtak̲imilh* location contains the correspondingly oldest radiocarbon dated deposit (ca. 1800 BP or AD 250), the second-ranked and second-oldest *ushtak̲imilh* location contains the second oldest radiocarbon date and so on for the four identified areas. This parallel sequence of site expansion indicates that this particular oral history, specific to multiple areas within one village site, spans a period of at least eighteen hundred years. This complementary alignment of archaeological and Indigenous oral historical

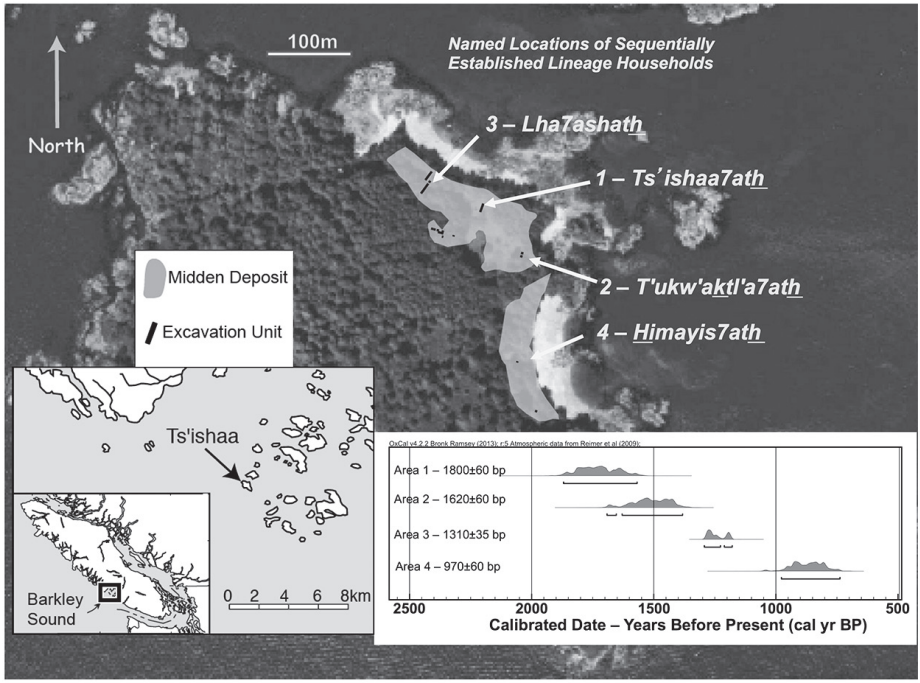

Figure 5. Site map of the village of *Ts'ishaa* (DfSi-16 and 17) showing oral historically named locations of household lineages (*ushtaḵimilh*) and their numbered sequence of occupation. Horizontal extent of midden deposits and the Tseshaht Archaeological Project excavation areas are shown, following McMillan and St. Claire (2005). Inset on the lower right depicts the calibrated ages of the four oldest radiocarbon dates obtained from separate site areas indicating the sequential occupation that accords with oral historical accounts. Dates are presented in McKechnie (2007, 215).

sequences indicates a chronological depth to the oral historical record that, in turn, strengthens our understanding of human settlement history at this particular archaeological site. This relationship is discussed in detail in the next section in relation to the neighbouring local group territory of the MaḵtlɁii7ath.

ORAL HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF *MAḴTLɁII7ATH* LOCAL GROUP TERRITORY

Oral historical accounts and ethnographic syntheses identify the MaḵtlɁii7ath as a formerly politically autonomous community whose territory encompassed the southern portion of the Broken Group Island archipelago (Figure 1 and 3) during and prior to European contact (Golla 1987; Inglis and Haggarty 1986; Sapir 1910-14; St. Claire 1991; William

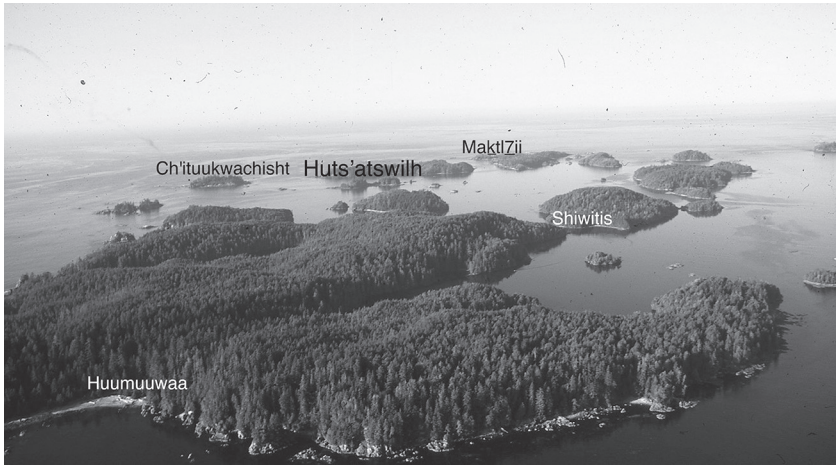

Figure 6. Overview of the Maktl7ii7ath study area with individual study sites (view looking west). Photo courtesy of the Royal BC Museum (West Coast Archaeological Project Files).

2009). Like other "local groups" on western Vancouver Island (e.g., Arima 1983; Drucker 1951), the Maktl7ii7ath are named for their village location: *Maktl7ii*, translated as "higher than others" (St. Claire 1991, 143), on southwest Wouwer Island (Figure 6). This name refers to the high landform on which houses were located as well as the social standing of the founding and highest-ranked lineage in the village.

