OF ONE HEART

Gitxaała and our Neighbours

Of One Heart

Dedicated to the memory, life and work of
James A. McDonald,
'Wii Goot, Waaps Nishaywaaxs
(b. 1951 d. 2015)

Of One Heart

Gitxaała and our Neighbours

Edited by
Charles R. Menzies

New Proposals Publishing
Vancouver
2016

Copyright © 2016 New Proposals Publishing

Copyright of articles remains with the authors.

New Proposals Publishing
6303 NW Marine Drive
Vancouver BC
V6T 1Z1

Edited by Charles R. Menzies

Design and Layout by Kenneth Campbell

Front Cover: Sighted Gitxaala mask (held in the Louvre, Paris) superimposed of mountain top view of K'tai, Laxyuup Gitxaala

Back Cover: Overlooking K'tai

Photos by Charles R. Menzies. Designed by Kenneth Campbell.

Contents

Introduction 7
Charles R. Menzies

1 Tsimshian *Wil'naat'ał* and Society: Historicising Tsimshian Social Organization 11
James A. McDonald

2 Coping with Colonialism: Services for Aboriginal Women in Prince Rupert, British Columbia 41
Oralia Gómez-Ramírezl

3 Gitxaała's Own Foods: Decolonizing Food Practices 65
Robin Anderson

4 Eating Gitxaała, Being Gitxaała: Food and Cultural Security 91
Danielle Gendron

5 Newcomer Self-Provisioning on the North Coast of British Columbia 107
Caroline F. Butler, Linda Mattson, Charles R Menzies

6 What if? Speculations about an Old Neighbour, the North Wind Wolf 132
John A. Dunn

7 *Nts'abm a Gyiyaaksi'i* Our Village Out to Sea: A Resource for Language Revitalization 144
Margaret Anderson

8 "In the Blink of an Eye": Collecting the Tsimshian Stone Masks 161
Joanne MacDonald

9 A Visual History of Nineteenth Century Lach Klan (Gitxaała) 187
George F. MacDonald

Of One Heart: Introduction

Charles R. Menzies

Of one heart is a loose translation and reference to the Sm'algyax (Tsimshian language) phrase *syt güülm goot* – being of one heart. This phrase has become ubiquitous today. One finds variations of the phrase used to highlight the underlying idea of interconnection and relatedness. *Syt güülm goot* codifies an important pan-Tsimshianic value of belonging and an ethic of care about all beings. We reference that spirit in the title of our collection *Of One Heart*.

The sub-title – Gitxaała and our Neighbours – is also a self-conscious reference, this time to our western intellectual predecessors. Jay Miller and Carole Eastman edited a collection of papers in honour of celebrated Tsimshianist Viola Garfield. Their volume was called *The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors of the North Pacific Coast*. In the three decades since *The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors* was published much has changed in academic sensibilities. For one, the objectifying and outsider view of "The Tsimshian" and "Their" neighbours – grammatical structures that turn our people into objectives of study clearly presented from an external vantage point – has been supplanted by a far more collaborationist and cooperative stance. The explicitly colonial vantage point of earlier researchers studying vanishing peoples in some kind of terrain is no longer as common as it once was. While we honour our academic predecessors our own focus is more internalist: hence our use of Gitxaała and OUR Neighbours. As a member of Gitxaała and a practicing academic I consider it critical that researchers orient their work and writing within the theoretical and intellectual framework of our Indigenous communities. The time for treating us as data sources or laboratories for externalist colonial theories has long passed.

Our collection builds upon the legacy of our Indigenous and academic ancestors and mentors. Included in this volume are papers from the generation of scholars published in *The Tsimshian and Their Neighbours* and the related volume *Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views for the Present* (edited by Margaret Seguin Anderson). These senior scholars have laid down an academic tradition that facilitated the work of new Indigenous Scholars and non-Indigenous fellow travellers. We are honoured to have chapters by James McDonald, Margaret (Seguin) Anderson, John Dunn, George MacDonald and Joanne MacDonald included in this collection.

George and Joanne's chapters relate directly to matters of import to Gitxaała. George uses a series of hard to locate photos and images to detail the history and structure of Gitxaała's late 19th century home village. Joanne's chapter explores the museological and historical aspects of Gitxaała's famed twin stone masks. Margaret and John explore linguistic concerns. Margaret's chapter highlights important techniques for language maintenance. John's chapter raises a controversial and intriguing linguistic history of the northern invaders: who were they and where did they come from? Jim's chapter highlights a critically important concept of internal social organization that has not received as much attention in Tsimshianic studies as it deserves. I will return, toward the end of this introduction, to the overall importance on central place of Jim's work to the Tsimshianic and Indigenous studies. As the reader will note we have dedicated this volume to the memory of Jim whose life and work has touched many of us.

Three chapters by emerging scholars, Oralia Gomez-Ramirez, Robin Anderson, and Danielle Gendron, were made possible by a longstanding UBC-Gitxaała research collaboration. All of these papers focus on critical contemporary concerns of relevance to Gitxaała: food, health, and social wellbeing. Oralia's chapter explores the dynamics of racialization and the provisions of social services for Aboriginal women in Prince Rupert. Robin's chapter examines the way regulatory and economic processes restricted Gitxaała harvesting capacity and how that has contributed to high levels of diabetes. Danielle's chapter, the most recent of the three, focuses upon the important link contemporary Gitxaała members place upon consuming one's own foods gathered from within Gitxaała lands and waters. In the chapter "Newcomer Self-Provisioning" my colleagues Caroline Butler, Linda Mattson and I explain the ways in which non-Indigenous north coast residents also engage in wild food harvesting. In this chapter we highlight the importance their harvesting practices play in newcomer social relations.

Taken together these chapters bring together a bundle of longstanding research concerns with emerging contemporary issues. This is accomplished by centering our inquiry with Gitxaała and then looking out to consider the ways of our Indigenous and Newcomer neighbours who share our common home.

I now return to our dedication of this book to James A. McDonald, friend, activist, scholar and intellectual mentor.

James McDonald (b. 1951 d. 2015) was a sociocultural anthropologist whose first work on the Northwest Coast, starting in 1979, involved a

> happy coincidence: Kitsumkalum Band Council decided it wanted an anthropologist to make a study of their social history that would assist them in their land claims and economic development. Since I [McDonald] intended to do an historical study of the political economy of an Indian population, our paths came together in a mutually beneficial way. [1985:22]

From the start, Jim's work was a collaboration with the leadership of the community. This was part of a new wave of engaged anthropology that had its roots in Kathleen Gough's call for new proposals that placed anthropology at the service of colonized peoples (Gough 1968; see also Marcus and Menzies 2005). Jim notes that he "usually met with people as a representative of Kitsumkalum Band Council, although the connection between my [his] work and theirs was not clear cut" (1985:24). Upon completing his dissertation, Jim worked for a decade as curator of ethnology at the Royal Ontario Museum. In 1994 he was hired by the University of Northern BC to take over as chair of the First Nations Studies program.

Jim's form of collaboration created a space for the co-generation of knowledge. That is, working on projects defined and requested by Kitsumkalum, Jim was able to focus his research in ways that would illuminate issues and perspectives relevant from an Indigenous perspective. At the same time his theoretical framework (political economy) and engagement in the academic arena brought insights to community understandings on their own social history that would not necessarily have been the case had they simply hired a consultant. Jim's work is an example of a transformative model of collaboration that marks a decisive turn away from the model of anthropologist as research coordinator employing an Indigenous key informant. With Jim, the researcher became engaged in a collaboration that starts with the interests of the Indigenous community front and centre.

Through Jim's longstanding research, personal, and political engagement with Kitsumkalum he was officially adopted into *Waaps Nishaywaaxs* and received the name *'Wii Goot*. This is more than the typical anthropological tale of being adopted – a distasteful anthropological trope. The annals of anthropology is replete with photos of smiling anthropologists posing in front of somewhat less than happy looking 'natives.' One can still hear anthropologists at conferences talking about "their tribe," "their village," "their people." Jim was an anthropologist of a totally different order. Along with his name in *Waaps Nishaywaaxs* came an expectation that he was and would continue to be a full participant in the affairs of the house.

Jim's commitment was built through a long term relationship and it was manifest in the celebration of his life and honouring banquet held in February, 2015 in Kitsumkalum. Jim's name rested through the mourning period and then, a year later was placed upon his heir in a naming feast in the late spring of 2016.

We dedicate our work and words collected together here in honour of the memory of the good works of our friend and mentor James McDonald.

References

Gough, Kathleen.

1968 New Proposals for Anthropologists." Current Anthropology 9, no. 5:403-35. http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/stable/2740394.

McDonald, James Andrew

1985 Trying to Make a Life : The Historical Political Economy of Kitsumkalum." Retrospective Theses and Dissertations,1919-2007. The University of British Columbia. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.14288/1.0096619.

Marcus, Anthony, and Charles Menzies

2005 Towards a Class-Struggle Anthropology." Anthropologica 47, no. 1 (2005): 13-33. doi:10.2307/25606215.

Miller, Jay, Carol M. Eastman (eds.)

1984 The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors of the North Pacific Coast. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984.

Seguin, Margaret Anderson (ed.)

1984 The Tsimshian: Images of the Past, Voices for the Present. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984.

Tsimshian Wil'naat'ał and Society: Historicising Tsimshian Social Organization

James A. McDonald

Introduction

Not far from Gitxaała are the people who live inside the mists of the Skeena River. Connected to Gitxaała by the familial ties of kinship and chiefly designs, the eleven Aboriginal communities of the lower Skeena River also are part of the Tsimshian Nation.

The prevailing understanding of Tsimshian social organization has long been clouded in a fog of colonialism. The resulting interpretation of the indigenous property relations marches along with the new colonial order but is out of step with values expressed in the teachings of the *wilgagoosk* – the wise ones who archived their knowledge in the historical narratives called *adaawx* and other oral sources. This chapter reviews traditional and contemporary Tsimshian social structures to argue that the land owning House (Waap[1]) and Clan (Wil'naat'ał) have been demoted in importance in favour of the residential and political communities of the tribe (*galts'ap*). Central to my argument is a critical analysis of the social importance of the contemporary Indian Reserve villages that is the basis of much political, cultural, and economic activity today. The perceived centrality of these settlements and their associated tribes in Tsimshian social structure has become a historical canon accepted by missionaries, politicians, civil servants, historians, geographers, archaeologists, and many "armchair" anthropologists. This assumption is a convention that loosens the Aboriginal ties to the land and resources and is attractive for the colonial society. It is a belief that has been normalized within the colonized worldview as the basis for relationships in civil society.

The issue I raise in this chapter concerns the extent to which the prevailing

1 *Waap* is the Sm'algyax term used in Kitsumkalum. A dialect variant used elsewhere is *wilp* or *welp*.

interpretation of Tsimshian social life is a reflection of the traditional community structure. This chapter is not intended to be an enquiry into authenticity. Today, Tsimshian society relies both on traditional cultural values based on kinship and the land, and on contemporary practises based on the Indian Reserve policies and a globalizing political economy. In exploring the issue, an alternative interpretation of a historically constituted society is presented that comes from discussions with elders, archived interviews, the *adaawx* (teaching narratives), and older ethnographies. The alternative is that of a land holding and tightly integrated society. It is an alternative based in the time of sovereignty but with a strong continuity in the underlying cultural values. To make this point, I will start with a story from Axdii Anx Smax (Larry Derrick), a Ganhada (Raven phratry) Sm'oogyet (chief) from the Nisga'a town of Laxgalts'ap on the Lisims (Nass River).

One afternoon, Axdii Anx Smax visited me in my research office in the Kitsumkalum Village on the Kitsumkaylum[2] Indian Reserve, outside of Terrace, BC. We were talking about the structure of Tsimshian and Nisga'a scientific knowledge. There are Sm'algyax terms that describe basic principles, and we were discussing how important it is to provide these words with an explanation of their meaning in English, rather than simply presenting an English translation using apparent equivalents of the terms themselves. This discussion was about the adequacy of translating complicated terms but quickly slipped into a political lesson.

The Sm'oogyet asked me if I knew what the Sm'algyax phrase *Sayt-K'ilim-Goot* meant. I have heard this expression in Tsimshian communities such as Gitxaała and in meetings in all the other communities. I have also heard it in Gitxsan meetings and feasts. However, keeping in mind that he was a Nisga'a Sm'oogyet, I replied that I understood the expression meant "of one heart" and that the Nisga'a Lisims Government[3] uses it to promote the nationalist sentiment of "One heart, one path, one nation."

The Sm'oogyit nodded in agreement but then asked, but do you know what it really means? I deferred to him and he explained that, originally, there were the two rivers, the Nass and the Skeena, and the people were all one, just like Txaamsm and Lagabolla, the twin supernatural brothers. They lived separately on the two rivers but were so closely connected that they could sense (*atix*) what was happening to the other. This was before the great flood that covered the earth. At that time, no distinction was made between the K'ala'aks Lisims (Nass) or K'ala'aks Ksiyeen (Skeena) – modern terms that are used to give identity to the Nass Valley and Nisga'a Nation, and to distinguish them from the Skeena River and its people: the

2 Unlike the English spelling of the community and village, the official spelling of the Reserve has a letter 'y'. The Elders group said in 1999 that it preferred the popular spelling for their community over the modern form of Gitsmgeelm or Gitsmk'eelm. I currently reserve the Gitsmgeelm form as a collective term just for the families or *wuwaap* that had estates in the Kalum Valley.

3 http://www.nisgaalisims.ca/welcome

Tsimshian Nation and the Gitxsan. In the days of Txaamsm and Lagabolla, all the nations were one. There were no distinctions. All was *Sayt-K'ilim-Goot*. Only after the flood did the three nations separate into the Nisga'a, Gitxsan, and Tsimshian – the great triangle. Before that, the families intermarried and moved about the entire area, as one people; but, now, there are three First Nations with their own territories mapped for Treaty and economic partnerships. He concluded, simply, by saying the people today are not one.[4]

This conversation is my starting point because it situates the question in oral history and suggests that, today, we are working from an understanding of Tsimshian social structure that carries traditional values but is infused with a consciousness generated from colonial experience.

In this chapter, I will explore ways that the framework of current issues have been shaped by the colonial administration of the Indigenous people in BC. My argument is that the colonial situation on the Skeena River has shifted the focus of Tsimshian society from the land owning Houses and lineages of Tsimshian sovereignty to the government settlements of the colonial period. During Tsimshian sovereignty, the tribal communities were local associations of the corporate groups called Houses or Wuwaap.[5] The Indian Reserve system redefined ownership and shifted the corporate group from the Waap/House as recognized by Tsimshian *ayaawx* (common law) to the Indian Reserve villages as recognized under the BNA Act. This transformation conditions contemporary Tsimshian society. I will frame this argument by historicising the three communities of Kitsumkalum, Lax Kw'alaams, and Metlakatla, and by demonstrating their interconnectedness. I will then explore the idea that the House groups and not the tribes were the corporate land holding groups.

Decolonization

Decolonization in Canada, as elsewhere in the world, has meant a return to cultural traditions that form the heritage and identity of Indigenous peoples. These traditions and cultures create, once again, a collective consciousness to heal the traumas of colonization and re-build a civil society based on Indigenous values. Culture provides a vision of the future and a road map to get there.

This is not a simple task. The reproduction of a collective consciousness inevitably incudes not just the ideas people have but also their experiences. In earlier papers (McDonald 1990, 1994), I examined how Tsimshian traditions and rituals are used to build a moral community that can provide alternatives to the imposed colonial structures. Here, I wish to examine the residues of colonial assimilationist policy that still intrude on cultural consciousness to form new ideas that inform contemporary practices. The focus is on how the traditional social structure of the Tsimshian is interpreted today.

4 The story is used with the permission of Axdii Anx Smax.

5 Wuwaap is the plural form of waap.

In the Tsimshian Nation, the function of tradition and rituals in creating civil society was clearly expressed when the community of Kitsumkalum raised crest poles in a 1987 ceremonial exclamation that they were entering into a New Beginning, a new relationship with their neighbours in northwestern British Columbia, within the Canadian confederation of provinces and federal governments and, indeed, within the globalizing world. They called the turning point with the Sm'algyax name "*Su Sit Aatk*" and proudly claimed the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the new Canadian Constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms that had been adopted in 1982, only a few years earlier.

The colonial history of Kitsumkalum is unique in many ways, as is the path the community has taken since 1987; however, it is not alone within the Tsimshian Nation in relying on culture and tradition to provide a source of inspiration and strength. Tsimshian culture is alive and lively in all the communities. The particular histories of each community have resulted in various expressions of continuity between the past and the present, but always the continuity is there. The Tsimshian community of Kitselas, for example, has strengthened its Tsimshian values with the guidance of elders and artists, created a marvellous National Heritage Site, and raised an unprecedented number of crest poles on that site and in their residential areas. Another Tsimshian community, Lax Kw'alaams, has built economic projects to benefit the members of that community on the basis of traditional rights to inland resources.

The liberalization of Canadian legal attitudes towards Indigenous cultures no longer criminalizes the culture and has started to open space in Canadian civil society for Aboriginal communities to heal from the traumas and distortions caused by Canadian laws and institutions. Much of today's leadership in the Tsimshian communities was born after the potlatch law was dropped in 1951 and after the vote was extended to status Indians in 1949 for provincial elections in BC and 1960 for federal elections. Their experiences have been shaped by the emergence of Aboriginal Rights and treaties, a resurgence of political activism and struggle. Under these conditions, Indigenous corporate groups within the communities are reforming and asserting their identity. Feasting is the iconic symbol of Tsimshian society and governance and examples abound in the communities of feasting that celebrates the recovery of hidden heritage such as House names and the repatriation of community members. One highly significant example occurred when a house of the Gits'ilaasü Gisbutwada clan living at Kitsumkaylum Reserve[6] reclaimed its rights in 2009 by installing chiefly titles, bringing members home to receive names, and adopting relatives to strengthen the House. Another important example was the

6 There are variants in spelling this name. Kitsumkaylum is the spelling for the Indian Reserve; Kitsumkalum is the spelling for the community and village. The Elders group said in 1999 that it prefer the popular spelling for their community over the modern form of Gitsmgeelm or Gitsmk'eelm. I currently reserve the Gitsmgeelm form as a collective term just for the families or *wuwaap* that had estates in the Kalum Valley.

Laxgibuu feast in 1996 that re-established a House that has since made major cultural and social contributions to the Kitsumkalum community but also to the broader regional community centred in the City of Terrace, enriching the regional district and promoting better understanding between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. We are in a new time that is ripe with potential. The young generation that is coming into leadership in this environment was born in an era of cultural pride and assertion, and policies of reconciliation. Their questions are not directed simply towards "how to survive government and protect the community," but towards "what form of self-government to create for the Nation." Theirs is a vision of a different kind of relationship to Canadian society. The emergence of this vision of the future is challenged by the lingering effects of what I will call below the Skeena Clearances and other colonial policies of social control such as residential schools, Department of Indian Affairs, and the resource laws and regulations that are in the foundation of Canada and the provinces.

The Skeena Clearances

Historically constituted villages

Many changes have taken place in Tsimshian land since the first European ships arrived on the coast in the late 18th century. The fur trade came in the wake of those ships, first as a marine trade then as a land based trade with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort (later Port) Simpson in the 1830s. A mercantile village dominated by Tsimshian grew around the trading post and eventually became known as Lax Kw'alaams. This historically constituted village was originally established on the estate property (*laxyuup*) of the one chief, the Laxsgiik Sm'oogyit Ligeex (Legaic), and grew into a commercial site with residences that included an international melange of people from many Tsimshian communities, and various individuals from other nations such as the Haida. It also included Métis, French Canadian and other HBC employees who were living with or visiting members of the villages. Social relationships were not always friendly as illustrated by an account of a so called "war" between the Tsimshian and Haida (Swanton 1905) but the complexity of the living arrangements around the fort was a defining feature of the mercantile era.

Cultural change was a part of the trade relationship, with the British trying to assert control over the trade, to control the liquor trade that damaged HBC profits, and to suppress slavery in accordance with new social laws in the United Kingdom. A more aggressive form of assimilation came with the arrival of the youthful and idealistic missionary William Duncan from the Church Missionary Society. Duncan eventually lead a significant portion of the native Port Simpson population back to Venn Passage at the northwestern entrance to what we now call Prince Rupert Harbour and established the missionary village of Metlakatla.

An attraction of the harbour was that it had been the site of the coastal resi-

dences and winter villages of many Skeena River families or *wuwaap*. Franz Boas wrote that "each group inhabited its own village site" in the area (1916:483), a statement supported by others and by archaeological evidence. Originally, there were a series of winter settlements in the area and the name was not for a single, large winter village but for the geography of the area which is reflected in the Tsimshian name of the area: Salt Water Passage or Maxłaxaała.

The mission settlement took the place name but Duncan's Christian Metlakatla was a new type of residence, being modelled along European lines (Usher 1974), and being a concentration of many families from many *galts'ap* in one specific site rather than around the harbour (Usher 1974, Campbell 2005:28-30). In fact, Metlakatla was filled with "large numbers of different and hostile tribes" (Usher 1974:165) not simply those who once had winter residences in the harbour area. Not surprisingly, residence in this Victorian styled village involved more than accepting the foreign religion of Christianity; it also required agreement to abide by the laws Duncan made for Metlakatla. This requirement undoubtedly was important because of the demographics of the village and, indeed, was an attraction because of the dynamics of the fur trade at Port Simpson such as described by Swanton 1905.

Originally established with just 50 Tsimshian, these were followed by other "panic-filled Indians" fleeing the small pox epidemic of 1862 (Usher 1974:64). The Gitlaan came in June and shortly after another "small tribe" joined the settlement beginning the growth of the settlement. Many were people not attracted by religion so much as by protection. "One of the chief speakers said – we have fallen down and have no breath to answer you – do your will" (Duncan Journal, quoted in Usher 1974:64-65).

Significantly, the 1862 epidemic was only one in a series of disastrous epidemics and there were other reasons for House groups to move to the missionary village of Metlakatla. For example, anthropologist Homer Barnett was told in 1938 that the Gitlaan settled there in 1862 because of a deadly feud with their neighbours up the Skeena (1941: 166). Hostilities such as the so-called Haida War at Port Simpson in 1835 (Swanton 1905)[7] illustrate the new, dangerous environment that resulted from the fur trade. The "very strict and specific guidelines that were laid out as the first laws of the village" allowed some refuge but at the expense of Tsimshian traditional life.

> The evils of white [sic] society, such as liquor, were to be unavailable at Metlakatla. But this was no return to a traditional Tsimshian life, for the basic institutional structure of Tsimshian society contained in the potlatch was to be destroyed. In its stead were to be constructed the moral and social institutions of a small, pious Victorian village. [Swanton 1905:64]

7 An archival account of the war is in the Hudson's Bay Company journals (HBCA B.201/a/4 1838-40, pages 98d-106)

As Barnett has shown with his study of the strategic conversion of Ligeex in 1860 (Barnett 1942), the cultural changes were not all imposed on a docile Tsimshian population. The chiefs were actively deciding on the advantages and disadvantages of the new social environment which some embraced and from which others distanced themselves.

Another type of settlement grew at Spokeshute as the industrial era was ushered in with the establishment of the first canneries at Port Essington in the 1880s. This location was strongly influenced by the presence of a significant Tsimshian population available for employment by the canneries, in particular people of the Kitsumkalum and Kitselas Tsimshian. Although within the general territory of the Gitzaxłaał "tribe," Port Essington was situated on a fall campsite called Spokeshute. Kitsumkalum and Kitselas were recognized as the resident "Indians" and Robert Cunningham deeded them a Special Reserve alongside the cannery town site he was building. Other "Indians" also lived at Port Essington but the site was a special one for Kitsumkalum and Kitselas.

Yet another example comes from the history of how the Tsimshian of Gitga'a**t** followed Duncan up to Alaska to establish his Christian utopia of New Metlakatla and then returned to establish their own Indian Reserve village of Hartley Bay, at a distance from their original Douglas Channel settlement located in Kitkiata Inlet (Campbell 1984).

These comments historicize the main Indian Reserve villages; but, what is the social significance of people changing their residence? An answer can be found in the changes that came with the colonial forces, especially those policies that cleared people off their lands and away from their resources, alienating them from their Aboriginal livelihoods. Historian Jean Usher focused on the destruction of Tsimshian society contained in the potlatch but the potlatch grounded Tsimshian society in the way it governed the connections to the land and resources. A more destructive attack on that grounding came following the Act of Union. Like the famous Highland clearances of the Gaelic tribes in Scotland, Canadian policy towards the land and resources created and normalized a social transformation on the Skeena that favoured industrialization and imposed new relations to the land (McDonald 1985, 1987, 1994).

Suppression of Traditional Property

Landed property

During Tsimshian sovereignty, the Tsimshian *wuwaap* or matrilineal corporate groups were associated with a variety of types of landed property governed by the common law of the *ayaawx* (McDonald 1983). The most significant ones were the *laxyuup* or estates which were House territories. A single *waap* might have one or more than one *laxyuup*, some or all of which had different types of resources to be

appropriated at different times of the year. For example the Waapm Nishaywaas, a Gisbutwada (Killerwhale clan) lineage, had several named *laxyuup* in the watersheds of the Copper River and Kleanza Creek, south of Kitselas Canyon, as well as eastward in the Skeena watershed. Geographically less extensive forms of property than the estates were specific resource sites such as the one in the Zimacord watershed owned by the Gisbutwada of Robin Town (Kitsumkalum) on the west side of Kitsumkalum Mountain (McDonald 1983, 2003). Another type of property law governed coastal residences and the ownership of the beach in front of the residences (Garfield 1939:275). These are examples from a complex system of property ownership that was disrupted by the unilateral usurpation of Tsimshian common law (*ayaawx*) and the imposition of Canadian governance by the Act of Union in 1871. Although stiff protest was mounted by the Tsimshian, the earlier colonial regime had established military dominance and set the conditions for the change in governance structure.

The most significant changes to landed property were the result of the legislation that has become known, simply, as the Indian Act. This racist law controlled property and organized the Aboriginal people into Indian Bands with members listed on a government register in Ottawa and separated from the so-called “white man.” The Indian Act has a central status in the suppression of the Indigenous people in Canada but associated with this were numerous other federal and provincial laws that appropriated resources out of the Tsimshian economy and transferred them into the emerging capitalist economy (McDonald 1984, 1985, 1987, 1994).

The Indian Reserve Commission established in 1876 to set up Indian Reserves in British Columbia did its work on the lower Skeena during the 1880s and 1890s. The allocation of reserves to the Kitsumkalum and Kitselas during the early 1890s legally cleared the Tsimshian people off their *laxyuup* and concentrated them in Indian Reserve villages where government services and control could be administered. Subsequent protest from Tsimshian leaders left an historical record indicating the societal damage inflicted by the clearances.

The Tsimshian people did not passively accept the Skeena Clearances. Indeed, the Sm’gyigyet struggled to have the new BNA governments recognize their homes and properties as these were distributed across the territory. In 1874, Port Essington First Nations (Kitsumkalum and Kitselas) stopped the land surveys (Department of Indian Affairs Reports 1874:282) but this type of direct action was dangerous. Military or other violent resistance had been suppressed by the 19th century expressions of gunboat diplomacy by the British navy and British supremacy was re-enforced by encampment of a military force at Port Essington in 1877 and again in 1888 that was sent to subdue the Gitxsan troubles (Large 1996:36; Department of Indian Affairs Reports 1889:lxxxi). The alternative was negotiation and the Sm’gyigyet found a forum in the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission. This Commission was set up to investigate the many problems with the establishment of Indian Reserves

in many locations throughout BC. For the Tsimshian, the Reserves under the new regime's laws provided protection for their *laxyuup* against the encroachment of the demands of industry and influx of settlers. Numerous applications were made to the Commission to have important locales identified as Indian Reserves.

The Commission's report in 1916 did not resolve the problems but the evidence revealed the extent to which the BNA governments cleared people from their estates. In fact, applications made to the Royal Commission for additional Reserve lands provide a detailed description of the traditional lands requested by Tsimshian leaders, and the specific reasons for each the request. A quick review can reveal both the nature of the Indigenous occupation of their territory during Tsimshian sovereignty and indicate the significance the clearances had for the Tsimshian way of life (British Columbia 1916 v3:571). Itemised are the very basis of the Indigenous economy and social geography: houses, cabins, graveyards, gardens, fishing stations, fish drying houses, trapping base, improved lands, and cockle beaches. These types of items were a part of productive properties that were the foundation of Tsimshian society.

For example, the settlement at Gitxondakł, a key residential site of the Kitsumkalum Ganhada and Laxgibuu families on Treston Lake in the Kitsumkalum Valley, was the subject of an application from the respected Ganhada leader, Charles Nelson. He reported that his family had two houses on the site and that the site was an important fishing station for his group. The Commissioners did not allow the application due to the presence of a Fire Warden's cabin. The decision read:

> Land applied for lies entirely within the boundaries of surveyed Perpetual Timber Limits Nos. 8686 and 8695, both in good standing; in addition the more northerly parcel appears to be entirely covered by a Forest Ranger's Station – land applied for is therefore not available. [British Columbia 1916 v3:568]

Forestry was a fledgling industry in the new settlement of Terrace when that settlement established in 1909. The Fire Warden's cabin could not have been there for very many years earlier, certainly not as long as the traditional residences of the Aboriginal owners, and was built without local consultation of the Kitsumkalum residents.

Not found in the applications are the intangible aspects of Waap property, the *adaawx* with their "true tellings" of Tsimshian history, the heritage values, the social relations embodied in the distribution of people and things. In the example just given, Treston Lake was the site of a special village where trout were fished according to specialized knowledge of the waters and currents, where there were nearby *laxyuup* with fruit bushes that were managed and maintained for their taste and nutritional values, and where significant events occurred that the oral histories recorded as part of the property laws and as evidence of the special connections and responsibilities the people had to the natural world.

All these cultural features are an integral and important component of the legal fabric that constituted Tsimshian real property but they were not comprehensible cross-culturally to the colonial system which sought evidence only of a physical presence and of a function relevant to colonial development. This official neglect is part and parcel of the suppression of Tsimshian governance, including the Tsimshian oral history. The fact that the suppression of oral history still occurs and was not fully rooted out by court cases such as Delgamuukw is of importance in understanding why a certain version of Tsimshian history has emerged. I would argue this version is "safe" in the sense that it is a diluted and, to some extent, distorted, version of Tsimshian governance and property laws. It is a safe history because it does not provide the strongest challenge to colonial structures.

Other property

The previous section discussed the clearances but the removal of people from their *laxyuup* was accompanied by the removal of their resources from the Tsimshian world and Tsimshian society into the industrial world and capitalist society. In an important thesis on changing landscapes, Brenda Guernsey documented the shift from a landscape as it appeared under the indigenous Tsimshian regime of resource management, to a colonial landscape that was first perceived as an untended wilderness, to a true wilderness vacant of residences and damaged by clear cut logging that was indiscriminate of other use values. Significantly, she showed how that "the rhetoric embedded in the culturally constructed concept of 'Wilderness' had the effect of dehumanizing and erasing an extant vibrant cultural Aboriginal landscape" (2008:ii).

The new resource management regime was established with a host of resource laws and regulations passed by the Canadian and provincial government in far away capitals. Many ambitious Tsimshian worked with the new opportunities, trying to make a life in the colonial period (McDonald 1984, 1985). Some prospered by adopting the new capitalist economy as business owners, merchants, and labourers; others worked with it syncretistically, merging their traditional practices with industry as petty commodity producers by trapping, freighting, hand logging, gill netting, or producing crafts (McDonald 1985). In the end, the loss of ownership left them dependent and set the conditions for Tsimshian underdevelopment.

It is important to bear in mind that the Indian Act and Indian Reserve system were only one policy area that cleared the Tsimshian from their lands. Various other pieces of resource legislation, such as the provincial Game Act or Forestry Act or the Dominion/Federal Fisheries Act, structured the new economy and conditioned the Tsimshian participation (McDonald 1985). As laws evolved to encourage and regulate the emerging capitalist economy, they redefined individual resources as having commercial significance, and expropriated the commercialized resources

out of Tsimshian control into the new economy (McDonald 1985), in the process marginalizing the Tsimshian ability to develop the resources (McDonald 1987), leading to Tsimshian underdevelopment (McDonald 1994).

The Sm'gyigyet (chiefs) and their representatives were not passive victims of the process. They mobilized important instances of political resistance to this loss of resources and transformation (McDonald 1984, 1985; McDonald and Joseph 2000) but the land had been cleared, government agents with the authority of the state were in place, and the corrosive effects of the new property relationships were eroding the ability for effective resistance and transforming Tsimshian society. New property relations were in effect and transforming the conditions supporting the basic institutional structure of Tsimshian society.

Creation of new property relationships during colonial rule

The clearing of the land through the Indian Reserve system cut off the corporate groups, the *wuwaap*, from their estates and other landed property. The resource legislation appropriated resources into the capitalist economy and redefined both the technology that could be used on those resources and the way labour could be applied. In the worst case, so-called "Indian" labour was excluded by the regulations; in other cases, the way it was able to engage was redefined with consequences to the functioning of Tsimshian society.

As an example, many Aboriginal groups used the provincial Game Law to protect their traditional territories by registering their traplines. Kitsumkalum people found they often had to contend with non-Indians taking advantage of the law and registering traplines in advance of the traditional owners, with a consequent loss of control over their *laxyuup* (McDonald 1984, 1985). Another, culturally significant challenge the registration system gave to the Tsimshian *ayaawx* was the patrilineal bias of the Game Law towards fathers and sons. This undermined the matrilineality of *laxyuup* ownership as defined by Tsimshian common law, affecting the continuity of trapline ownership over time, and affecting the integrity of the organization of the *Waap*.

New social relations were emerging in the Tsimshian productive economy as Canadian and provincial organizational structures for traplines, hand logging operations, commercial fishing, labour were normalized. In tandem with these changes within Tsimshian society, the Indigenous resources expropriated out of Tsimshian production by these resource laws were transformed into new resources defined commercially. Salmon were no longer a Tsimshian fish but became a cannery fish, a sport fish, and a food fish. The status of the cedar tree was reduced as a multipurpose and sacred plant in Tsimshian society and culture, to become a log for a global market harvested by hand loggers, later by power loggers, and later still by corporations clear cutting the forest for export to the USA and, more recently, to China.