Sapir (1910–14, 4:34) describes the Maktl7ii7ath as "one tribe with four bands," referring to four named *ushtakimilh* locations within the village of *Maktl7ii* (Table 2). These households, their leaders, and, by extension, their members would have held hereditary rights (*tupaati*) to occupy and use resources associated with this territory with the permission of the *Taayii Hawilth* (head chief). As at *Ts'ishaa*, these *ushtakimilh* have an internal ranking based on their sequence of establishment (St. Claire 1991, 38), with the Maktl7ii7ath *ushtakimilh* holding the highest rank. The lowest-ranking group of the Maktl7ii7ath, the Ts'ap'is7ath, was founded late, after the daughter of the high-ranking chief had a child with a low-ranking man. Eventually, when the Ts'ap'is7ath held a potlatch at which the flukes of ten whales were displayed, the group was given a new name, the Nach'imuuwas7ath, and accorded a higher level of status within the Maktl7ii7ath (St. Claire 1991, 38).

Oral historical accounts mention two other village settlements in Maktl7ii7ath territory: *Huumuuwaa* on Effingham [Village] Island (Inglis and Haggarty 1986, 127; William 2009) and the village and fortress of *Huts'atswilh* on Dicebox Island. Of particular archaeological relevance,

TABLE 2
*Lineage household names (*ushtakimilh*) names at the village of* Maktl7ii *on Wouwer Island (DfSi-19 and 30) presented in St. Claire (1991: 38–41, 142–43)*

Place or name	Translation
Maktl7iiath	"higher than others" also the name for the entire village
Ts'ap'is7ath, later becoming the Nach'imuuwas7ath	n/a "people who have whale fins all around"
Ust'is7ath	"down below (not high up on the beach)"
T'imik'ak'is7ath	"people of gooseberry bushes on beach"

the large village of *Huumuuwaa* is identified as one that "belongs to Maktl7ii7ath" but was "not one of the old villages" (William 2009, 370). Similarly, *Huts'atswilh* is identified as a village that was "inhabited by the Huts'atswilhath, a sept of the Maktl7ii7ath" (ibid.). "Sept" refers to a descendant lineage group (*ushtakimilh*) of the Maktl7ii7ath. These accounts indicate that the villages of *Huts'atswilh* and *Huumuuwaa* were established after the village of *Maktl7ii*, providing a sequential model to evaluate in tandem with the archaeological dataset.

Maktl7ii7ath was the first independent local group to politically amalgamate with the Ts'ishaa7ath, just prior to or during the early contact era (sometime around the late eighteenth century) (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 16). This amalgamation was one in a sequence of several for the Ts'ishaa7ath, the politically autonomous community that represents the present-day Tseshaht First Nation. Based on several oral historical records, this merger occurred "probably in the latter years of the eighteenth century" after a devastating battle with the Hach'aa7ath (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 17). The Hach'aa7ath, a neighbouring local group that occupied the northeastern portion of the archipelago at contact (Figure 1), nearly devastated the Maktl7ii7ath in a deadly conflict that reduced the population to such an extent "that only 15 adult men remained" (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 15). The survivors chose to merge politically with the Ts'ishaa7ath, although the head chief retained the right to host potlatches and held drift whale rights in his former territory (ibid.). This merger greatly expanded Ts'ishaa7ath territory and, critically, included the strategically defensive fortress of *Huts'atswilh*, discussed at length later in this article.

Prior to and during the early years of contact with European trading ships, the Maktl7ii7ath local group maintained a defined territory

encompassing the southern quadrant of the archipelago and shared a mutually recognized boundary with the Ts'ishaa7ath local group (Figure 1). The shared boundary was marked by a line of brush cleared across a small island that was visible from the water (*Iitsmakiis*, St. Claire 1991, 142). The Maktl7ii7ath northern boundary was Coaster Channel, encompassing "*Village Reef*," the "*Faber Islets*," and Wiebe Island. This latter portion of Maktl7ii7ath territory, including the village of *Huumuuwaa* on Effingham [Village] Island (Figure 6), was violently seized by the Hach'aa7ath local group in the late eighteenth century (St. Claire 1991, 28-31). Soon thereafter, however, the Hach'aa7ath were defeated as a fighting force and extinguished as a politically autonomous group by a regional alliance of Nuu-chah-nulth local groups in Barkley Sound and elsewhere (ibid.).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA IN MAKTL7II7ATH LOCAL GROUP TERRITORY

There are twenty recorded archaeological shell midden sites in the area that was bounded by Maktl7ii7ath territory (Figure 1) prior to the merger with the Ts'ishaa7ath, including five large shell midden settlements with surface areas greater than two thousand square metres (Figure 4). I investigated seven sites in this study area (Figure 6) and obtained a total of fifty-six radiocarbon dates (McKechnie 2013, 255-56).[5] Combined with detailed surface mapping and percussion coring, these radiocarbon chronologies provide a basis for inferring the long-term settlement history within this territory. Over forty Indigenous place names are known for this portion of the Broken Group archipelago, and each archaeological site is directly or indirectly associated with one or more place name(s) (Figure 2). Below, I briefly summarize the settlement chronology of these study sites, focusing first on the archaeological deposits and settlement chronology for the village site of *Maktl7ii*.

[5] To translate radiocarbon dates into calibrated age estimates, I use the OXCAL calibration program (Ramsey and Lee 2013), which both calibrates individual dates and provides a way to graphically depict the probability of the calibrated age-range for a number of dates. I radiocarbon dated both terrestrial charcoal and marine shellfish, the latter requiring an estimate of the marine reservoir effect. To estimate the temporally variable local marine reservoir, I calculated Delta-R values for each pair of shell-charcoal pairs and applied these values to non-paired shell dates (McKechnie 2013, 255-56).