As a result of the clearances and the appropriation of resources into the capitalist economy, the demographic patterns of the eleven Skeena River communities changed. With the loss of Waap corporate ownership of their properties and resources, the Tsimshian social organization lost a crucial force for integration. The *wuwaap* declined as the Skeena River families were concentrated into the new corporate groups that became the six Indian Reserve villages of Lax Kw'alaams, Metlakatla, Port Essington, Kitsumkalum, and Kitselas (Endudoon or Kulspai and Gitaus). Many relocated off reserve to urban centres, including Prince Rupert, Port Edward, Port Essington (off reserve), Terrace, New Kitselas, Vancouver, and Victoria. So long as they retained their Indian status and membership in one of the village corporate groups, they retained some control over their Aboriginal resources, albeit in a radically transformed way. Some choose to abandon their Indian status in favour of citizen status in Canada.

Social relations changed profoundly during the Indian Affairs era and were simplified with the loss of the important organization of the *wil'naat'ał*. The next section discusses these changes and the impacts they had on being Tsimshian.

Being Tsimshian

The classic literature on Tsimshian social organization describes five fundamental cultural categories of social being that are cultural axes along which the citizens of the First Nation align themselves: kinship (houses, lineages, clans, and phratries), marriage alliances, *galts'ap*, residence, and class. Each of these categories entitled an individual to a certain bundle of rights. For example, kinship groups owned property and productive resources, and marriage alliances gave the spouse extended rights of access and use to the property of the other spouse's kin group. The most important bundle of rights was the *Waap* or House group because this conferred an individual's main social identity as well as access to the means of livelihood. Through the matrilineal descent within the *Waap*, the individual inherited the basic social identity and placement as well as rights belonging to the *Waap*. The paternal side linked the individual to a larger group in the community, and provided services that marked and guided the individual through life's changes.

Tsimshian social integration

There often are three assumptions underlying presentations about the relationship between Tsimshian social groups and traditional land use. One assumption is the uncritical equating of today's reserve communities to specific traditional *galts'ap*. In other words, we tend to say, in a simplistic way, that there are nine tribes in the Lax Kw'alaams/Metlakatla group and one each in Kitsumkalum, Kitselas, Gitxaała, Hartley Bay, and Klemtu. This assumption lies at the heart of the dissonance between the Allied Tsimshian Tribes based in the Indian Reserve of Lax Kw'alaams and the

other reserve Tsimshian communities. The second assumption follows from the first and enables people to equate the nine tribes of the Lax Kw'alaams/Metlakatla group as populations distinct from the other communities, notably from Kitsumkalum and Kitselas on the Skeena River. The third assumption is that the tribes are the corporate groups rather than the lineages. These three assumptions have become so prevalent in discussions of the Tsimshian that they have the power of an orthodoxy guiding historians (Marsden 2002), archaeologists (Martindale 2006; Martindale and Marsden 2003), and sociologists (Matthews et al N.d.; DiFranscesco 2010). I argue that the assumptions come from a tendency, described by Michael Harkin, to "frame their arguments in terms of the ideology of settler colonialism (Harkin 2010:114)

The first assumption makes a correspondence between the modern reserve communities and the traditional ones. Is this true? Writing in 1917, Marius Barbeau described the villages as flexible in time, with old villages being abandoned and new ones established frequently:

> Essentially a local and accidental unit, occupying a definite expanse of territory, and consisting of various families considering each other as relatives or strangers, and tracing their origins to different localities and ancestors. [Barbeau 1917:403]

This is not to say the villages were not important but their stability is in contrast to the "greater stability of the kinship and social groups that integrated so many other aspects of Tsimshian society. The situation of instability must have conflicted with the economic importance of territorial integrity" (Marius Barbeau, paraphrased by Louis Allaire 1984:82). Significantly, Garfield was told in Lax Kw'alaams that "In ancient Tsimshian culture the loyalties of [tribal] members were, first to their own lineage and clan and second, to their tribe or village and its chief" (Garfield 1939:318). This passage further indicates the temporary nature of the tribe.

The community of Kitsumkalum exemplifies the flexibility of these relationships. Centred as it now is at Kitsumkaylum Reserve, the registered Kitsumkalum Band membership currently includes several lineages that the orthodoxy associates with the nine *galts'ap* of the villages of Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla. A particularly striking example is the important house of Waaps Niskimaas, the Ganhada group from the Giluts'aaw (the Killatsul or Lakelse tribe) which had its main *laxyuup* or estates in the Lakelse watershed. As a result of arranged marriage in the early 20th century, the Giluts'aaw Ganhada were linked with the Kitsumkalum Band and reserve community, sharing resources and lands along the Skeena and at coastal sites, supporting each other in the evolving global economy and political situation, and living together in the same camps and settlements along the Skeena and at coastal sites. Another example is a Gisbutwada *waap* which the orthodoxy associates with Kitselas; however a part of its *wil'naat'ał* resides in Kitsumkalum. The political

interests of traditional *wuwaap* like these two lineages living in Kitsumkalum are represented by the Kitsumkalum Band Council and Administration.

In addition to these groups, there are numerous individuals who the orthodoxy would classify with the tribes of Lax Kw'alaams and Kitselas but who are living in Kitsumkalum, often with a Kitsumkalum registration number for their Indian status. Some examples from the Kitsumkalum genealogy project include individuals associated with *wuwaap* of the Ginaxangiik, Gispaxlo'ots, the Gitzaxłaał, Gitlaan, Gitga'at, and the Gitwilgyoots.

The second assumption is that the nine tribes of Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla are somehow the sole members of the group that does not include the Kitsumkalum or Kitselas communities. Sometimes the term used in Lax Kw'alaams for the nine tribes is "Tsimshian" or "Coast Tsimshian." Marsden, who uses the term Northern Tsimshian for the nine tribes, claimed that although Kitsumkalum and Kitselas "have always been part of the Tsimshian, as they are now called, they do not fully accept the use of this term to describe their tribes and peoples" (2002:fn 4). In fact, Kitsumkalum warmly embraces the term Tsimshian. They do not accept efforts to exclude them and assert their common heritage with all the Tsimshian on the coast and their coastal settlements. Being Tsimshian is such a fundamental part of the existence of the Kitsumkalum people that to say otherwise is to deny them their identity. The geography of their inland territories in the broad valley was an environment with different opportunities from the narrow valleys further down the river but they still valued their sea food and coastal sites as much as their other Tsimshian relatives. People living in Kitsumkalum will point out that even the name Tsimshian[8] translates as "in the Skeena" and includes not only the people of Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla but equally those of Kitsumkalum and Kitselas. This more inclusive view is the common understanding in the oral histories of Kitsumkalum and is well represented in the *adaawx* told by Walter Wright of Kitselas and published by that Band. There is plenty of supporting archival and published evidence to substantiate the claim that the Skeena River people who are labelled "Coast Tsimshian" or "Tsimshian" includes the community of Kitsumkalum.

A better understanding of the relationship and role of the Reserve Villages – tribe – community is possible with a closer examination of what Boas, Garfield, Barbeau and others actually said about the tribes. In the following sections, I will present this information and address to the third assumption that the tribes are the land owning corporate groups.

---

8 This is spelled Ts'msyen in the new standards that are emerging (e.g., Sm'algyax Living Language Talking Dictionary http://smalgyax.unbc.ca/). Currently the Kitsumkalum Elders group has stated a preference for the established spellings of Tsimshian and Kitsumkalum.

Galts'ap

The traditional understanding of the 19th century Tsimshian social geography identifies 14 social groups or *galts'ap* concentrated along the Skeena River or in close proximity to the Skeena. These are variously labelled tribes, towns, or *galts'ap* (communities). Prior to the demographic changes associated with Tsimshian participation in the globalizing economy and suppression under colonial policies such as the Indian reserve system, the Tsimshian had numerous villages and town sites throughout their territories.

In the 19th century, the individual houses of these *galts'ap* lived on or near their properties to work the lineage resources but they also gathered and congregated in a number of town sites for a variety of reasons that included resource processing such as the labour intensive salmon fishing, winter ceremonies such as the feast and secret society functions, and defense against hostile groups.

The Gisbutwada historian, Walter Wright, described the creation of towns as the result of the resettlement of people, the expansion of towns as the result of the movement of families into new territories and being welcomed, the breakup of towns over time as the result of environmental pressures (Wright and Robinson 1962). This dynamic was also noted by anthropologists who recorded social information from Tsimshian leaders. Marius Barbeau, in his book *Totem Poles of the Gitksan* (1929), reported that the *galts'ap* are nothing but casual geographic units; an agglomeration that could come into existence and also dissolve through necessity or catastrophe (1929:152). Boas also wrote that

> some of the "tribes" are evidently the result of a breaking-up of older communities, made necessary by their increase in numbers. It is told that when a village became too large, the head chief would assign part of his people to his nephew, who would set out and found a new village, which would naturally embrace only members of his own exogamic group. [1916:486]

The process Boas describes is undoubtedly the birth of a new *waap* within the *wil'naat'ał* and the extension of the *wil'naat'ał* into new territory.

The colonial experiences lead to significant changes in this axis as described earlier but change itself was not new. With the establishment of the European presence and the beginning of the Tsimshian incorporation into the emerging global economy, some of these residential sites transformed into Port Simpson (now Lax Kw'alaams), Metlakatla, Port Essington, Kitsumkalum, and Kitselas' Endudoon, Queensway (now Kulspai) and Gitaus. In addition, some individuals and families moved into the new type of *galts'ap* – urban centres such as Victoria, Vancouver, Prince Rupert, and Terrace. These Indian Reserve settlements now take a central place in Tsimshian social structure. The next sections look at other structures conditioning Tsimshian social life: kinship structures as well as class structures.

Social class

The second axis was structured by the social classes of *Sm'oogyet* or chief, *k̲'a̲lgyigyet* or common people, and *ga̲xaa* or slaves. These terms[9] do not fully capture the intricacies of the class system but provide a basis for the following comments. For example, a more refined description of the chiefly class should also include, at least, the House leaders or *lik'agyigyet* and matriarchs or *Sigyidm hana'a*. It should be noted that women were of the same rank as men (Halpin and Sequin 1990:275). The Sm'gyigyet (plural form of Sm'oogyet) were centred in the lineage structure of the Houses but had strong common interests as stewards of the House properties and resources. For present purposes, I include all types of chiefs in the term 'Sm'oogyet' without expanding on the various levels and roles.

The common interests of the Sm'gyigyet were apparent in feasting, in the two secret societies that were exclusive to Sm'gyigyet, arranged marriages, in building political and military alliances, and in economic activities involving productivity, distribution, and trade. The discussions occurred in many situations where Sm'gyigyet from different groups gathered and where some class-consciousness could emerge. Garfield reported from Lax Kw'alaams that

> In ancient times inter-tribal matters were settled by a council of the chiefs of the tribes involved, and their decisions were final. There is still great respect for the opinions of the chiefs and where the council cannot agree on a course of action the matter is referred to the chiefs, who meet and hand down their decisions for the council to follow. [Garfield 1939:323]

Even today, these interests can be observed by watching the communication that occurs among the leadership seated in the feast hall at the Sm'oogyet Table. As Sm'gyigyet watch and witness the business that is conducted in the feast, they discuss among themselves the mutual concerns chiefs have concerning the business of the social groups that constitute the Tsimshian Nation.

Some social historians have argued that a new, more complex political organization, a "proto-state," was being created by the chiefs at Port Simpson (Robinson 1978) while others feel the evidence is incomplete (McDonald 1985:22). The basis of this was the ranking of the Sm'gyigyet within a *galts'ap*. As Garfield noted, "In most tribes there are several chiefs' lineages in separate, though related, houses, but one is always recognized as the head chief, while the others are subordinate to him" (Garfield 1939:182). Margaret Seguin (1985) described the process of acquiring the head chief position as it occurred in the 1980s in Hartley Bay.

The ranking of the *galts'ap* Sm'gyigyet touches on a significant difference within the Tsimshian Nation; the very highly ranked Kitsumkalum title-

9 In this paper, I follow the spelling standards set out in the *Sm'algyax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary*. (Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Authority and the Sm'algyax Committee of School District 52 2013). This linguistic reference also provides some helpful ethnographic insights.

holder Łagaax (Arthur Stevens) told Barbeau in 1926 that Kitsumkalum had no lik'agyigyet. Unlike the other Tsimshian, "the system [at Kitsumkalum] resembled the Gitksan in that each head of the group was recognized as chief of his own group. He recognizes himself the difference between the Tsimshian group and this " (Barbeau and Beynon B-F 49.2). Kitsumkalum did not have a *galts'ap* chief, a *mansm'ooygit* or *wii sm'ooygit*.

Today, a new factor has emerged in political practice. Leadership comes from the contemporary chiefs who may include the traditional titleholders as well as elected chiefs and councillors, and hired leaders. These leaders now sit not only at House feast tables to discuss the traditional topics but also at village feast tables, Band Council tables, and Board Room tables to discuss the business of the village.

The other classes had different interests and had less opportunity to develop those interests outside of the residential patterns. As a result, commoners were more focused on matters internal to the lineage structure. Slaves, like slaves generally, did not have the rights and freedoms necessary to develop an effectively significant class consciousness. Only the chiefs had an environment to nurture an effective class consciousness. One expression of this was the arranging of strategic marriages.

Kinship, Waap

During Tsimshian sovereignty, the Tsimshian lived in a kinship oriented society, the values of which continue to shape Tsimshian social life and cultural practices. The familial axis places the individual within three key matrilineal groups: the corporate group called the *Waap* or *Wilp*, the *wil'naat'ał*, and the *pteex*.

The term *waap* translates into English as House, implying the physical present of the group in the structure of an actual house build of massive cedar support poles and beams and split cedar planks used to clad the structure (Seguin 1984). These were impressive residential structures that placed families in town sites with other families who occupied their own houses. While the physical *waap*[10] consists of an extended family and attached individuals such as husbands, the Waap as a corporate group is a matrilineage (Garfield 1939:174; Durlach 1928:141; Seguin 1985; McDonald 2003).

The House Groups lived near the resource territories that they used, including their estates or *laxyuup* and other productive properties. Tsimshian common law recognized a complex assortment of property rights (McDonald 1983).

Marriages

Alliances created through marriage and other means linked the *wuwaap* and *wil'naat'ał* to each other and across *galts'ap* and *pteex*. Marriages within the same *pteex*, *wil'naat'ał*, and *waap* were forbidden (McDonald 2003) and efforts were made to create alliances of wealth and for peace. These marriages consolidated the wealth

10 In this paper, I follow the convention of capitalizing the term when it refers to a *Waap* or House as a corporate group but not when it refers to a house structure.

of the *wuwaap* over generations, extended social connections and privileges of the spouses and created for the next generation the obligations of the paternal side. John Cove provided a detailed analysis of the marriage strategy over generations (Cove 1976).

Pteex

Another important structure based on the principles of kinship is the *pteex*. In English the *pteex* is commonly called either clan or tribe, and in anthropological terminology it is a "phratry."

Traditionally, the literature ascribes to the Tsimshian four matrilineal, exogamous social divisions called *pteex* consisting of the Ganhada or Raven phratry / Raven clan, the Gisbutwada or Killerwhale phratry / Blackfish Clan, the Laxgibuu or Wolf phratry / Wolf Clan, and the Laxsgiik or Eagle phratry / Eagle Clan. The *pteex* are associations using the fictions of kinship so that members of each *pteex* feel a kindred that extends beyond their lineage and *galts'ap*. Viola Garfield stated they had "no important function other than the regulation of spouse selection" (1966:20). She goes on to call them "loose federations of clans, which were the named subdivisions of phratries" (1966:20). The subdivisions she identified are the *wil'naat'ał* as discussed in this chapter.

Something should be said about the English translations of the Sm'algyax terms. In English, the divisions are called either tribes or clans, which causes confusion because the term tribe is also sometimes applied to the Tsimshian as a group, sometimes to the individual *galts'ap* communities, and sometimes to the *pteex*; the term clan is sometimes applied to the *pteex* and sometimes to the *wil'naat'ał*. Technically, the *pteex* can be called phratries. The Tsimshian phratry is a fictive kinship group that integrates individual members within and between residential sites, and even beyond the social boundaries of the Tsimshian world into the neighbouring territories of the culturally close Nisga'a and Gitksan communities, as well as the similar but more distinct Haida and Haisla.

There is also confusion over the nature of the *Pteex*. The passage from Viola Garfield establishes two salient features about the *pteex*: they are federations of *wil'naat'ał*, and they have limited function in Tsimshian social organization. Garfield also reported the *pteex* to have an extremely complex composition of *wil'naat'ał* with diverse origins and histories. The member houses of a *pteex* were so dispersed that some *wil'naat'ał* did not know of related houses in distant *wil'naat'ał*. Nonetheless, as members of the same *pteex*, all *wil'naat'ał* shared a relationship. Although in today's society, that relationship seems paramount over the actual kinship of the *wil'naat'ał*, for Garfield, who conducted her research in the 1930s, the *wil'naat'ał* seemed paramount over the *pteex*. Barbeau was in accord with Garfield's description of *pteex* as federations:

> The phratries in their present form are not very ancient. They are more in the nature of a federation than the natural growth of kinships units, once small, into larger groups; their ramifications extend several nations. [Barbeau 1929:152]

In this passage, Barbeau saw some influence shaping the present form of the phratries but declined to elaborate. Marjorie Halpin and Margaret Seguin commented that the "four-clan structure appears to have been the case only in the post-contact villages of Port Simpson and Metlakatla" (1990:274). While this statement ignores the four-clan model found in Kitsumkalum and Kitselas, it does indicate a recognition that the perceptions of the phratries has changed, an observation that is important in the consideration of the role of the *wil'naat'ał* below. This is not to say the phratries themselves are recent. Both Boas (1916:485 ff) and Barbeau in his books on totem poles (1929, 1951) deal with the ancient origin of the phratries and *wil'naat'ał*.

More recently, Roth describes the fourfold division of Tsimshian society with the interesting statement that the *pteex* are

> a simplification, a kind of pidginization, of a more complex history. This pidginization enables regularity in feasting, marriage, and trading relations but does not erase history or memory [of the constituent parts such as the *wil'naat'ał*]. [Roth 2006:183]

Most pertinent to the present discussion is that Barbeau thought of the phratries as fictive kinship groups with political functions across nations and *galts'ap* (1929:153). Thus the *pteex* exist across and to some extent connect Tsimshian settlements. This marks the *pteex* / phratries as distinct from the *wil'naat'ał* with the *pteex* cross-cutting the other cultural axes and the *wil'naat'ał* being the extended lineage family.

Role of the Wil'naat'ał

To properly understand Tsimshian social organization and integration, it is important to distinguish between the phratry and the *wil'naat'ał* (McDonald 2003:73ff). Unfortunately, English usage of the term clan for both social structures has confounded our appreciation of the distinctiveness of these two important concepts and, possibly, hidden some of the importance of the *wil'naat'ał* from modern scholarship and popular social consciousness. As a result, scholars have paid a rather erratic attention to the *wil'naat'ał*. In some cases, the *wil'naat'ał* is treated as a significant component in Tsimshian social organization (Boas, Barbeau, Garfield). The elders of Kitsumkalum who guided and endorsed the writing of the People of the Robin

(McDonald 2003), a community based ethnography of Kitsumkalum, included a discussion of the importance of the *wil'naat'ał*. Similarly, the community based dictionary, the Sm'algyax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary, highlights the concept (Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Authority). In other cases, there is scant or no acknowledgement of the *wil'naat'ał*. This range of differences in treatment is difficult to reconcile.

Genealogist Chris Roth described the *wil'naat'ał* as a "web of heterogeneous macro-matrilineages" that form the "consensus of ethno-genealogical reality, which is of a multitude of matrilineages with distinct patrimonies and essences" (2006:178). In other words, the *wil'naat'ał* is a social group consisting of relatives and related *Wuwaap*/Houses, linked matrilineally back to a common ancestor. It is an important key to Tsimshian social organization. Like so many Tsimshian concepts, it is also important to note a limitation in discussing these concepts in the English language. In John Cove's study of the Gitxsan traditional concept of land ownership he found the term *wil'naat'ał* "appears to refer to a number of different kinds of collective; localized sub-clan being one" (1982:fn 4). Boas translated the term as "company, society" (1916:487) and did not limit its use to the clan (or sub-clan in Cove's usage).

Franz Boas (1916:483-488) dedicated several pages to the description of the 'subdivision" or *wil'naat'ał* (spelled as *wul-na-t!a'ł* 1916:488), concluding that

> it appears from these data that there are two intercrossing divisions among the Tsimshian tribes – one a tribal division based essentially on village communities consisting of clan fellows; another one a subdivision of the exogamic groups according to their provenience. [Boas1916:485]

He then went on to give examples of the *wil'naat'ał* as reported by Kitsumkalum people and others who he interviewed in Port Essington in 1888 (486), including the information of his collaborator Henry Tait.

This indicates the social importance he ascribed to the *wil'naat'ał* but, as he himself alluded, his ethnography was too preliminary and his field research too brief for him to fully develop his understanding of the *wil'naat'ał* and to be able to identify clearly the various groupings (1916:487).

Viola Garfield, on the other hand, who had more extensive experience with the Tsimshian communities of Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla described the *wil'naat'ał* in her published dissertation as a sub-clan or branch of a pteex that shared an origin 'myth' meaning an *adaawx* (1939:174-76). For her, "The lineage is the significant functioning unit" (174) that is key to understanding Tsimshian society. Unfortunately, as Chris Roth (2008) has pointed out, Garfield is inconsistent with her usage of the terms clan and lineage and does not always make clear which level of social organization she is using but a careful reading makes it clear that she understood the *wil'naat'ał* to be the important unit "for social control, ownership of houses and property, and the control of various spirit powers" (Eggan 1940:139).

Barbeau's wil'naat'ał

Among the anthropologists who document the *wil'naat'ał*, few come to grips with it as thoroughly as Barbeau who benefited from working with the Tsimshian ethnographer William Beynon. Barbeau was keenly aware of the role of the *wil'naat'ał* and provided important ethnographic information on the geographic placement and international linkages of the *wil'naat'ał*, based on his studies with the Gitxsan. A selection of one *wil'naat'ał* from each *pteex* reveals the importance of this information.

Barbeau's information for the phratries shows links to Kitsumkalum and other Tsimshian communities for each phratry. This is further indication of the importance of the *wil'naat'ał*.

The Ganhada wil'naat'ał

Barbeau recorded seven *wil'naat'ał* for the Ganhada. One of them is the group that came from Kitselas. Among the Gitxsan this *wil'naat'ał* was

> under the leadership of Hlengwah, of Kitwanga. It is a subdivision of a Tsimsyan clan, that of Qawm [K'oom], of Kitselas, and Neesyaranæt [Nisyaganaat], of the Gitsees tribe. Representatives of this clan, which originated among the Tlingit, are to be found among the Gitksan, the Hagwelget, the Tsimsyan, the Kitimat, and the Haida. It is one of the outstanding clans of the Larhsail-Ranhada [LaxSeel-Ganhada] phratry on the North West Coast. Halus [Haalus], of Kitwanga, and Mawlarhen, of Gitsegyukla, are descendants of one of the first Hlengwah among the Gitksan. Hlengwah's ancestors, when they migrated up the Skeena, were adopted by a family under the leadership of Yarhyaq. And that family later amalgamated with that of Arhkawt, of the Frog-woman clan, after he had migrated south from the Nass. [Barbeau 1929:153]

The Laxgibuu wil'naat'ał

Barbeau recorded five *wil'naat'ał* for the Laxgibuu distributed among other Nations:

> The Wolf phratry consists of five clans, all of which are genetically related: the Prairie clan, the Gitxondakł clan, the Wild-rice clan, the second Wild-rice clan and the Kaien Island clan. [1929:157]

One of these originated in the Kitsumkalum Valley and still is active in the Kitsumkalum community – the Gitxondakł. Barbeau identified seven Gitxondakł Houses, also distributed through four nations: the two Laxgibuu families in Kitsumkalum, four families in Gitwingax and two in Morristown.

> It is undoubtedly part of the southward migratory movements of the northern Wolves, like the Prairie-clan. But its members trace back their origin only to

> Gitrhangakhl [Gitxondakł], at the headwaters of Kalem [Kalum] River, near the Nass.[11] It consists of three branches on the Skeena; two families at Gitsemrælem [Kitsumkalum]; three, at Kitwanga; and one, at Hagwelget; and at least one on the Nass, that of Nees-yawet, at Gitlarhdamks. Arhteeh, Tenemgyet, and Hrpeelarhæ head this group of Kitwanga, and Waws, their relative, is the head of a family at Hagwelget. [1929: 156]

Today, Kitsumkalum Laxgibuu live on the Nass and in coastal communities in continuation of the distributed geographic pattern across many ecological zones and political environments. Today, members of this *wil'naat'ał* who have hereditary names are widely distributed, living in locations such as Kitsumkalum, Lax Kw'alaams, Gitwangak, Cedarvale, Ayiansh, Prince Rupert and Quesnel where they have access to traditional foods and other resources, as well as to wage labour.

Such a wide distribution implies much in terms of social strategies. Like the Gisbutwada case, the connections were maintained and provided each *Waap* with potential allies and support over a large area. Aside from published and archival sources, I have seen these relations continuing in ceremonial contexts such as the feast hall, in economic contexts of sharing traditional foods, and political contexts of sharing information and support.

The Laxsgiik wil'naat'ał

Barbeau recorded only one *wil'naat'ał* for the Gitksan Laxsgiik, but claimed it originated with the Kitsumkalum:

> Only one clan of this phratry exists among the Gitksan, under the leadership of Qawq, at Kitwanga. It may be designated as the Gitanræt[12] clan. It is part of the Na'a clan, which originated at Na'a, among the Tlingit, on the Alaskan coast, and migrated south after intratribal feuds with the Wolf clans. The Gitanræt sub-clan is a subdivision of the Kitsumkalum [Gitsemrælem] Eagle families, under one of the earliest Legyærh. Qawq now heads three Eagle families, of the same sub-clan, at Kitwanga, those of Qawq, Tewlalasu, and Sqayæn. [1929:156]

The Gisbutwada wil'naat'ał

The information about the Gisbutwada phratry is both informative about Tsimshian society and revealing about the greater depth of information that Barbeau recorded. Garfield wrote that there were two main branches of the Gisbutwada. Each has their own myth or *adaawx*, one from Temlaxham in the interior and the other from the coast:

> Those who possess the Gau-a myth and the myth of descent from Prairie Town (T'am-lax-am [Temlaxham]) in the interior form one branch; those who own the

11 Alternate spellings in brackets come from contemporary standards used by Gitxsan cartographers.

12 Gitanræt on the Skeena is now known under the name of Fiddlers Creek.

> Git-na-gun-a'ks myth of origin in the south form the other… a coastal origin for this branch, which probably constituted the original coast Blackfish clan members. [Garfield 1939:173-174]

Barbeau, on the other hand, recorded five *wil'naat'ał* for the Fireweed[13] phratry of the interior. Three are closely related branches of the Sky Clan, one of which is part of Kitsumkalum:

> The Sky clan is one of the most important among the Gitksan, the Tsimsyan, and the Nisga'a [Nisræ]; it is also represented among the Haidas of Queen Charlotte islands, and two Athapascan groups, the Babine and the Hagwelet, of the interior plateaux. Its origin is traced back to Temlaham, on the Skeena, and its remote ancestress was Skawah, the virgin whom Rays-of-the-Sun, a sky spirit, once took to wife, in mythic times. Its members among the Gitksan fall into three or four groups or sub-clans. Their differences are marked; and they consider each other as belonging to wholly different clans. The Gitksan families that belong to the Sky clan proper are: Gurhsan and Hanamuq, of Gitsegyukla; Gitludahl, Nurhs, and Wawsemlarhæ, of Kispayaks; Hatisran and Aret, of Gitenmaks (Hazleton); *'Wiidildal of Kitsumklaum* [Weedeldæl, of Gitsemrælem]; Tpee, of the Nass; and the several "royal" Gisbutwada [Gispewuwade] families among the Tsimsyan - Weesaiks, of the Ginaxangiik [Ginarhangyeek]; Nees-hlkemeek, of the Giluts'aaw [Gillodzar]; Neeswærhs, of the Ginadoiks [Ginahdawks], and Tseebesæ, of the [Gitrhahla]. [1929:154, emphasis added]

This is an especially relevant example of the linkages of the *wil'naat'ał* to several Tsimshian *galts'ap* (Kitsumkalum, Giluts'aaw, Ginaxangiik, Ginadoiks, and Gitxaała) as well as among the Nisga'a, Gitxsan, Haida, Babine, and Hagwelget. Unfortunately, Barbeau was confused on this piece of history. He either failed to record the connection this *wil'naat'ał* also had to two Gisbutwada groups at Kitselas canyon or misunderstood the connection. He wrote that "and Nees-tarhawk, of Kitsalas, among the Skeena River Tsimsyan" was from a clan called "Gitkeemelæ" that "traces its origin to the mythic village of Keemelæ, a short distance above Gitlarhdamks, on Nass River" (1929:154). However, the traditionally trained historian of this group, Walter Wright, who wore the title Nistaxo'ox (Nees-tarhawk in Barbeau's spelling), described the group as not separate from the other Sky Clan as described by Barbeau.

I have chosen examples that are most relevant to Kitsumkalum. There are many more that exist in the three nations. They all show the same integrative pattern of being in multiple nations yet maintaining the familial ties and providing assistance to one another when needed. They shared their history, their kinship, and their resources in people and property.

13 The Gitxsan use this English term for the Gisbutwada and Giskaast in their own language.

Wil'naat'ał of the Men of Medeek

A classic narrative of a *wil'naat'ał* is the history of the Waaps Nishaywaas as told by the traditionally and highly trained Tsimshian oral historian, Sm'oogyet Nistaxo'ox, Walter Wright, and recorded by the temporary Terrace resident Will Robinson (Wright and Robinson 1962). Several versions of the narrative from a dozen other knowledgeable people collaborate and extend the information in *Men of Medeek*. All their narratives form a compilation of *adaawx* recorded by Marius Barbeau and William Beynon over a period of 40 years[14] and organized by Barbeau into an unpublished collection on the history of the Gisbutwada (Barbeau, N.d).

The story of the *Men of Medeek* is the history of the movement of that one lineage from their ancestral homeland of Temlaxham, down the Skeena River to Kitselas canyon, and beyond. In the process of establishing themselves on the Skeena River, the family established new houses at Kitselas Canyon, Kitsumkalum River, Zimacord River, Lakelse River, Gitnadoix River, Exstew River, Skeena River sites, and Gitxaała. Other members of the clan are among the Nisga'a, Gitxsan, Haida, Wet'suwet'en at Hazelton, and Nat'oot'en at Lake Babine. This is a good example of how geographically dispersed a lineage can become and of how a *wil'naat'ał* can form.

Walter Wright's narrative relates how the chief of Gitxaała invited Ts'ibasaa (Che-Ve-Sar) and Saaks to stay and live in Gitxaała. Although Nishaywaas sang a funeral dirge to signify the loss of his brothers as chiefs of Kitselas, their separation did not end their relationship and they sang the war song before parting (Wright and Robinson 1962:52-54). This narrative illustrates how the extended family stayed as a unit that was a clan in the technical anthropological sense and a *wil'naat'ał* in the Tsimshian sense.

The Sm'oogyet, Walter Wright, spoke of the unity of the Totem of Medeek through all the villages and lands where the 'cadet' houses were established. Viola Garfield wrote that "in theory, all members of a clan [*wil'naat'ał*] were obligated to render mutual assistance and protection" (1939:326-327, 1966:22). Garfield's qualifier is the geographic dispersion of the members but that was an asset not a problem for mobile people. As Walter Wright related,

> for them there were reasons for trips of friendships. Ts'ibasaa (Che-Ve-Sar) and Saaks welcomed friendship. At Kitkatla they delighted in visits with their relatives, made them welcome. Neas Waias, whose home at Gitnidox was on the main route of river travel, saw much of the people who journeyed on the Skeena. Here was a convenient place to stop for the night. Here his relatives rested on their trips. So the bonds of blood and friendship were held taut. The federation of the scattered peoples of Medeek grew stronger with each succeeding generation.

14 The recording occurred during the years 1915, 1916, 1924, 1926, 1939, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1952, and 1954.

The federation supported and promoted economic exchange and trade labour assistance, ceremonial relations, as well as military support (Wright and Robinson 1962:77-78). Arranged marriages further united the *wil'naat'ał* with other communities, as was the case of the marriage into the Giluts'aaw of the Lakelse River.

So was another link forged in the lengthening chain of the federation of Medeek. A chain that stretched along the river banks into the Land of Ksan (Wright and Robinson 1962:80).

Being Tsimshian Today

Today, these social dynamics still operate, albeit under the restrictions of Canadian and Provincial law. Those restrictions have impacted all relationships to the land, disrupted the House groups, undermined the function of matrilineal ties and of marriage patterns that established alliances between kin based social groups. The Indian Reserve system and Indian laws have removed people from the land and limited their options for residence and residential mobility. Traditional values towards marriage have been attacked by the Church's prejudice towards heterodox forms of marriage. The school system preached against cultural forms and language, allowed racism and bullying towards Aboriginal students, and worse, as in the cases of residential school abuse.

One of the often-invisible results is the assimilation that has normalized many of these changes. Family names inherited through the father create patrilineal family groups that seem normal for a Tsimshian family. Inheritance tends to follow those lines. Living in extended families based around a nuclear family or a divorced/separated single parent seems more normal than living in the matrilineal corporate group of the House/Waap. Living in Reserve communities seems more natural than living in clusters of Houses residing in a *galts'ap*. And so on.

Today, the most common social identifiers are the place of residence with a civic address; membership in an Indian Band or, for people without status, familial ties to people with status who belong to an Indian Band; and, important for many but not all, is membership in one or more of the 14 'tribes.' The notion of a *galts'ap* community is now tied to the Indian Band, at least for many members. Each of these ties comes with their own bundle of rights; bundles that are separate but not unconnected.

Conclusions

A Tsimshian story tells how Txaamsm cheated his brother Lagabolla in an archery competition and how this separated the twins and lead to a distinction between the Nass and Skeena Rivers.[15] The colonial experience has recreated that story through

15 A printed version of this story is in Boas 1916:68. The Boas version adds to the story told by Axdii Anx Smax .

cheating the Tsimshian of their birthrights and promoting boundaries that are fixed in the European way rather than permeable in the way of *Sayt-K'ilim-Goot*.

My starting point was that our understanding of Tsimshian social structure is permeated with a consciousness generated from colonial experience. My argument reviewed the internal organization and operation of Tsimshian society to clarify some of the difficulties associated with the processes of decolonization and the path to self-government.