Maḵtl7ii – *Storm Island*

As mentioned, *Maḵtl7ii* is a very large archaeological shell midden (DfSi-19) that is the oral historically named origin village for the Maḵtl7ii7atḥ (i.e., "the people of" *Maḵtl7ii*). The site is situated in a sheltered cove on the highly exposed southwestern fringe of Wouwer [Storm] Island,[6] facing south towards the Pacific Ocean (Figure 6). It has extensive archaeological deposits, consisting of five closely spaced areas with shell midden separated by elevated bedrock promontories that lie shoreward of several pocket beaches sheltered from ocean swell by fringing reefs to the west and south. Four extensive "backridges" (3 to 5.5 metres deep) are evidence of constructed midden ridges behind house platforms or terraces suitable for house locations. These ridge features are characteristically observed at other village-sized sites throughout Barkley Sound as well as across western Vancouver Island (Mackie and Williamson 2003; Marshall 1993, 2006; McMillan 1999).

A series of forty-two percussion cores, ten auger samples, and ten accelerated mass spectrometry (AMS) dates, obtained from various locations at *Maḵtl7ii,* provide a basis for interpreting the archaeological settlement history (McKechnie 2013). The three oldest radiocarbon dates are from the base of three spatially separate deep midden ridges situated in different areas of the site. These three dates statistically overlap in calibrated age (ca. 2600 -2340 cal yr BP), indicating that the growth of these separate midden ridges began simultaneously around twenty-four hundred years ago (Figure 7). Given the subsequent increase in depth and extent of these massive anthropogenic landforms, this contemporaneous deposition indicates the establishment of the site as a village location. Moreover, terminal dates from the midpoints and top of two of these separate ridge deposits indicates they grew rapidly over the next eleven hundred years but stopped accumulating between fourteen hundred and thirteen hundred years ago.

During this same temporal interval, extensive midden deposits began to accumulate in a separate "outer" cove to the southwest, representing a shift in community residence. This area of the site has surficial evidence of historic materials and subsurface evidence for historic material to a depth of at least 1.8 metres in one of four well defined house platforms on a sharply sloping but terraced shell midden (McKechnie 2013, 232). Here dates from 3.5 metres beneath a house platform and at the base of a 5.5-metre-deep backridge indicate rapid midden growth between

[6] This location is often referred to as "Storm Island" in oral historical accounts.

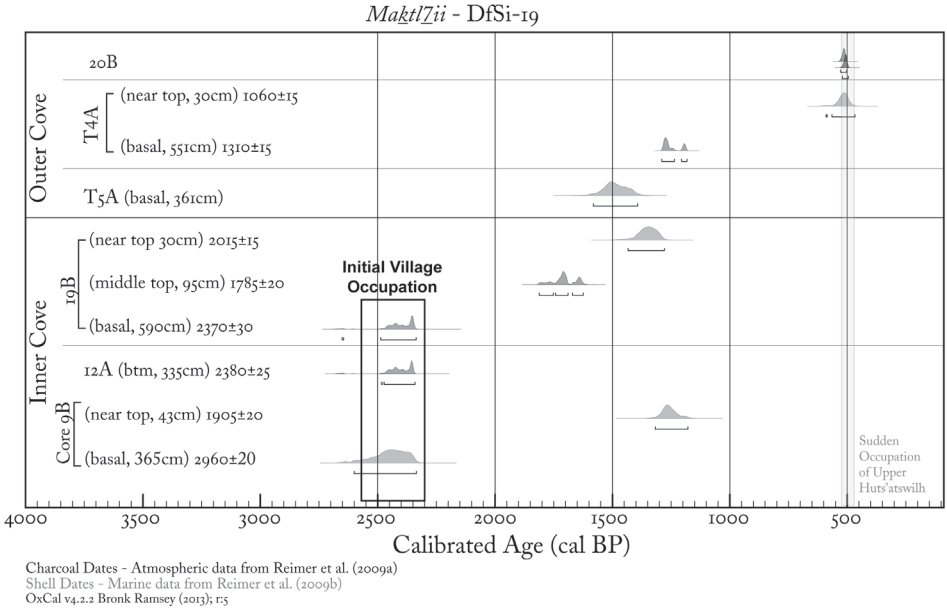

Figure 7. Calibrated radiocarbon dates from *Maḵtl7ii* (DfSi-19) showing the calibrated age range for individual dates. Dates on marine shell shown in light grey, and dates on charcoal are in dark grey. Numbers indicate core test locations. Further details are presented in McKechnie (2013).

approximately 1500 and 500 BP and continuing at a slower rate into the historic era (Figure 7). This stands in contrast to the older and more extensive site areas discussed above, with much more heavily vegetated terrain with dense salal that does not contain historic materials on the surface or in the auger samples.