The current convention of equating the Indian Band structure with the *galts'ap* / tribes is not adequate for understanding the history of Kitsumkalum or its needs as a Tsimshian community. This equation is a consciousness focussed by the colonial experience that supresses the importance of the land owning corporate groups of the *Waap* and *wil'naat'ał* under Tsimshian common law. Underlying this experience, however, is the Kitsumkalum vision of the land, river, and ocean as grounded by the values of the *adaawx* and the *ayaawx*. This is a vision inspired by spirits and myths that are natural and historical, by values that are ancient and new, by teachings that are traditional and adapted to current contexts.

Unlike the developers who see only with their economic plans, the Kitsumkalum people can see with their histories. Three or four generations of colonial rule have left a mark on both the *adaawx* and *ayaawx*, supressing their transmissions and criminalizing many of the central practices such as the potlatch or feast, but have failed to eradicate these phenomena or to terminate the memory of them. Like the famous twin stone masks of the Gitxaała (Halpin 1984), not all the Kitsumkalum people have their eyes open to this vision; but, when they enter the feast hall where the crests are worn for display and they see the heritage revealed, their eyes are woken. The civil heritage of the teachings and Tsimshian laws still exist and are active ingredients in community discussions of current issues and of visions for the future.

These discussions involve difficult conversations to remove the filters of the colonial experience, to work at a deeper social level than the surface features of Indian Band registrations, Indian Reserve villages, elected councils, government defined relations, or any of the features of the sovereign society that the colonial regime found/finds non-threatening and supports. These conversations seek to clarify and focus the Tsimshian vision.

For Kitsumkalum, it has been on a long journey to fulfill the spirit of *Su Sit Aatk* –the 1987 pole raisings when the community stood up publicly to herald a new beginning in civil society informed by Tsimshian values and culture. The wisdom of the Elders and the teachings in the *adaawx* are honoured for guidance in the process of reclaiming the people's heritage. Since *Su Sit Aatk*, the presence and authority of the Sm'gyigyet has grown and with it the need to look deeper into the *ayaawx* and oral histories for direction. That direction has included strengthening of the matrilines in the *Waap*, with a greater understanding of the importance of the

kinship between the *wuwaap* as defined by the blood ties of the *wil'naat'ał*, and of the ceremonial importance of the *pteex*.

The spirit of the ancestors comes alive in the feast hall, in community meetings, and in the lived experiences of the community members struggling to create a future that respects their Tsimshian norms and values as they were received and as they are integrated in a world dominated by other values and norms. Land management plans are germinated from the values of traditional Tsimshian common law governing resources; and grow into Treaty negotiations with more powerful provincial and federal governments, neighbouring First Nations and *galts'ap*, municipalities and corporations.

At this deeper level, social structures emerge out of the fog of colonial assimilation, the *Wuwaap* are stood up, and the relations of the *wil'naat'ał* are rekindled. The *Waap* grounds the families on their *laxyuup* territories, the *wil'naat'ał* connects them beyond their settlements to their broader histories, and the *pteex* is a blanket for the entire nation.

Indigenous structures may conflict with the legacies of the Indian Act and resource legislation but this conflict creates a dynamic that generates solutions that increasingly are in the realm of the Tsimshian vision (McDonald 1990, 1994). For the Tsimshian community of Kitsumkalum, the solutions point to the linking of the *adaawx*, *ayaawx*, and authority of the Sm'gyigyet with the developments occurring in the current form of globalization and political reform as represented by such processes as Treaty negotiations or agreements with economic development projects. The value of traditional solutions, once dismissed and despised, is gaining greater prominence. This is not to say the past will come alive again but that the basic cultural values of being Tsimshian still have meaning and will be a part of the future.

References

Allaire, Louis

1984 A Native Mental Map of Coast Tsimshian Villages. *In* The Tsimshian. Margaret Seguin, ed. Pp 82-98. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Barbeau, Marius.

n.d. Gisbutwada Adawx Binder. Northwest Coast Files. Canadian Museum of History.

1917 Growth and Federation of the Tsimshian Phratries. Proceedings of the 19th International Congress of Americanists. (Pages 402-408). Washington.

1929 Totem Poles of the Gitksan, Upper Skeena River, British Columbia. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

Barbeau, Marius and William Beynon
var. Field notes. Northwest Coast Files. Canadian Museum of History.
Barnett, H. G.
1941 Personal Conflicts and Cultural Change. Social Forces 20(2):160-171.
1942 Applied Anthropology in 1860. Human Organization 1(2):19-32.
Boas, Franz
1916 Tsimshian Mythology, Based on Texts Recorded by Henry W. Tate. Bureau Of American Ethnology. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.
British Columbia. Royal Commission on Indian Affairs
1916 Report on the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia, Vol. III. Victoria: Kings Printer.
Campbell, Kenneth
1984 Hartley Bay, British Columbia: A History. *In* The Tsimshian: Images of the Past, Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp 3-26. Vancouver: UBC Press.
2005 Persistence and Change: A History of the Ts'msyen Nation. Prince Rupert: Tsimshian Nation and School District 52.
Canada. Department of Indian Affairs
1874 Department of Indian Affairs Reports.
1889 Department of Indian Affairs Reports.
Cove, John
1976 Back to Square One: a Re-Examination of Cross-Cousin Marriage. Anthropologica 18(2):153-78.
1982 The Gitksan Traditional Concept of Land Ownership. Anthropologica 24(1):3-17.
DiFrancesco, Darryn Anne
2010 Fishing for Foresters: A New Institutional Analysis of Community Participation in an Aboriginal-owned Forest Company. MA thesis, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa.
Durlach, Theresa Mayer
1928 The Relationship Systems of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian. New York: American Ethnological Society, G.E. Stechert and Co., Agents.
Eggan, Fred
1940 *Review of* Tsimshian Clan and Society. American Anthropologist 42: 138-140
Garfield, Viola
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle: University of Washington.
Guernsey, Brenda
2008 Un-Layering Landscapes: a Post-Colonial Critique of "Wilderness" in Tsimshian Territory, Northern British Columbia. M.A. thesis, University of Northern British Columbia.

Halpin, Marjorie

1984 "Seeing" in Stone: Tsimshian Masking and the Twin Stone Masks. *In* The Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp 281-307. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Halpin, Marjorie M. and Margaret Seguin

1990 Tsimshian Peoples: Southern Tsimshian, Coast Tsimshian, Nishga, and Gitksan. *In* Handbook of North American Indians. W.C. Sturtevant and W. Suttles, eds.

Harkin, Michael E.

2010 Ethnohistory's Ethnohistory: Creating a Discipline from the Ground Up. Social Science History 34:113-128.

Large, R. Geddes

1996 The Skeena, River of Destiny. Surrey: Heritage House.

McDonald, James A.

1983 An Historic Event in the Political Economy of the Tsimshian: Information on the Ownership of the Zimacord District." B.C. Studies. British Columbia: A Place for Aboriginal Peoples, A Special Issue. 57(Spring):24-37.

1984 Images of the Nineteenth-Century Economy of the Tsimshian. *In* The Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp 40-54. Vancouver: UBC Press.

1985 Trying to Make a Life: the Historical Political Economy of Kitsumkalum. PhD. dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of British Columbia.

1987 The Marginalization of a Cultural Ecology: The Seasonal Cycle of Kitsumkalum. *In* Native Peoples, Native Lands. Bruce Cox,ed. Pp 109-218. Ottawa: Macmillan.

1990 Poles, Potlatching and Public Affairs. The Use of Aboriginal Culture in Development. Culture X(2):103-120

1994 Social Change and the Creation of Underdevelopment: a Northwest Coast Case. American Ethnologist 21(1):152-75.

2003 People of the Robin : the Tsimshian of Kitsumkalum. Edmonton: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press.

McDonald, James Andrew and Jennifer Joseph.

2000 Key Events in the Gitksan Encounter With the Colonial World. *In* Potlatch at Gitsegukla William Beynon's 1945 Field Notebooks. Margaret Anderson and Marjorie Halpin, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Marsden, Susan

2002 Adawx, Spanaxnox, and the Geopolitics of the Tsimshian. BC Studies 35:101-135

Martindale, Andrew
2006 Tsimshian Houses and Households through the Contact Period. *In* Household Archaeology on the Northwest Coast. E. Sobel, A. Trieu Gahr, K. M. Ames, eds. Pp.140-158. Ann Arbor: International Monographs in Prehistory.

Martindale, Andrew and Susan Marsden
2003 Defining the Middle Period (3500 BP to 1500 BP), Tsimshian History through a Comparison of Archaeological and Oral Records. BC Studies 138:13-50.

Matthews, Ralph, Robin Sydneysmith, Jordan Tesluk and Georgia Piggot
N.d. Assessing Community Capacity to Respond to Climate Change in the Northwest Skeena. Climate Change Adaptation Planning for Northwest Skeena Communities: Future Forest Ecosystems Scientific Council. http://ffesc.brinkman.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/FFESC_Sociology_Poster_v2-Compatibility-Mode.pdf

Robinson, Michael P.
1978 Sea Otter Chiefs. Friendly Cove Press, British Columbia.

Roth, Christopher Fritz
2008 Becoming Tsimshian: the Social Life of Names. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Seguin, Margaret
1984 Lest There Be No Salmon: Symbols in Traditional Tsimshian Potlatch. *In* The Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp110-133. Vancouver: UBC Press.
1985 Interpretive Contexts for Traditional and Current Coast Tsimshian Feasts. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

Swanton, John
1905 Fights between the Tsimshian and Haida and among the Northern Haida (Kaigani). Annual Report to the Smithsonian American Ethnology.

Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Authority
Sm'algyax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary. Electronic document, http://smalgyax.unbc.ca.

Usher, Jean
1974 William Duncan of Metlakatla. A Victoria Missionary in British Columbia. Publications in History 5. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

Wright, Walter and Will Robinson
1962 Men of Medeek by Will Robinson As Told by Walter Wright. Kitimat, B. C.: Northern Sentinel Press.

Coping with Colonialism: Services for Aboriginal Women in Prince Rupert, British Columbia

Oralia Gómez-Ramírez

Introduction

The history of colonialism has greatly influenced First Nations peoples' livelihoods and experiences in Canada. Coping with colonial legacies, such as material poverty, still remains a central part of the struggles of Aboriginal people across the country (Menzies 2004). Aboriginal women, in particular, continue to be embattled by dramatic social and economic disadvantages (Fiske 1991; Voyageur 2000), and thus, research assessing the resilient effects of colonial history on their present conditions is needed.

In this chapter I take up this concern and offer an overview of the services available for First Nations women in Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Based on qualitative data derived from formal interviews, informal conversations, participant observations, and newspaper research, the chapter sets out not only to delineate some of the service programs' characteristics, but to examine how effectively they address First Nations issues, particularly those of Aboriginal women. Looking at existing and non-existing community services, this study demonstrates that not enough gender-and ethnic-visible social programs aiming to counter the structural disadvantages that affect First Nations peoples are offered.

Through an analysis of the most significant features of – and justifications for – the existing services, it is argued that service programming targeted at Aboriginal peoples has been conceived with a limited colour- and gender-blind view, and that only through the visibility of ethnic- and gender-specific needs, community services would help Aboriginal women overcome some of the many negative by-products of colonial history.

Research Context

The Northwest Coast has long been a location of anthropological study. Drawing on pioneering studies by Franz Boas (1889, 1890) and other renowned academics (De Laguna 1972; Garfield 1939, 1966; Maud 1989), contemporary research has paid attention to First Nations' movements towards self-determination, including land claims, ownership and title, and the struggles for cultural revitalization (Campbell 2005; Culhane 1998; Harris 2002; Seguin 1984; Tennant 1990). Taking a political economy approach, scholars have also focused on issues of colonialism and its political and economic components (Fisher 1977; Muckle 1998), and have examined the initial integration of the First Nations labour force into the emergent industrial economy of the 19th Century, the subsequent deprivation of their resources, and their exclusion from the world capitalist economy (Campbell 1984; Knight 1996; McDonald 1984). Similarly, significant attention has been given to the resource extraction economies of British Columbia, such as the fishery and forestry industries and the effects of the participation or exclusion of First Nations peoples in them (Marchak et al. 1987; Menzies and Butler 2001). Researchers have examined the fourth-world-like conditions of underdevelopment and extreme material poverty resulting from these exclusionary practices (Barsh 1994; McDonald 1994), as well as the construction and reproduction of social inequalities in relation to existing class, racial, sexual, and gender relations (Barman 1997/98; Fiske 1996a; Menzies 1994, 1996).

Yet, with some notable exceptions (Biewert 1999; Dyck and Waldram 1993; McDonald 2003), the critical issues of marginalization and poverty, including unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, family violence, suicide and sexual abuse, and inadequate housing, have been documented to a large extent through statistics and survey data (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996; Statistics Canada 1994, 1995, 2001, 2006). Likewise, the growth of urban areas and the social processes resulting from larger populations of Aboriginal peoples concentrated around them (Dosman 1972; Nagler 1970) has been the subject of little qualitative research (Andersen and Denis 2003). The need for further results in this area becomes evident if we consider that the 2001 Census states that over 70% of the total Aboriginal identified population was living off-reserves and that most of them were living in urban areas (Statistics Canada 2003). The few existing qualitative studies focusing on issues of material poverty for Aboriginal peoples in urban areas have tended to look at large urban areas, such as Vancouver or Toronto (Benoit et al. 2003; McCaskill 1983; Richards 1994), and despite their contributions at illuminating the linkages between colonialism, material poverty, and its interrelated problems, more attention needs to be paid to the same problems in small and medium size urban cities.

Concurrently, research on Aboriginal women has analyzed the discriminatory practices of the Indian Act and its subsequent amendment with Bill C-31 (Bourassa et al. 2004; Fiske 2006), women's political practices (Browne et al. 2010;

Fiske 1990, 1992), and the rise of an Aboriginal women's movement (Fiske 1993, 1996b; Ouellete 2002; Simpson 2001). However, little has been written on women's relations (and access) to services, except in the health area (Browne et al. 2000). A notable exception is the work of Allison Williams (1997) on Aboriginal women's socio-economic situation in Toronto. Virtually no qualitative research that looks at community services for Aboriginal women in the city of Prince Rupert has been conducted. This paper seeks to begin filling in these research gaps.

Scope of Study

This article is a study of First Nations urban women and the community services available to them in the city of Prince Rupert, British Columbia. My research project's central goal is to provide an overview of the services available for Aboriginal women in one of the largest cities in the northwest coast of British Columbia. This chapter addresses two interrelated questions. First, what are the services in Prince Rupert offered for the community at large and what are their most relevant characteristics? Second, what are the services available for Aboriginal women and how effective are they in dealing with these women's most pressing issues?

In the field, the first research question included looking at the most important features of existing programs, the criteria that had to be met in order to gain access to them, the length of time the services had being running, and their main sources of funding. Also, one of the goals was to understand who the main users of community programs were and, from the point of view of the service providers, what other services were further needed in town. The second research question aimed at understanding Aboriginal women's access (or lack thereof) to existing services. It comprised looking at the ways women access and experience those services, what factors prevented or enabled their use of available programs, and ultimately, whether Aboriginal women actually made use of those services in order to cope with issues associated with material poverty, such as inadequate housing, underemployment and unemployment, insufficient education, and domestic violence, to name but a few.

Even though my initial research project intended to focus on Aboriginal women's personal narratives regarding their particular experiences of – and responses to – issues of material poverty, coming to the realization that there was insufficient information on existing community services for Indigenous peoples on and off the reserve gave my research a slightly different direction. Thus, my project took a different path, so that providing the community with a clear picture of the current services and resources on offer – specifically those available for Aboriginal women – as well as understanding Aboriginal women's participation in those programs and identifying the reasons that might facilitate or impede access to them, became the central concerns of my final project. It is important to mention that although politically distinct, in this paper I use the terms First Nations, Aboriginal, Native and

Indigenous indiscriminately to refer to both status and non-status original dwellers in the now urban area of Prince Rupert.

The Research Process

Field research for this paper was conducted during the month of June 2006, and is situated within the existing collaborative research efforts between the members of Gitxaała Nation and Professor Charles Menzies from the University of British Columbia.

Having had their most precious natural resources repeatedly stolen (Lewis 2004; Menzies 2004), First Nations communities have become more reluctant to share their knowledge with researchers (Butler 2004; Nadasdy 1999). Thus, researchers have slowly but steadily come to understand that the history and current situation of First Nations in Canada is one of dispossession and alienation from the natural resources and lands that belonged to them. Refusing to further collaborate in this long-standing history of expropriation of resources, which includes knowledge, social scientists have forcefully proposed and engaged in new forms of research that benefit the communities affected by their studies (Marker 2004; McDonald 2004; Menzies 2001, 2004; Smith 1999). Community-centered research that not only takes place in a certain community, but respects community protocols, addresses community needs, allows for community input into the project, presents the results back to the community, and overall, contributes to the process of decolonization, is nowadays considered the only positive way of conducting research with First Nations peoples (Beck 2006).

Consequently, research for this paper developed within the context of a collaborative service learning project between the University of British Columbia and Gitxaała Nation. Formerly known as Kitkatla, due to difficulties in English language pronunciation (Napastiuk 2003a), Gitxaała is the oldest known village on the North Coast. Located southwest of Prince Rupert on Dolphin Island, this reserve accommodates around 472 residents, while approximately 1,057 members of the Gitxaała Nation live in other surrounding areas, including Prince Rupert (Burghardt 2005b). Thus, research was conducted following indigenous Tsimshian research protocols (Lewis 2004; McDonald 2004). Coming out of a series of needs stated by the Gitxaała Nation, this study along with the projects of five more graduate students underwent a process of permission and consultation regarding both the scope of the study and the best possible strategies to carry it out. Reporting back to the community and offering luncheons were essential components of this protocol (Fox 2006; Kowalsky et al. 1996). This project in particular benefited from the support and direction of Merle Bolton, the Social Development Officer for Gitxaała Nation at the time the field research took place.

As mentioned earlier, my research unfolded in two components: one regarding services in Prince Rupert and the other about how those services impacted (or not)

Aboriginal women. In order to delineate a picture of the services in town, I located as many existing service institutions as possible, which was facilitated by the relatively small size of the city and a dense physical concentration of their offices in just one small area. After making initial contacts, returning phone calls came in. I contacted as many service providers as possible from such different arenas as education, housing, recreation, religion, advocacy, employment, culture, and sports. Due to the specificity of health services, these were not surveyed in this project. Since my efforts happened to coincide with significant events in life of the community, such as Sea Fest and National Aboriginal Day, I was confronted with social timing issues (Ritchie 2006a). Despite hearing phrases like, "Everybody is at Sea Fest" or "I am all booked because of Aboriginal Day" with some frequency, I was gratified that most services providers made themselves readily available for formal interviews and promptly booked the appointments. Interview questions focused primarily on understanding the main characteristics of the existing programs.

Whenever possible, service providers also offered their insights on the most prominent cultural and economic features of the users of their programs. They also provided information regarding the social position of specific programs within the array of other ongoing programs and coexisting institutions, along with their understanding of who had – or did not have – access to them. In addition, interviewed service providers suggested other people I could talk to and, through successive referrals I achieved the goal of mapping out the existing services and ongoing programs in Prince Rupert.

In seeking an answer to the research component regarding Aboriginal women's access to services, I sought contact with both First Nations women who worked as service providers and First Nations women who had been beneficiaries of community services. Aboriginal service providers offered their insights about their particular double position as providers and users of services themselves. In the course of talking to them, they provided further potential contacts. I also searched for Aboriginal women with access to services. Obtaining access to First Nations women was a slow process. Trust and a sense of comfort needed to be developed in order for women to share their personal experiences. When circumstances allowed, First Nations women agreed to talk to me, and let me hold interviews either in their houses, public places, or places of social gathering. In addition, I spent a few days at one Social Housing complex, located on the west side, talking to women both formally and informally. It was in this context that some of my most valuable realizations took place.

The findings of this project come from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers, as well as a handful of First Nations women who shared their experiences about accessing services in Prince Rupert. Data-gathering methods included formal interviews, informal conversations, and observations. I also participated in some of the service provisions through volunteering at a program run by the Social

Housing complex. Finally, relevant newspaper research served as a backdrop against which I was able to understand historical benchmarks in the local history.

Emerging Issues

What follows is both a description and an analysis of the findings and emerging issues I encountered during this project. I will start out by addressing the research question concerned with the existing services in Prince Rupert and what distinguishes them.

The picture of the services available in Prince Rupert reveals a generous community. Several different types of services are offered to the population, ranging from research and evaluation of social needs, referral to services, and implementation and execution of specific programs. Whereas the North Coast Community Asset Development Initiative embodies a good example of the assessment services, the BC Ministry of Community Services, on the one hand, and the North Coast Transition Society and Salvation Army, on the other, provide examples of referral and implementation of programs, respectively.

The community has a significant number of institutions working within different arenas of social action, such as education, employment, health, advocacy, addictions, counselling, housing, and child and family services. Schools, daycare centres, nurseries, preschools and churches are spread out around the city. Yet, with some notable exceptions, one striking feature regarding available social services in Prince Rupert is that most of the programs and institutions are located in a small area downtown.

Among the existing organizations, I found the Friendship House Association; Northwest Community College; Roosevelt Park Community School; The Salvation Army; North Coast Transition House; the BC Housing Commission; Kaien Island Anti-Poverty Society; the Community Enrichment Society; The Berry Patch; the Unemployed Action Centre; The Ministry of Children and Family Development; The Ministry of Community Services; and The Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance. These institutions are responsible for at least one – and often more than two – programs and, since some of them represent crucial sources of help for First Nations peoples in Prince Rupert, they deserve close inspection.

Roosevelt Park Community School

Located right in the middle of a mainly Aboriginal social housing area, Roosevelt Park Community School has been described as "not your average learning space" (Vasallo 2006c:1). Due to its comprehensive child approach, "the school runs programs that deal socially with student's needs" and "has support in place for kids and their families, whereas in other schools they don't have that support" (female service provider, personal interview). During the school year 2005-2006, 184 students out of 205 were First Nations students, making up 90% of the population (male First

Nations service provider, personal interview), and, as a consequence of its location, this figure even sparks some shock: "I'm surprised it's not 100% First Nations" (First Nations woman, personal interview). The school has developed a wide range of programs that include music, outdoor learning, loss grieving, and suicide prevention, but its breakfast and lunch programs are possibly the most relevant ones. The school's success also rests on programs that include both kids and their parents, such as reading groups, a cooking program, and parenting and awareness workshops. Despite receiving recent severe critiques of its performance (Daily News 2006a, b; Mason 2006), this learning centre is probably the one with the most relevance for Aboriginal boys and girls, as well as for their parents, in the city of Prince Rupert.

Friendship House

Located at the heart of downtown, just across from the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) and Northwest Community College (NWCC), this institution has established a reputation for over 40 years. Attending mainly urban First Nations people's needs ((Dawson 2000a), this centre runs a multitude of programs under the motto "All Nations Welcome, First Nations Focus." Its programs include the "Parent/Tot Program", an opportunity for learning parenting skills in interaction with children; the "Aboriginal Mental Health Program," a drop-in centre that helps people stay sober; "Alcohol & Drug Counselling Services;" "Planet Youth," a centre where young people they can practice sports and use computers for resumes and workshops; the "Pregnancy Outreach Program," which addresses issues of nutrition, labour, delivery and child rearing; "Futures" and the "Adult Graduation Program," programs that are run in conjunction with School District #52 and offer upgrading courses and courses for completing high school education; "Aboriginal Family Advocate," which provides advocacy, referrals, and resources to ministry and court cases; "Aboriginal Family Support Worker," which provides information on FAS and advocacy; "Aama Goot Aboriginal Women's Wellness Program," designed primarily for the promotion of women's healthy lifestyles; "Friendship House Preschool;" and the "Aboriginal Men's Wellness Program," which delivers anger management workshops.

North Coast Transition Society

Having just celebrated its 25th anniversary, North Coast is "an organization committed to address issues brought up by the UN CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)" and "to close the gap between the laws and realities that women face" (Vasallo 2006a:3). Transition Society provides services for women and their children that include "Transition House," a safe emergency shelter for women escaping from abusive and violent relationships; "Crisis Line" – 24-hour-a-day confidential support; "Child Support Program" for children residing

at Transition House and "Sexual Abuse Intervention Program for Children" for children who have been sexually abused; "Women Supporting Women Program" based on women-to-women sharing of stories and time together; "Supportive Recovery Program" for women with alcohol or drug addictions; "Changes Program" aimed at making positive changes towards abuse-free life styles; "Women's Outreach Program" which offers advocacy and support services; and "Stopping the Violence Counselling Program," for women who have been sexually abused or assaulted. All of the programs offered by North Coast Transition Society are specifically targeted at women in Prince Rupert. This is the only institution that aims at women as their main target users.

The Salvation Army

An institution that offers both community and church services – "because we are church first and foremost" (male service provider, personal interview). They offer a breakfast-and-lunch "Soup Kitchen," "Food Bank," "Counselling programs," and "Christmas Hamper." The Salvation Army also provides emergency shelter for men, women, and families in need of short-term shelter accommodations. Also located downtown, this institution's feeding program is one of the most famous among the population, and, thus, in times of peak economic crisis, the number of attendants to the food assistance programs increases considerably (Ritchie 2003b).

Kaien Island Anti-Poverty Society

This society seeks to help people cope with issues of material poverty, such as lack of clothing and furnishings (Lamb-Yorski 2003a). Over the past year, it has developed a couple of successful initiatives aimed at providing children with school supplies and Christmas food and presents. Both the "Backpack Program," run in collaboration with The Salvation Army (Daily News 2005c; Burghardt 2005a; Vasallo 2005, 2006b), and "Christmas Stockings" (Daily News 2005a, b) had needy families in mind. Located in a social housing complex (Ritchie 2003a, 2004), it is also, as one of the volunteers puts it, "a place where people come and sit around. They talk to me. I always have coffee on; people can hang out here for a while" (First Nations woman, personal interview).

Other visible organizations in Prince Rupert are the *Community Enrichment Society* and *The Berry Patch*, both working under the umbrella of the Ministry of Children & Family Services. Whereas the two of them offered children-related services, the former emphasizes family-related services while the latter devotes itself entirely to issues of child caring. The Community Enrichment Society offers programs, such as the "Family Skills Program" and "Support to Parents with Children with Special Needs and to Parents with Special Needs"; Berry Patch, in turn, runs a child-minding program, whose users are social housing inhabitants who call the place "The Nest."

These focal organizations run programs in a variety of areas of work. Some of the most prominent address issues of poverty and unemployment. In the 2001 Census, the population of Prince Rupert was 14,000 (Statistics Canada 2001). Due to serious and constant economic crises, especially in the fishing industry, people estimate that the city's population has come down to 12,000 inhabitants. Scarce employment opportunities have broadened the situation of material poverty, and thus welfare assistance, un/employment centres, and food programs have gained a prominent place among other services. Some of the people I talked to commented: "there are no jobs in town"; "you're really lucky if you get a permanent part-time job" (female First Nations service provider, personal interview).

The BC Ministries of Community Services and Employment and Income Assistance, as well as other advocacy centres, such as the Prince Rupert Unemployed Action Centre, seek to palliate these circumstances by offering access to computer terminals, where people can work on their resumes, or providing work-search workshops, information and assistance about relevant government legislation, and benefits to persons who are unemployed and/or underemployed.

Literacy programs have also been in the minds of community service providers as a way to confront issues of poverty in the long run. According to the Aboriginal Peoples Survey conducted in 2001, one of the paramount reasons given for dropping out of school was boredom. Inclusive curricula programs, such as the recently developed Learning through Understanding Cultural and Inclusive Imaginative Development (LUCID) program, tackle this problem by attempting to increase First Nations students' educational success through "the validation of cultures and shifting of teaching strategies" (female service provider, personal interview).

In spite of this, a key finding in relation to services and women is the dominance of both children and youth-related services and abuse and violence-relief programs. Perhaps as a result of prominent outreach coordinators working in these fields or as an expression of the priority of tackling these critical issues immediately, the high profile and visibility of these two types of services are another notable characteristic of services available in Prince Rupert. It is not difficult, for instance, to find posters on these topics spread throughout the city or brochures that can be picked up at most of the institutional offices.

The offering of food and snacks is an element shared by many of the programs, especially those with a focus on children. Since hunger is omnipresent, there are quite a few programs that provide food assistance, for instance, those run by Roosevelt Park Community School, Annunciation Catholic Church, The Salvation Army, and Friendship House. But other programs also provide snacks and it is not uncommon to find expressions like "healthy snacks are provided" or "the kids get a snack" (female service providers, personal interviews) on the walls of such places. Similarly, there is the Good Food Box program, a community-based initiative

that delivers food to people in need for $15 dollars. From depots strategically located in key centres of wide-spread neighbourhoods, the food box is distributed on a monthly basis. Yet, hunger is ubiquitous. I often heard people say such things as, "kids are always hungry; they find ways to make their way to food programs, sometimes they go to two of them" (female service provider, personal interview). A community service provider speaking of the food programs at Roosevelt Park Community School said: "We have a food program. It is only $1 dollar a day but some of them can't afford it. So we give it for free. The breakfast consists of cereal, a snack, and fruit. After school, all the stuff that wasn't eaten is gathered; the children line up after school to get a snack. We've seen kids who get 3 or 4 sandwiches to bring home. Pretty much everybody uses the breakfast and lunch program: maybe 10 kids go home; the majority stays" (male First Nations service provider, personal interview).

Community-based initiatives speak to the closely connected community of service providers in Prince Rupert, which facilitates mutual referrals, close collaborations and programs run in partnerships. It is not an exception to find programs both sponsored and handled by people working within different institutions and agencies. Take for example the previously discussed Backpack Campaign launched in 2005, in which both the Kaien Island Anti-Poverty Society and The Salvation Army joined forces and provided around 70 children with basic school supplies, such as pencils, notebooks, rulers, erasers, scissors, markers, lined and plain paper, pens, crayons and backpacks. After all, Prince Rupert is a small city: service providers working at one institution usually know the workers at another and they mutually refer their service users. *A Community Resources Directory* put together by the Prince Rupert Community Enrichment Society assists many services providers in their work and helps them provide better and more precise referrals to their users. Also, in an effort to show all the services on offer, as well as to assess existing services, in 2004, the North Coast Community Asset Development Initiative implemented an ongoing mapping project that seeks to gather the voices of the community and to visually evaluate their perspectives regarding services in town (*Daily News* 2004a, b).

I also found that funding shortages and cutbacks are a problem for many programs. As funding cutbacks hit some programs and others are chronically under or unfunded, the struggle for scarce resources is an increasing issue: "There have been cuts in funding from some years to date; it is going backwards. We have a lot of applications to do; there's a lot of bureaucracy" (female service provider, personal interview). Financial dilemmas have imposed restrictions on programs and influenced their direction and duration. Thus, the public library reduced its hours (Ritchie 2006b), proposals for a homeless shelter were halted (Lafleur 2003), and school funding is constantly under threat (Lamb-Yorski 2003b).

The fact that most programs are short-lived and soon disappear is due to many reasons: funding agencies' evaluations are not positive; grant opportunities and moneys are ephemeral; current strategic government planning does not consider certain areas of work a priority; funding agencies change directions in the nature of work they want to see embarked upon; or simply, another program or agency in town attracts resources that were previously allocated to them (Bramhill 2004; Dawson 2001a, b; Smith 2001a).

Accommodating shifting social needs also factors in; for instance, the child care centre, The Nest, started off as a program designed for parents, but since parents brought their children to the meetings, people from The Berry Patch decided to transform the program into a child-rearing facility. Likewise, KAPS Neighbourhood House was initially a youth-oriented program, but since youth already had several options downtown, the House became a childcare centre. The same thing happened with the NCCADI, which began as the Kaien Youth group and evolved into a community development and assets program in Prince Rupert.

Finally, it is significant to note the goals of the Strategic Government Plan and Service Plan outlined for the province of British Columbia and its Ministries, given that those BC Liberal cutbacks have either forced new directions on existing programs or put some programs in jeopardy. For instance, as a section within the BC Ministry of Community Services, women's services are equated to senior's services. Only programs that support abuse-and-violence-free lives for women have continued to be supported under these plans.

It is time to turn to the research question concerned with services and how they impact (or not) Aboriginal women. Since the colonial system and its resilient outcomes have affected both Aboriginal men and women, first, we will look at the programs offered to both of them and then delineate the specific characteristics of the services available for Aboriginal women.

It seems that service providers realize the potential benefits their programs can get from operating in a city with a significant number of Aboriginal people. According to a 2001 Aboriginal Population Profile (Statistics Canada 2001), Aboriginal identity population in Rupert made up over 4,500 people, a bit less than one third of the population as a whole. Using Aboriginal peoples as services' potential targets on grant applications definitely expands the array of institutions they can apply to, and these include, for instance, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD), Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Urban Aboriginal Homelessness (UAH) and the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI): "Prince Rupert gets money from UAH. Rupert qualifies as a city because of that, because of its Aboriginal population" (female First Nations service provider, personal interview).

At the same time, however, one of the most interesting issues that emerged from this research is that few of the services and programs available in town are targeted exclusively to Aboriginal peoples. Notable exceptions are the programs at Friendship House, which are unambiguously directed at First Nations peoples.

Although programs and institutions have Aboriginal peoples in mind as among their potential users, most services in Prince Rupert are not limited to them. Usually services have broader targets that include women, men, and children from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, but Aboriginal people comprise the greatest proportion of their users. Service providers estimate that First Nations people make up approximately 60%, and in the most dramatic cases, 95% of the users of soup kitchens, social housing, shelter and transition accommodations, inner-city schools, food boxes, and welfare assistance. One consistent important finding, in fact, was precisely that while service users are mainly Aboriginal, programming often does not reflect the particular needs of First Nations people. Furthermore, with the exception of educational institutions, such as Roosevelt Park Community School and Prince Rupert Secondary School, popularly known as "PRSS," there is usually no accurate ethnic breakdown of service users. Yet, as mentioned above, service providers' estimations position First Nations people as well above 50 percent of "their clients," as they would sometimes call them. Interestingly, sometimes service providers invoke an ethnic-blind approach as a means of fighting against racism. In fact, the Charter against Racism, an initiative of the Multicultural Policy of British Columbia appears on one of the walls of City Hall. It seems that the popular Canadian institutional emphasis on multiculturalism prompts service providers to seek to include culturally-different populations into their programs (Smith 2001b).