Huumuuwaa – *Village Island*

The large shell midden and historic village of *Huumuuwaa* (DfSh-4) is located along a semi-exposed rocky beach facing Imperial Eagle Channel on eastern Effingham [Village] Island (Figure 6). *Huumuuwaa* was thoroughly occupied when it was designated an Indian reserve in 1882 and remains one of only three Tseshaht reserves in the Broken Group Islands. The shell midden deposits at this site span approximately 275 metres of vegetated shoreline with an estimated surface area of approximately ninety-one hundred square metres (Table 1). A number of large house platforms are recognizable on the surface and contain the partially preserved remains of fourteen house posts and six house beams, providing further context to infer the structural dimensions of these traditional "big" houses. These house platforms front the shoreward

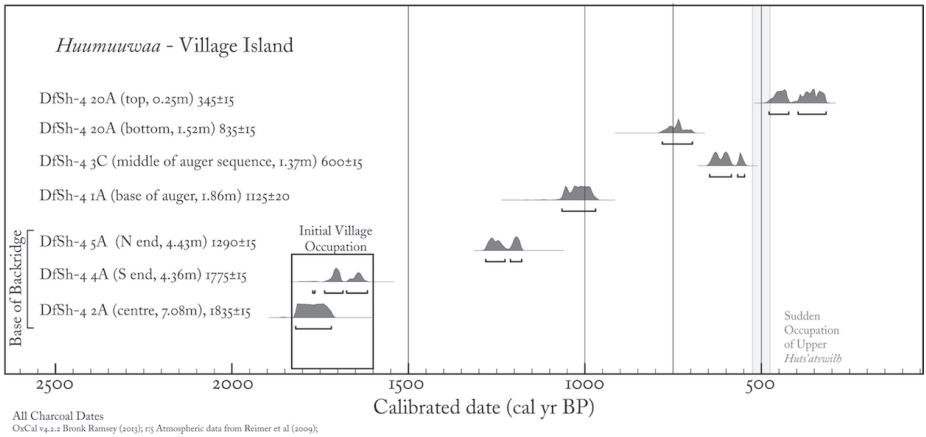

Figure 8. Calibrated radiocarbon dates from *Huumuuwaa* (DfSh-4) showing the calibrated age range for individual dates including test numbers and depths below surface. All dates are on charcoal and are calibrated on the atmospheric curve. Further details are presented in McKechnie (2013).

portion of a ninety-metre-long "back-midden ridge" that contains at least 7.08 metres of cultural deposit at the height of this feature, which is currently the greatest documented depth for a shell midden on western Vancouver Island. Shallower shell midden deposits occur at the periphery of this portion of the site and are bisected by two small drainages that are diverted by the massive shell midden landforms.

Seven radiocarbon dates, obtained from a variety of localities within *Huumuuwaa,* constrain the age of this large village site to within the past eighteen hundred years (Figure 8). As at *Maḵtl7ii*, the three earliest dates come from three separate areas at the base of the very deep backridge of shell midden that parallels the shore and represents the inland extent of the shell-bearing components. These dates indicate that this enormous anthropogenic ridge began to accumulate around eighteen hundred years ago, expanding forty metres south over the following century and reaching its northern extent by approximately 1200 BP (Figure 8). As at *Maḵtl7ii*, these dates represent good evidence for the initial establishment of this site as a village-sized community between approximately 1800 and 1200 BP.

Two additional dates from the bottom and top of cultural deposits at the far southern margin indicate a horizontal expansion of the site between approximately eight hundred years ago (ca. AD 1170-1260) and four hundred years ago (ca. AD 1490-1630). If these basal and terminal dates adequately characterize the chronology, they indicate that *Huu-*

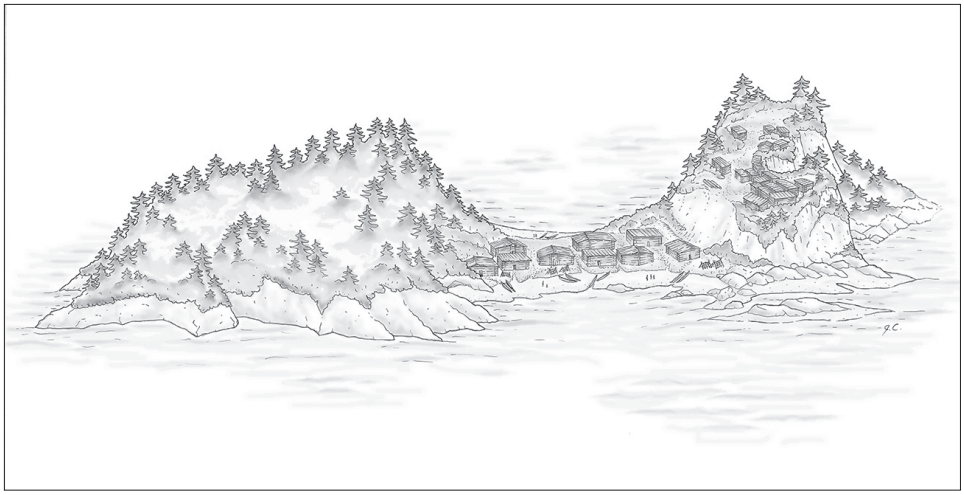

Figure 9. Illustration of *Huts'atswilh* showing the lower village in between two elevated bluffs (DfSh-31) and the upper defensive site (DfSh-79) on the sheer-sided elevated area to the right (view facing east). House locations and orientations are based on house depressions and platforms identified from a high resolution topographic map (McKechnie 2013, 247) as well as on oral historical accounts provided in St. Claire (1991). Artwork by Jenny Cohen.

muuwaa roughly doubled in size and then contracted to its former extent four hundred years later (ca. AD 1500-1600). An additional date of approximately 600 BP, obtained from midway down a small ridge behind a house platform as well as from the historic remains on the surface and ethnohistoric accounts of early contact in 1787 (Inglis and Haggarty 1986, 23; McMillan 1999, 189), provides strong evidence for persistent use as a village into the historic era.

Huts'atswilh – *Village and Fortress*

The last two settlements examined in this study are located on a small six-hectare island that contains extensive archaeological deposits, including well defined house platforms constructed with shell midden matrix atop a steep, elevated bluff on the southern side of the island (DfSh-79) and a lower elevation shell midden with house depressions covering a tombolo landform (DfSh-31) with east and west facing beaches (Figure 9).[7] There are three Indigenous place names for the island. The first, *Huts'atswilh*, is specific to the village and fortress location and is derived from the word for "drift back," referring to winter waves that "splashed through a cave in the middle of the island" (St. Claire 1991, 145). A beach on the

[7] A tombolo is a bar or "spit" of land joining two islands or an island to a larger body of land.

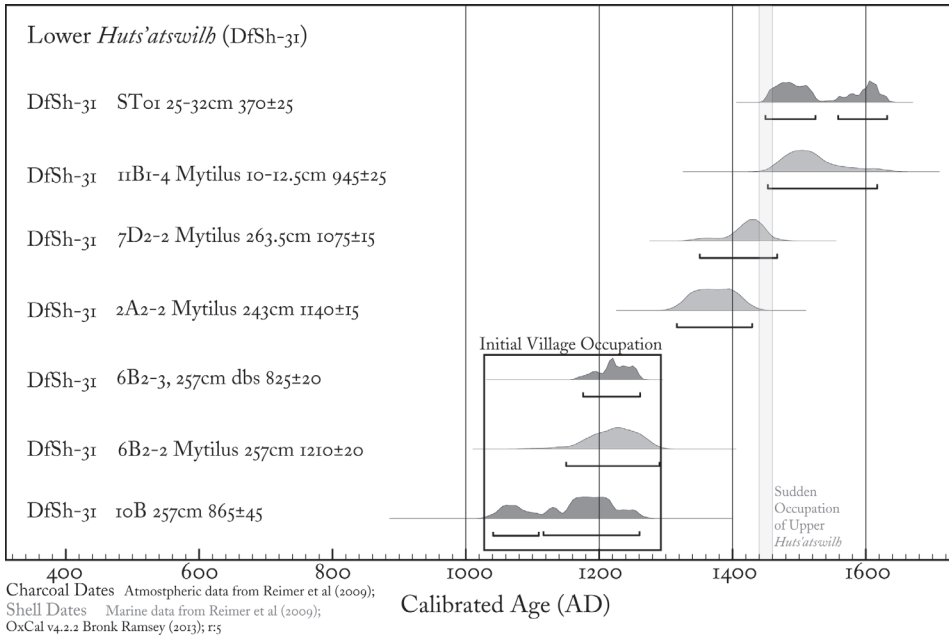

Figure 10. Dates from lower *Huts'atswilh* (DfSh-31) showing calibrated ages on marine shell shown in light grey and charcoal dates in dark grey. Numbers indicate test locations and depths below surface. Further details are presented in McKechnie (2013).

western side of the island is named *7aats'aatsupshilh,* which means "when you are there it is so beautiful that you don't want to leave." The third place name, *Ch'iwaakhat*, translates as "somebody holds your hair while you are at it" (ibid.), likely describing a sheer drop from a precipitous cliff or an act carried out in war. The site is described in oral histories as a "village … on top of the hill inhabited by the Hots'atsswil?ath, a sept of the Ma:ktl?i:?ath" (Sapir 1910-14; William 2009, 370), indicating that the island was occupied by the Huts'atswilh7ath, a subgroup of the Maktl7ii7ath (Inglis and Haggarty 1986, 127; Sapir 1910-14).

Lower Huts'atswilh

Lower *Huts'atswilh* (DfSh-31) contains nine surficially recognizable house depressions oriented to the west-facing beach on this tombolo landform (Figure 9). Seven radiocarbon dates indicate that the age of these cultural deposits falls between AD 1050 and 1620 (2-sigma calibrated range, Figure 10). Five of these dates are from the bottom of cultural sediments just above underlying beach sands and reveal a progressive sequence of northward site expansion over a period of approximately four

hundred years and a horizontal distance of seventy metres (McKechnie 2013, 244). This south-to-north trend is also stratigraphically apparent in the vertical extent of archaeological deposits, indicating greater accumulation in the southern portion of the site, which has more direct access to the elevated upper defensive site. The timing of the construction of these house depressions is therefore likely sequential, as is indicated by the greater depth of deposits on the southern portion of the site than on the northern portion.

Upper Huts'atswilh

Radiocarbon dating was conducted on nineteen samples from seven separate house platforms spread throughout upper *Huts'atswilh* (Figure 11). Two of the dates from upper *Huts'atswilh* are significantly older than are the remaining seventeen and indicate a highly intermittent sequence of human occupation between twenty-five hundred and five hundred years ago followed by a particularly intense period of occupation, as discussed below (McKechnie 2013, 239). These two early dates are from two adjacent house platforms in the western portion of the elevated site area (House 6 and House 3) that have particularly prominent views of the ocean to the west. They also closely overlap in age and are in sight of two similarly elevated small sites on Cree Island (*Ch'ituukwachisht*), one kilometre to the southwest (ibid.). Use of these elevated sites over the following two thousand years may have been infrequent, considering the limited extent and depth of archaeological deposits. This would have been consistent with their occasional use as lookout locations (cf. St. Claire 1991, 105).