On one occasion, I was told the following narrative about equality:

> I don't keep records like that [those distinguishing between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal users of programs] because there is no distinction. I don't look upon distinction. We don't differentiate between people. People are people, whether you are white, whether you are black, whether you are brown, yellow…we are all people. And when we start to bring in these distinctions, we start separating people. And that's not the way it should be. They are not meant to be separated; they are meant to be together, unified, so I don't bring in distinctions. I don't see any Aboriginal; I don't see any white, any… I see them as persons; I see people. [male service provider, personal interview]

Narratives like the above, though meant to rectify exclusion and overcome segregation and other injustices from the past, are simply well-intentioned ideological narratives (Clarke 1998). As a matter of fact, previous research has consistently shown that conflicting ethnic dynamics prevail, and that many socioeconomic processes are class- and ethnic-specific in Prince Rupert (Menzies 1994). Social housing is a

case in point: though potential receptacles for diverse ethnic populations, the field research indicates that subsidized housing for people with low incomes is mainly accessed by First Nations people. The debates that arose among the population when a school was given the indigenous name, Lax Kxeen (Dawson 2000b), has been further evidence of the veiled ethnic and racial tensions underlying the surface of everyday life in the city.

I was also told, on another occasion, that the reason First Nations peoples made up the majority users of services in Prince Rupert was "probably reflective of our demographics" (female service provider, personal interview), dismissing the fact that, even though some Rupert dwellers estimate a decline in the population over the past few years, the First Nations population has remained stable and makes up no more than 1/3 of its total. This shows that while poverty is a product of colonial history and is indeed racialized, service programming seems to look at social problems from a colour-blind perspective. As a result, the ethnic-blind approach taken by many service providers obscures the reality of the situation and prevents them from delivering culturally-sensitive programs to the First Nations community they are supposed to serve.

A look at women and their relation to community services reveals a similar picture: Aboriginal women suffer from a gender-blind approach, just as Aboriginal peoples suffer from ethnic-blind service programming. Only those programs included within Friendship House's *Aama Goot* Aboriginal Women's Wellness Program (Napastiuk 2003b) and those offered by North Coast Transition Society, though they also include children, aim primarily at serving women in Prince Rupert. As Transition House's Executive Director has expressed to the local newspaper: "In Prince Rupert, the main issues facing women are isolation, lack of access to services (especially for those living on the reserve), poverty, violence, historical violence, residential schools, alcohol and drugs, disabilities (and) racism" (Vasallo 2006a:3). While many programs are not specifically designed for First Nations people, the picture of services available for Aboriginal women is slightly more visible, although it takes on a peculiar attribute: programs aimed at women are those that address pregnancy, healthy life styles, and issues of violence. It was particularly clear that, since the most visible programs available in town for Aboriginal women are those related to children, youth, and violence, women have access to some kind of support, so long as they are either pregnant, have kids, or are victims of violence. This issue was confirmed by the accounts of most of the women, who only recounted experiences with services related to these issues.

A key finding that has emerged rests on the fact that service providers do not often have a breakdown of how many men and women use their services, respectively. While it is undoubtedly true that "sexual abuse and abusive relationships happen across the board" (male service provider, personal interview), it appears that First Nations women have access principally to the services associated with these problems.

At Hope Haven Transition House, for instance, the estimations state that "95% of the women in the shelter are First Nations and it could probably be higher" (female service provider, personal interview). Aboriginal women do use economic support services and sometimes seek to pull in resources by returning to school. As students in upgrading programs, Aboriginal women have found another way to cope with their economic constraints. Furthermore, not only did service providers in general not pay heed to an accurate gender breakdown of those who use their services, but I faced some discomfort and reluctance in even talking about potential differences between the genders. Every so often I heard replies of this sort: "men are more at risk than women"; "it is easier for girls than boys"; "there are single dads as well"; and "more services for men are needed, such as a men's shelter" (male service providers, personal interviews). These predictable responses that emerged during the process hinted at the idea that, since men were now more often using the services once set up for women, that, somehow, women no longer needed them. In other words, women's needs became invisible. I will use the case of an increasing number of male single parents to illustrate this research finding further.

In the 1981 Census, over 700,000 people reported being single parents. The number increased to around 950,000 in 1991, and in 2001, there were approximately 1,300,000 single-parent families in Canada. Whereas male single-parent families have certainly increased during the past three decades, making up about 245,000 in 2001, female single-parent families have consistently had higher numbers. Census 2001 stated that approximately 1,000,000 families were headed by females (Statistics Canada 2006). Claims of a rise in male single-parents have become popular in Prince Rupert. Service providers say they see more male single-parents coming in and using their children-related programs. But taking the statistical information as a backdrop against which to make sense of these statements, it is surely true that women still comprise the majority of single parents. Moreover, Aboriginal Profiles (Statistics Canada 2001) claim that a disproportionate number of these female-headed households live in conditions of extreme material poverty, rendering flawed the suspicion that women's issues had been solved and now programming needed to concentrate more on men's issues. It seems, however, that people are more aware of men's experiences and that their needs take higher priority when it comes to service programming. Conversely, women's needs seem to have undergone a process of erasure, consisting of the normalization and consequent invisibility of persistent issues of gender inequality. Female lone-parenting is not a new issue; yet they seem not to share the same level of visibility as male lone-parents. While men's indisputable emerging needs and problems are more often coming to light, women's unremitting setbacks seem to be fading to invisibility. Ironically, women do gain visibility when they become victims of that structural gender imbalance. It appears that they have to be missing women on the Highway of Tears before their

trials steal the spotlight in newspapers and have forums set up in response to their needs (Vasallo 2004).

Additionally, it appears that most women only become aware of – and gain access to – certain services and programs through word of mouth, that is, if they know someone who has accessed that service before, such as a friend, a sister, their mother, or another family member. Schools figured as a potential place of referral to specific services that help them cope with chronic unemployment and underemployment, insufficient social assistance, and inadequate housing. One last way in which women found themselves enrolled in programs was because they were mandated to do so by a Ministry or the courts. Women taking workshops on parenting or anger management were likely to have been required to do so by a provincial or federal institution, under threat of losing rights over their children.

Inadequate economic support and lack of trust figured among the most constant barriers to women's successful use of services. Lack of information due to weak or non-existent outreach programs was another contributing factor. Lack of transportation was also a key barrier to service access and this was equally true for on- and off-reserve women. The success of some programs was determined by their location and thus Aboriginal peoples were more likely to use services if programs moved out from the downtown area, facilitating access to them. The Nest is a case in point: while initially located downtown, it only took off when it was moved into a social housing complex.

Scarcity of available programs targeted at First Nations women also factors in. The virtual non-existence of programs aimed at women as individuals contributes further to the exclusion of some Aboriginal women. It seems that the only way for women to get access to services is either as mothers, wives, or as victims of violence or addiction (to drugs, tobacco, or gambling, for example). Since existing programs appear to be constructed around values of victimization or motherhood, it seems Aboriginal women are always seen, first and foremost, in relation to their children, their husbands, their families, or their communities (Fiske 1992, 1993, 1996b). From this perspective, the issue of the ways in which childless women or senior and elderly women, attract resources and manage to cope with poverty, remains largely overlooked. While unquestionably important, not all women's issues are about reproduction and parenting.

Nevertheless, one strength of the current system is the way it makes use of extended familial and community networks to help First Nations women with their most urgent economic needs. The Aboriginal women I talked to always made this clear: it was through their families and their closest social networks that they received help with child caring or migrating to the city if they were living on-reserve before, or in providing money if resources were tight or nonexistent. For all of them, family support had been central in coping with issues of poverty and lack of adequate housing.

Conclusion

Drawing on the issues that have emerged from this fieldwork research project on services available for First Nations women in Prince Rupert, we can conclude that, despite a variety of services offered in town, adequate attention to the needs and specific historic, social, and economic circumstances of Aboriginal people was rarely encountered. Nonetheless, First Nations peoples are the major users of social services in town – not a surprising fact considering the long-seeded and resilient history of systematic marginalization, exclusion and alienation from the benefits of the system. Looking at this situation in gendered terms, this research study has also shown that there were not enough available programs for Aboriginal women. The few programs available for Aboriginal women either focused on pregnant women, women with children, or on female victims of addiction and violence. Women with no children did not have preference when applying to social housing, for instance, and, hopefully, this research project will help illuminate this situation.

A couple of interesting contradictions emerged during the analysis of the research findings: on the one hand, while Aboriginal men and women were primary users of services in town, the people running the services and programming were reluctant to address the ways in which their Indigenous identity shaped their realities in particular ways. On the other hand, Aboriginal women's needs were consistently present, yet men's experiences seemed to have a higher profile and visibility. In revealing a systemic reluctance to acknowledge issues of structural gender inequality at play, this paper provides further evidence that women's specific problems have not yet been solved. If it were true that poverty was the single major cause of women disappearing on the Highway of Tears, men and women would have gone missing in equal numbers (Lheidli T'enneh First Nation et al. 2006). This is not the case.

In closing, the findings of this research suggest that the analysis of the similar and distinct effects of colonial marginalization on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and men need to be consistently taken into account when designing and delivering community social services. Furthermore, they suggest that broadening the type and scope of community services to include prevention and long-term solutions to issues of poverty and violence against women, would assist in other women's needs besides those of mothering, parenting, or short-term support. This paper ultimately argues for making service programming both ethnic- and gender-distinct (Creese and Stasiulis 1996; Stout and Kipling 1998).More research concerning the particular racial and gender workings of poverty – and the services that intend to palliate it – is also clearly needed. A colour-blind approach is not necessarily a non-racist approach. Likewise, a gender-blind perspective is not necessarily a baseline for equal gender inclusion and participation. How, if not by making gender and ethnicity visible, can we achieve an equal society, in which gender and ethnic categories are no longer necessary?

Acknowledgements

This chapter would have not been possible without the contributions of several service providers working in different institutions in Prince Rupert who generously offered their time for formal interviews and showed genuine interest in my research project. These institutions are: Prince Rupert Secondary Schools; The Salvation Army; Roosevelt Park Community School; The Berry Patch; North Coast Transition Society; The Friendship House Association; School District # 52; Kaien Island Anti-Poverty Society; Ministry of Children and Family Development; and North Coast Community Asset Development Initiative. Similarly, I am particularly grateful to those First Nations women, both service providers and service users, who agreed to talk to me while allowing me to pour myself cups of coffee or tea from their kitchens and offices.

I also want to thank Dr. Margaret Anderson and Dr. Ken Campbell for teaching me some Sm'alyax words and a little bit of social housing history, respectively. Of those who offered guidance throughout the development of this research project, I would especially like to acknowledge the support and direction of Merle Bolton, Social Development Officer for Gitxaała Nation.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to Dr. Caroline Butler and Dr. Charles Menzies for giving me the opportunity to take part in their service learning ethnographic field school. I am particularly indebted to Dr. Menzies and Marie-Eve Carrier-Moisan for their critical reading of earlier drafts of this work.

References

Andersen, Chris, and Claude Denis

2003 Urban Natives and the Nation: Before and After the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 40(4):373-390.

Barman, Jean

1997/98 Taming Aboriginal Sexuality: Gender, Power, and Race in British Columbia, 1850-1900. BC Studies. Special Issue: Native Peoples and Colonialism 115/116:237-266.

Barsh, Russel Lawrence

1994 Canada's Aboriginal Peoples: Social Integration or Disintegration? The Canadian Journal of Native Studies 14(1):1-46.

Beck, Sam

2006 Community Service-Learning: A Model for Teaching and Activism. North American Dialogue 9(1):1-7.

Benoit, Cecilia, Dena Carroll, and Munaza Chaudhry

2003 In Search of a Healing Place: Aboriginal Women in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Social Science & Medicine 56(4):821-833.

Biewert, Crisca

1999 Facing Monstrous Prospects: Structures and Narratives of Family Violence. *In* Brushed by Cedar, Living by the River: Coast Salish Figures of Power. Pp. 195-223. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

Boas, Franz

1889 First General Report on the Indians of British Columbia. *In* Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Bristol.

1890 The Indians of British Columbia: Tinglit, Haida, Tsimshian, Kotomaqa. *In* Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Pp. 797-893. London: Fifth Report of the Northwest Tribes of Canada.

Bourassa, Carrie, Kim McKay-McNabb, and Mary Hampton

2004 Racism, Sexism, and Colonialism: The Impact on the Health of Aboriginal Women in Canada. Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme 24(1):23-29.

Bramhill, Vanessa

2004 We need more choices for poorer families. Daily News. Prince Rupert, September 17: Pg.4.

Browne, Annette J., Jo-Anne Fiske, and Geraldine Thomas

2000 First Nations Women's Encounters with Mainstream Health Care Services & Systems. Vancouver: British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health.

2010 First Nations Women's Encounters with Mainstream Health Care Services & Systems. Vancouver: British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Women's Health.

Burghardt, Hilary

2005a Kids get help with start of school. Daily News. Prince Rupert, August 23: Pg.1.

2005b Kitkatla hopes to take full control of sacred land. Daily News. Prince Rupert, August 8: Pg.1.

Butler, Caroline

2004 Researching Traditional Ecological Knowledge for Multiple Uses. Canadian Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):33-48.

Campbell, Kenneth

1984 Hartley Bay, British Columbia: A History. *In* The Tsimshian. Images of The Past: Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp. 3-26. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

2005 Persistence and Change: A History of the Ts'msyen Nation. Prince Rupert: First Nations Education Council.

Clarke, George Elliot

1998 White Like Canada. Transition 73:98-109.

Creese, Gillian, and Daiva Stasiulis

1996 Intersections of Gender, Race, Class, and Sexuality. Studies in Political Economy 51:5-14.

Culhane, Dara

1998 The Pleasure of the Crown: Anthropology, Law and First Nations. Vancouver: Talon Books.

Daily News

2004a Mapping project aims to show services on offer. Daily News. Prince Rupert, September 9: Pg.3.

2004b Rupert gets co-ordinator to build community assets. Daily News. Prince Rupert, April 29: Pg.5.

2005a Christmas stocking campaign. Daily News. Prince Rupert, December 9: Pg.3.

2005b KAPS stuffs stockins for kids. Daily News. Prince Rupert, November 28: Pg.3.

2005c Program puts kids on same page... Daily News. Prince Rupert, August 23: Pg.3.

2006a Institute defends Rupert report card. Northwest This Week. Prince Rupert, May 25.

2006b Report challenges Rupert's schools. Northwest This Week. Prince Rupert, May 18.

Dawson, Donald
2000a Friendship House Society: A place where the door's always open. Daily News. Prince Rupert, April 16: Pg.1.
2000b What's in a name? Daily News. Prince Rupert, May 14: Pg.1.
2001a Homeless shelter sought for temporary stays here: Friendship House. Daily News. Prince Rupert, April 4: Pg.1.
2001b New Homeless shelter planned. Daily News. Prince Rupert, April 27: Pg.1.
De Laguna, Frederica
1972 Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tinglit. Washington: Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology.
Dosman, E.J.
1972 Indians: The Urban Dilemma. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
Dyck, Noel, and James B. Waldram, eds.
1993 Anthropology, Public Policy, and Native Peoples in Canada. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
Fisher, Robin
1977 Contact and Conflict: Indian European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
Fiske, Jo-Anne
1990 Native Women in Reserve Politics: Strategies and Structures. Journal of Legal Pluralism & Unofficial Law 30/31:121-137.
1991 Colonization and the Decline of Women's Status: The Tsimshian Case. Feminist Studies 17(3):509-535.
1992 Carrier Women and the Politics of Mothering. In British Columbia Reconsidered: Essays on Women. G. Creese and V. Strong-Boas, eds. Pp. 138-216. Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.
1993 Child of the State, Mother of the Nation: Aboriginal Women and the Ideology of Motherhood. Culture 13(1):17-35.
1996a Pocahontas's Granddaughters: Spiritual Transition and Tradition of Carrier Women of British Columbia. Ethnohistory 43(4):663-681.
1996b The Womb is to the Nation as the Heart is to the Body: Ethnopolitical Discourses of the Canadian Indigenous Women's Movement. Studies in Political Economy 51:65-95.
2006 Boundary Crossings: Power and Marginalisation in the Formation of Canadian Aboriginal Women's Identities. Gender & Development 14(2):247-258.
Fox, Sarah
2006 Students put North Coast life under the microscope. Daily News. Prince Rupert, July 6: Pg.2.

Garfield, Viola E.
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
1966 The Tsimshian and their Neighbors. *In* The Tsimshian Indians and their Arts. V.E. Garfield and P. Wingert, eds. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Harris, Cole
2002 Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Knight, Rolf
1996 Indians and Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1848-1930. Vancouver: New Star Books.

Kowalsky, Laura O, Maria J. Verhoef, Wilfreda E. Thurston and Gayle E. Rutherford
1996 Guidelines for Entry into an Aboriginal Community. The Canadian Journal of Native Studies 16(2):267-282.

Lafleur, Lynda
2003 Friendship House left out in cold on homeless funding. Daily News. Prince Rupert, March 31:1.

Lamb-Yorski, Monica
2003a Anti-poverty group prepares to become society. Daily News. Prince Rupert, January 13: Pg.1.
2003b Roosevelt fears for funding. Daily News. Prince Rupert, January 23: Pg.1.

Lewis, John (Wuyee Wi Meedeek)
2004 Forest for the Future: The View from Gitkxaała. Canadian Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):8-14.