As for the remaining occupational sequence on the elevated portion of *Huts'atswilh*, multiple dates from four separate house platforms (Figure 11) indicate that construction of multiple houses occurred within an extremely tight time period, between approximately AD 1430 and 1450 (pooled 2-sigma [94.5 percent] probability). This very narrow temporal range indicates an effectively simultaneous occupation of several areas of the site by multiple household groups. This relatively precise calibrated age estimate, representing a span of two decades, is well within that of a human generation. This is consistent with a scenario of a relatively large-scale community effort to initiate construction and occupation of a defensive landform at a particular moment in history (cf. Angelbeck 2007; Moss and Erlandson 1992). A fifth dated house structure (House 2), situated in the midst of a cluster of these three dated houses, appears to have been constructed slightly after this period (AD 1450–1620). Notably, this structure would have had a restricted view and was buffered from

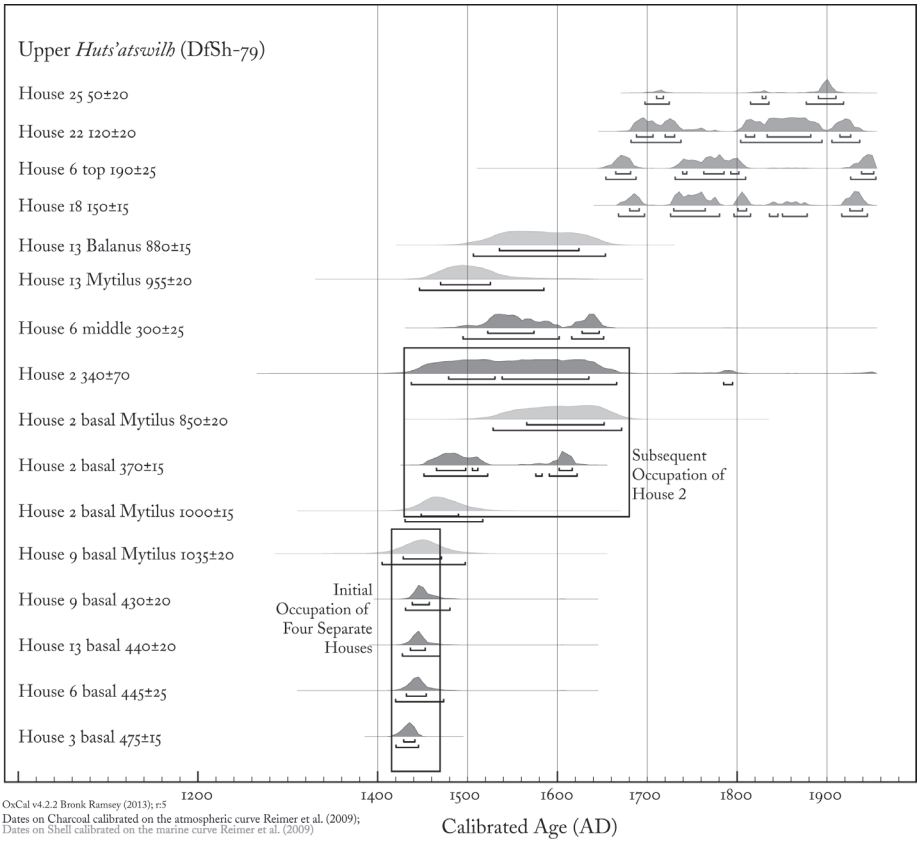

Figure 11. Dates on cultural deposits on upper *Huts'atswilh* (DfSh-79) indicating the rapid construction of four house locations and subsequent occupation into the contact era. Dates on marine shell shown in light grey and charcoal dates are in dark grey.

approach by houses on its periphery. A sixth dated house structure on the southern periphery of the site, with more ephemeral deposits, dates to well within the early contact era (ca. AD 1774-1850) and indicates an expansion of this portion of the site, as previously interpreted by the 1982 survey and mapping team (Inglis and Haggarty 1986, 276). The occurrence of extensive archaeological deposits, including multiple house platforms, on the precipitous elevated location of upper *Huts'atswilh* (Figure 9) supports the interpretation that the upper site area was used over a prolonged period that may have been characterized by political and/or territorial conflict.

DISCUSSION

The preceding sections detail archaeological evidence for settlement in several shell midden sites in Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u> local group territory (Figure 6). To recap, the earliest definitively cultural dates, from two elevated sites in the southern periphery of the archipelago, are approximately twenty-seven hundred to twenty-five hundred years old (McKechnie 2013, 239). Use of these elevated and inter-visible sites over the following two thousand years was periodic based on the limited extents and depths of archaeological deposits, which is consistent with the occasional use of "lookout" locations (*nachowa7a*), or "where one goes to look out to sea" (St. Claire 1991, 143, citing Sapir 1910-14, 1:57) to watch for approaching people, animals, and weather. Soon after these sites were established, deep midden deposits in three separate areas of the very large site of *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii* began to accumulate rapidly, indicating the rapid growth of a village. Approximately one thousand years later (around 1500 to 1200 BP), major portions of this village appear to slow or to stop accumulating, during which time the nearby village of *Huumuuwaa* began expanding rapidly (between 1800 and 1200 BP), nearly reaching the size of *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii* within a lesser time frame. Simultaneously, a small village settlement was established nearby at *Shiwitis*, while the lower village of *Huts'atswilh* began to expand rapidly during the sudden occupation of the upper fortress five hundred years ago.

This archaeological settlement sequence indicates a striking complementarity with the oral history of local group territories in this portion of the Broken Group. In particular, the first establishment of a village in Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u> local group territory occurred at *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii*, the named origin place of this local group. This settlement grew to be the second largest in the archipelago following *Ts'ishaa*, which is also a named origin place for the Ts'ishaa7at<u>h</u> local group (McMillan and St. Claire 2005). Subsequent to this, the village of *Huumuuwaa* expanded to become the third largest in the archipelago. Later, the elevated fortress at *Huts'atswilh* provides strong evidence for the sudden construction of multiple households on a defensive landform approximately five hundred years ago and their extended use into the nineteenth century.

Several oral histories pertaining to events in the territory match this pattern, offering a chance to evaluate oral historical records and archaeological history prior to the mid-twentieth century. Notably, the archaeological chronology indicates that both *Huumuuwaa* and *Huts'atswilh* came into existence well after *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii*. As described previously, these observations are sequentially consistent with oral historical accounts identifying

these villages as semi-autonomous descendant lineage groups (*ushtaḵimilh*) within Maḵtlʔii7atḥ territory (William 2009, 370). Such complementarity provides evidence that the archaeological and oral historical sequences of settlement within this small thoroughly occupied territory record the same history. While relatively little oral historical detail is explored here, the integrity of recounted oral historical information remains consistent with archaeological information stretching back over two millennia. This is a remarkable affirmation of the chronological integrity of oral narratives, and it provides an additional reason for considering subsequent narratives about changes in Maḵtlʔii7atḥ and Ts'ishaa7atḥ local groups during the contact era (see below).

Contact-Era Political Change and Amalgamation

After a several-millennia-long history of village, lookout, and fortress establishment within Maḵtlʔii7atḥ territory, oral narratives pertaining to the early contact era provide additional descriptive context about the demise of the Maḵtlʔii7atḥ as a territorially independent group. A consequential event for the Maḵtlʔii7atḥ was a violent conflict with the Ḥach'aa7atḥ that occurred during the "latter years of the eighteenth century" and reduced the formerly robust multi-village Maḵtlʔii7atḥ community to a small population with "less than 15 men" (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 17). This occurred during a period of political tension, intercommunity conflict, and the spread of disease within and beyond the Nuu-chah-nulth world – circumstances that persisted, in various ways, into the mid-nineteenth century (Harris 1997; McMillan 1999; Swadesh 1948).

After the Maḵtlʔii7atḥ battled with Ḥach'aa7atḥ, survivors regrouped and chose to amalgamate with their Ts'ishaa7atḥ neighbours immediately to the north. Because this was a peaceful merger, Maḵtlʔii7atḥ chiefs (*Hawilth*) managed to obtain potlatch seats as well as drift whale rights and other family-based harvest privileges (*tuupati*), but they ceded the territorial ownership of their *ḥaḥuulhi* to Ts'ishaa7atḥ leadership (St. Claire 1991, 41). Soon thereafter, a political alliance of Nuu-chah-nulth groups within and outside Barkley Sound collectively destroyed the Ḥach'aa7atḥ as a political entity (McMillan and St. Claire 2005, 17). Regional tensions persisted, however, and a series of other violent conflicts unfolded over the next few decades (Arima et al. 2009, 325-27; McMillan 2009; Swadesh 1948), culminating in what was referred to as "The Long War in Barkley Sound." This likely occurred over a decade during the 1830s or 1840s and involved communities well beyond Barkley Sound

(Sapir and Swadesh 1955, 412-39). After this extended and large-scale conflict, the now amalgamated Ts'ishaa7ath resumed seasonal settlement at village locations, as recounted by Tom Sayach'apis (ca. AD 1835-1927) in 1921:

> I saw Hiikwis at the time the Tsishaa Tribe ceased to be at war with the Ucluelet. I was still a small boy. We always moved away [from Hiikwis] after the herring finished spawning. We would go to Huumuuwa [Village Island], the whole Tsishaa Tribe, staying together because the war had ended only recently. We did not want to get separated. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955, 39)

As this quote indicates, the amalgamated Ts'ishaa7ath remained vigilant and consolidated during the years following the "Long War," practising seasonal residential mobility in a large group. As time passed and widespread conflict did not re-emerge, the formerly autonomous local groups within the now amalgamated Ts'ishaa7ath polity began to disperse to their former village sites. Approximately a decade later, when Sayach'apis "grew up to be a young man," he describes a time when:

> War was not in season. So the Tsishaa moved apart. The Maktlii Tribe went to Maktlii (Storm [Wouwer] Island). The Tsishaa Band was with the Nachimwas at Tsishaa [Benson Island]. The Himayis people went to Himayis. The Wanin people went to Wanin. The Nashas people went to Dutch Harbor [*Hiikwis*]. The Tlasimyis people went to Tlasimyis. The Hachaa people lived on Village Island [*Huumuuwaa*], for that was their land. The Hikuuthl people went to Shaahuwis. I used to live at Mokwa'a [Turrett Island]. We would troll when autumn was coming and when the cohoe started going thru the passage in schools. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955, 45)

This account encapsulates the dynamic series of changes in residential settlement that emerged after the Long War, when family lineages within the now amalgamated Ts'ishaa7ath polity returned to their ancestral villages within their former local group territories. This reversion to pre-amalgamation territorial and residential affiliation, albeit only on a seasonal basis, indicates an enduring persistence for what appears to be a much more ancient pattern of place-based affiliations and affinities, as indicated in the archaeological record of settlement.

Ethnographic Synthesis versus Oral Historical Narrative

Considered in the context of millennia of sustained settlement in the Broken Group Islands, oral historical accounts pertaining to the post-contact era indicate a considerable change in settlement organization. Such details are often poorly documented in European explorer accounts (Clayton 2000). In contrast, oral historical accounts provide vital context for illustrating the degree to which social and political history in this region shifted from its former circumstances.

Framed in a broad chronological perspective, three archaeologically relevant observations about contact era change are: (1) the overall reduction in the human population on the outer coast, (2) a coalescence of a number of formerly independent groups into fewer groups with larger territories, and (3) the increase in seasonal residential movements over the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Notably, these details may not have been readily apparent during the 1860s and 1870s, when the colonial presence and waves of virulent diseases began to affect Nuu-chah-nulth nations in Barkley Sound (Harris 1997; Sellers 2013). Yet, this period is also when the first Victorian-era anthropological observations of Nuu-chah-nulth became formalized (Grant 1857; Sproat 1868; Swan 1870), serving as a basis for later ethnographic syntheses. Most notably, American anthropologist Philip Drucker (1951, 1965) popularized an interpretation of Northwest Coast settlement structure based, in part, on his work with Nuu-chah-nulth communities north of Barkley Sound. He influentially posited that individual territories of "local groups" collectively controlled relatively large areas within which they exhibited a pattern of seasonal residential movement between protected "inside" inlets and exposed "outside" coasts (Drucker 1951, 49; see also Mitchell 1983). However, while this synthetic ethnographic observation was relevant for the late nineteenth century, it lacked a detailed engagement with oral historical accounts discussing demographic and political changes within communities prior to that period (Marshall 1993; McMillan 2009). In contrast, Edward Sapir's approach to anthropological inquiry did not aim for a broad ethnographic synthesis but, rather, focused on place-specific oral histories recorded in Nuu-chah-nulth and subsequently translated into English. This considerable documentation was never fully transcribed or published during his lifetime, which contributed to an overall lack of awareness of the utility of these records. While both approaches have valuable insights as well as limitations, the latter is especially relevant to archaeological interpretation of pre-contact history, as demonstrated in this article and elsewhere in Barkley Sound. Nuu-chah-nulth oral

histories as well as archaeological data document the extensive use of numerous settlements in the highly exposed archipelagos on the "outer" coast, indicating sustained year-round use by multiple communities over millennia (e.g., Calvert 1980; Mackie and Williamson 2003; McMillan 1999; McMillan et al. 2008).

While from a modern perspective the Broken Group archipelago may appear an unlikely location for year-round settlement, the islands feature extensive intertidal habitats, nearshore kelp beds, and protected channels sheltered from ocean waves, and they offer a wealth of highly productive marine resources that are accessible throughout much of the year. Broad and deep channels on either side of the islands geographically delineate potential settlement areas, and the archipelago's proximity to the wide continental shelf offshore allows ready access to one of the most productive marine environments on the Pacific coast (Ware and Thomson 2005). From this relatively small land base, multiple independent groups maintained tight control over these productive territories and, in the case of the Maḵtl7ii7aṯh village of *Huts'atswilh*, defended their community from attacks both during the pre-contact era (approximately five hundred years ago) and again during the early contact era (when the archipelago was controlled by the amalgamated Ts'ishaa7aṯh). In the words of a recent Supreme Court decision concerning Aboriginal title to land in Canada (*Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*), such evidence is consistent with "a strong presence" and "regular use of definite tracts of land," particularly in the construction of a defensive fortress that ensured "exclusive" occupation of the territory and that, by its very presence, communicated to "third parties that it held the land for its own purposes." Similar circumstances were undoubtedly the case for other Nuu-chah-nulth peoples and other First Nations in British Columbia. Here, a detailed oral historical and archaeological settlement record provides a glimpse into these highly localized historical processes over a three-thousand-year period.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have examined an area of the outer coast, using detailed oral historical accounts and archaeological information that document multi-faceted community-level changes during the contact era and over the past three thousand years. The oral historical information and archaeological data indicate that these two distinct ways of considering human history reveal parallel and comparable sequences of settlement, including village establishment, expansion, and the construction of a fortress to ensure continued control over specific territory. Combined,

these oral narratives and physical records offer a stronger basis for evaluating change, continuity, and settlement variability within a local group territory on the outer Northwest Coast (e.g., Moss 2012).

These observations also indicate that the outer coast of Vancouver Island was a demographically packed landscape circumscribed by a series of sharply delineated territories that underwent significant reorganization during the postcontact era. Similar changes in demography and settlement practice have been observed elsewhere on the coast during the contact era (Acheson 1995, 2005; Carlson 2007; Inglis and Haggarty 2000; McMillan 1999; McMillan et al. 2008), although they remain underexamined in coastal archaeological research more broadly. As research into the extent of contact-era demographic change in Indigenous North America is refined (Jones 2014), it is hoped that archaeologists can more adequately reconcile the degree of population change and its impact on Indigenous settlement practices.

The historical dynamism and broad correspondence between archaeological and oral historical information observed here support the observations of Crowell and Howell (2013), Cruikshank (2001), and Martindale and Marsden (2003), which indicate that narrative oral historical accounts of human settlement have the potential to maintain an enduring historical integrity that can complement, and be complemented by, archaeological information. Conversely, archaeological approaches to Indigenous history in North America over the twentieth century have oscillated from an artefact-centric cultural historical orientation to a scientifically focused evolutionary approach that largely eschews Indigenous perspectives on their historical experience (Trigger 1989). Contemporary interpretive approaches are well positioned to draw together diverse sources of information to maximize the pool of relevant information for investigating vast expanses of human history (Martindale and Nicholas 2014; Wylie 2014; cf. White 1997). This disciplinary realignment further reflects the recognition that anthropological concepts in North American archaeology have been unmistakably shaped, and continue to be influenced, by disciplinary dialogue with and by Indigenous peoples (Atalay 2008; Darnell 2000; Mack 2011; Valentine and Darnell 1999). Although archaeological interpretation may ultimately not be needed to "verify" oral historical knowledge, both forms of knowledge offer views of the past that are made stronger and richer when examined in parallel.

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