Lheili T'enneh First Nation, Carrier Sekani Family Services, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Prince George Native Friendship Center, Prince George Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association
2006 A Collective Voice For the Victims Who Have Been Silenced: The Highway of Tears Symposium Recommendations Report. British Columbia: June 16.

Marchak, Patricia, Neil Guppy, and John McMullen, eds.
1987 Uncommon Property: The Fishing and Fish-Processing Industries in British Columbia. Toronto: Methuen.

Marker, Michael
2004 Theories and Disciplines as Sites of Struggle: The Reproduction of Colonial Dominance through the Controlling of Knowledge in the Academia. Canadian Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):102-110.

Mason, Gary
2006 B.C.'s worst school just may be its best. The Globe and Mail. Toronto, June 13.

Maud, Ralph

1989 The Henry Tate-Franz Boas Collaboration on Tsimshian Mythology. American Ethnologist 16(1):158-162.

McCaskill, D.N.
1983 The Urbanization of Indians in Winnipeg, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver: A Comparative Analysis. Culture 1(82-89).

McDonald, James
1984 Images of the Nineteenth-Century Economy of the Tsimshian. *In* The Tsimshian. Images of the Past: Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp. 40-54. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
1994 Social Change and the Creation of Underdevelopment: A Northwest Coast Case. American Ethnologist 21(1):152-175.
2003 People of the Robin: The Tsimshian of Kitsumkalum. Edmonton: CCI Press.
2004 The Tsimshian Protocols: Locating and Empowering Community-Based Research. Canadian Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):80-91.

Menzies, Charles R.
1994 Stories from Home: First Nations, Land Claims, and Euro-Canadians. American Ethnologist 21(4):776-791.
1996 Indian or White? Racial Identities in the British Columbia Fishery. *In* Anthropology for a Small Planet. A. Marcus, ed. Pp. 110-123. New York: Brandywine Press.
2001 Reflections on Research With, For, and Among Indigenous Peoples. Canadian Journal of Native Education 25(1):19-36.
2004 Putting Words into Action: Negotiating Collaborative Research in Gitxaala. Canadian Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):15-32.
2004 First Nations, Inequality, and the Legacy of Colonialism. *In* Social Inequality in Canada: Patterns, Problems, and Policies, 4th edition. J. Curtis, E. Grabb, and N. Guppy, eds. Pp. 295-303. Toronto: Prentice-Hall.

Menzies, Charles R., and Caroline Butler
2001 Working in the Woods: Ts'msyeen Resource Workers and the Forest Industry of BC. American Indian Quarterly 25(3):409-430.

Muckle, Robert J.
1998 The First Nations of British Columbia: An Anthropological Survey. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Nadasdy, Paul
1999 The Politics of TEK: Power and the "Integration" of Knowledge. Arctic Anthropology 36(1-2):1-18.

Nagler, M.
1970 Indians in the City: A Study of the Urbanization of Indians in Toronto. Ottawa: Canadian Resource Centre for Anthropology, St. Paul University.

Napastiuk, Pavlina

2003a Gitxaała Nation re-takes its name. Daily News. Prince Rupert, March 20:1.
2003b Wellness group seeks perfect fit. Daily News. Prince Rupert, June 19: Pg.6.

Ouellete, Grace
2002 The Fourth World: An Indigenous Perspective on Feminism and Aboriginal Women's Activism. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Richards, K.
1994 The Urbanization of Aboriginal Canada. Perception 17(4):18-19.

Ritchie, Leanne
2003a Anti-poverty society finds home. Daily News. Prince Rupert, December 24: Pg.3.
2003b Welfare cuts begin to bite. Daily News. Prince Rupert, December 10: Pg.1.
2004 Earth Day open house at KAPS new home. Daily News. Prince Rupert, April 23: Pg.3.
2006a Excitement builds as Aboriginal Day looms. Daily News. Prince Rupert, June 2: Pg.3.
2006b Funding cuts force library to slash hours. Daily News. Prince Rupert, March 14: Pg.1.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
1996 The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Ottawa: Government of Canada.

Seguin, Margaret
1984 Introduction. *In* The Tsimshian. Images of the Past: Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Pp. ix-xx. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Simpson, Shannon
2001 Aboriginal Women and Integrative Feminisms. *In* Pushing the Margins: Native and Northern Studies. J. Oakes, R. Riewe, M. Bennett, and B. Chisholm, eds. Pp. 136-143. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba.

Smith, Don
2001a Friendship House homeless project faces axe Friday. Daily News. Prince Rupert, November 29: Pg.1.
2001b Multicultural project looks to improve services. Daily News. Prince Rupert, November 23: Pg.1.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai
1999 Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. London and New York: Zed Books Ltd.

Statistics Canada
1994 Aboriginal People's Survey Community Profiles. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
1995 Profile of Canada's Aboriginal Populations. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey Community Profiles: Prince Rupert. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
2003 Aboriginal Peoples Survey - Initial Findings: Well-Being of the Non-Reserve

Aboriginal Population. Ottawa: Statistics Canada.
2006 Canada at a Glance. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Communications and Library Services Division.

Stout, Madeleine Dion, and Gregory D. Kipling
1998 Aboriginal Women in Canada: Strategic Research Directions for Policy Development. Canada: Status of Women Canada, Government of Canada.

Tennant, Paul
1990 Aboriginal Peoples and Politics. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Vasallo, James
2004 Remember Alberta as we try to take back the night. Daily News. Prince Rupert, September 17: Pg.4.
2005 Backpacks ease first week of school for 40 families. Daily News. Prince Rupert, September 12: Pg.5.
2006a Day marked with bread, flowers. Daily News. Prince Rupert, March 7: Pg.3.
2006b Sally Ann backs the backpack campaign. Daily News. Prince Rupert, March 23: Pg.3.
2006c School is a natural hub for the community: Turn to Five. Daily News. Prince Rupert, February 24: Pg.1.

Voyageur, Cora J.
2000 Contemporary Aboriginal Women in Canada. *In* Visions of the Heart: Canadian Aboriginal Issues. D. Long and O.P. Dickason, eds. Pp. 81-106. Canada: Harcourt.

Williams, Allison M.
1997 Canadian Urban Aboriginals: A Focus on Aboriginal Women in Toronto. The Canadian Journal of Native Studies 17(1):75-101.

Gitxaała's Own Foods: Decolonizing Food Practices

Robin Anderson

> A long time ago, [we had] a strong connection with the nature and the body, you know, a really strong connection. Here we have a strong connection with the food we have.
>
> (Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax Allan Brown, 20.07.2005, p.17)

Food was a central topic of discussion while conducting research on diabetes in the Aboriginal community of Gitxaała, on Dolphin Island on the north coast of British Columbia, Canada. Sam Lewis, my community research partner, and I interviewed elders, harvesters, and traditional food experts about many aspects of their relationship with food. To initiate discussions about diet and diabetes, we asked people which foods they thought of as healthy. Many participants replied "everything is healthy," or "all our own foods are healthy." At first I interpreted this to mean that participants did not conceive of the store-bought foods high in sugars and starches that I saw them consuming as unhealthy. But over the course of our research, I realized this answer was based not so much on Gitxaała people's understanding of the term "healthy" as on what they categorize as "food."

Was there a clue in the way people spoke about foods that might hold a key to healing, not just from diabetes but from the colonial practices of disenfranchisement and assimilation that lay at its root?

This chapter first discusses what it means to live and to eat in Gitxaała, before expanding on the idea of "own foods." It then examines what the mental and linguistic category of own foods reveals about the means of production, rightful resource ownership, and Gitxaała identity. Finally, it explores the use of own foods in healing from diabetes and from colonialism.

Living in Gitxaała: The Diet Context

Gitxaała was part of a thriving regional system in the millennia before contact (*Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005[1], pp.3-6); for the approximately 400 people who live in Gitxaała, it remains the centre of the world. But colonial policies, practices and economies have isolated and marginalized Gitxaała.[1] From the village, it is a 20-minute float-plane ride or two hours by boat to Prince Rupert, British Columbia, the nearest town with a supermarket, a hospital, and industry. Because the community is cut off from its traditional resources by the bounds of the reserve system[2] and by colonial conceptions of ownership that deny traditional systems of land tenure and resource rights, its economy has largely depended on the fishery.

The gradual collapse of the 20th century commercial fishery resulted in community-wide economic hardship. The only steady employer in the village is the Band Council Office. Between 75 and 85 percent of community residents are on social assistance, which pays $225 per month for a single adult (Sam Lewis, 15.06.2005, p.9). Many other community members are on Employment Insurance, which pays a minimum of $500. Gitxaała youth must leave the community to graduate from high-school in Prince Rupert, and many choose not to. Most Gitxaała people leave the community at some point in their lives to find employment, leaving behind family, friends and home.

The tandem effects of economic marginalization and resource disappropriation – that is, of colonization – have severely curtailed Gitxaała residents' ability to access healthy foods, generating community-wide food insecurity.[3] The most accessible store-bought foods in Gitxaała are not nutritionally adequate, and perhaps not even safe if one considers the sharp rise in obesity, heart disease and diabetes due to their consumption. At the same time, the healthiest foods on the planet are in the waters just off Gitxaała's shores, rendered increasingly inaccessible by colonial policy. For these reasons, Gitxaała is beginning to see the effects of the diabetes epidemic (Young et al. 2000) currently taking hold among aboriginal peoples.

1 See McDonald 1994 for a parallel example concerning nearby Kitsumkalum.

2 In the Canadian system, small parcels of Aboriginal peoples' original territories are 'reserved' for them; in British Columbia, reserves were created in the 1880s. By law, Aboriginal peoples are unable to sell reserve land, although the Canadian government felt entitled to downsize many reserves in the early 1900s (Harris 2002) selling off the pieces to settlers and industry. It is next to impossible to own land within the reserve privately; few Aboriginal individuals have access to capital from the value of their land. Some First Nations choose to challenge the size of their reserves by making a land-claim to larger portions of their original territories. Others refuse to acknowledge the restrictions placed upon their unextinguished rights by the reserve system, a choice that often results in lengthy, expensive, politicized court battles that sometimes rise to the Supreme Court of Canada. The Supreme Court often rules in favour of Aboriginal peoples' rights, but the Canadian government has frequently stalled in enacting the rulings.

3 Community-level food security may be defined as "a situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice" (Hamm and Bellows 2003).

Eating in Gitxaała: From Own Foods to Sugar Diabetes

> Even now, we call the inlet our grocery store. [*Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.1]

The community of Gitxaała relies significantly on its traditional food sources including: salmon, halibut, cod, oolichan (or eulachon), seal and sealion, deer and mountain goats, a variety of fowl, cockles, clams, mussels, sea urchin, sea prunes, china slippers, sea cucumbers, octopus, herring roe on kelp (ROK) and a variety of other seafood, seaweed, berries, and other forest foods. The adverse economic conditions with which First Nations people live in disproportionate measure to their non-native neighbours (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2004; Adelson 2005:S53) increases the importance of these food sources.

The cultural and nutritional importance of salmon cannot be over-stated. Salmon is so central to the diet that it is simply called 'fish.' Traditional food experts in the community stated that they jar between 20 and 140 jars of salmon to last them through the winter. This is in addition to the salmon that is smoked, dried, or frozen. One participant reported knowing only two families in the entire village who did not eat jarred salmon.

Despite the ongoing importance of these foods, there is no doubt that the Gitxaała diet has undergone a massive shift in the last 60 years. Elders participating in the research project described a cornucopia of resources and dishes from their youth, many of which are no longer available in the community due to resource depletion or the host of other reasons for diet change discussed later in this paper. Originally, the Gitxaała diet was high in fats and proteins provided by fish and meats. Plant resources also played an important role, each in its own season; seaweed and a diversity of berries were dried to ensure vegetable content through the winter. Berries were the only source of fructose; wild rice (the bulbous root of a lily plant) was most probably the only starch.[4] Oolichan and sea mammal greases, rich in fat, non-starchy carbohydrates and other nutrients (Newell 1993:154) were staples, eaten with dried fish, vegetables, or mixed with berries for desert; these greases, laborious to prepare, are now a special treat.

It is difficult to afford nutritious store-bought foods in Gitxaała. Prices for groceries in Prince Rupert are already high compared to larger urban centers such as Vancouver due to transportation costs; purchases must then be shipped from Prince Rupert to Gitxaała at 33 cents per pound by plane, and 25 cents per pound on the ferry that runs twice a week. Store-bought vegetables are usually restricted to celery, carrots, potatoes, and onions. Each of these staples has a corollary in the traditional, locally available diet, and community members therefore know how to include them

4 Wapato, a starchy tuber growing a thousand kilometers away in southernmost B.C., may have been acquired by trade (Turner 1995).

in their dishes. These vegetables have also been selected for their hardiness; folks laughed when I bought lettuce and I understood why when it rotted in three days because of the humidity.

Nowadays, there is an increasing reliance on starchy carbohydrates and sugars. Candy bars, chips, and pop are the only goods sold in Gitxaała at the same price as in town (Prince Rupert). Packaged, processed foods high in starches and sugars, such as Kraft Dinner, pastas, and rice, are light to transport, easy to store in the sea air climate, and can feed a large family inexpensively.

Project participants continually expressed to me their concern about the amount of starchy, sugary foods being consumed by Gitxaała residents, particularly children: "I see a lot of our kids who, their lunch diet when I'm walking by the school, is a bag of chips, pop, candy, chocolate. Which to me, we're really setting them up for more diabetic kids as they grow up." (Cliff White, 14.07.2005, p.30)

The concern about "sugar diabetes" is a valid one. Undocumented in Aboriginal populations in Canada before 1940, type 2 diabetes has increased dramatically since the 1950s (Szathmary 1994) and now affects some Aboriginal populations at a rate 3 to 5 times higher than non-native Canadian populations (Young et al. 2000; Canadian Diabetes Association 2013). Prevalence rates among First Nations individuals living on reserve average 17.2 percent across Canada and top out at an estimated 30 percent in some communities; an additional estimated 20 percent of cases remain undiagnosed (Public Health Agency of Canada 2011). Type 2 diabetes is one of the fastest growing diseases in Aboriginal communities (Public Health Agency of Canada 2011), but there is a paucity of research on how primary health care initiatives impact the management of diabetes in these communities (Gibson and Segal 2015).

Diabetes mellitus involves a difficulty in absorbing and transforming ingested sugars into energy, resulting in hyperglycemia (Szathmary 1994:458). This debilitating illness is the leading cause of "blindness, kidney problems, nerve damage[5] and erectile dysfunction" in Canada, and four out of five people with diabetes will die of heart disease (Canadian Diabetes Association 2007). Complicating risk factors include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and being overweight or obese.

Type II diabetes[6] (or non-insulin dependant diabetes mellitus) is the most common in Gitxaała. Five out of 22 project participants reported having type II diabetes

5 The majority of lower-limb amputations among aboriginals in Canada are due to diabetes. Nerve damage causes numbness, resulting in opportunities for gangrenous infections (Szathmary 1994).

6 "Diabetes" actually refers to several different disease mechanisms (Szathmary 1994) grouped into three "types." Type I (insulin-dependant diabetes mellitus, or IDDM) refers to the body's inability to produce insulin; its onset usually occurs in childhood and can be regulated with insulin shots. Gestational diabetes (GDM) occurs temporarily during pregnancy and is a strong indicator for type II diabetes later in life for both mother and child (Benyshek 2005).

or being prediabetic. All participants knew someone in their family who was diabetic; many have had to change their own dietary habits to accommodate them.

Type II diabetes refers to the body's inability to produce sufficient insulin to process the sugars ingested, or its inability to absorb insulin into tissue cells (Szathmary 1994:458). Symptoms often do not appear for many years after the onset of the disease (Bennet 1982). Diabetic project participants all learned of their condition due to an acute health crisis, usually catalyzed by their diabetes and involving an extended hospital stay in Prince Rupert.

While members of the scientific community debate the complex etiologies of diabetes,[7] they all agree that a diet high in carbohydrates and sugar is one of the causes of type II diabetes.[8] In order to maintain a safe blood sugar level, the at-risk or diabetic individual must regulate foods which the body quickly converts to glucose. These include refined sugar, carbohydrates high in starch (a type of sugar) such as rice and potatoes, and processed foods derived from refined carbohydrates such as white bread, pasta, and potato chips. Heavy alcohol consumption[9] and tobacco smoking (Bazzano et al. 2005) can also complicate the picture. The Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) recommends that individuals at risk for diabetes "choose" to eat more carbohydrates high in nutrients and fiber, such as vegetables and whole grains – foods in short supply in Gitxaała. The foods it recommends restricting are increasingly prominent in Gitxaała's store-bought diet

Traditional Foods… or "Own Foods"?

Our work centered on exploring the multiple reasons for the increasing importance and consequences of store bought foods in the Gitxaała diet. These discussions also brought to light complexities surrounding the way Gitxaała people use the term "traditional" when referring to foods.

7 Neel (1962) hypothesized a "thrifty genotype" which would enable fat storage in a "feast or famine" food cycle; this has been expanded into a polygenetic model (see Benyshek, Martin, and Johnston 2001, for discussion). See Fee (2006) for a critical analysis of how the genetic debate is a recasting of old racist theories of disease etiology. The "fetal origins" model proposes that both malnutrition and hyperglycemia in the fetal environment, consistent with cycles of malnutrition and over-consumption in the colonization process, can cause diabetes later in life (Benyshek 2005). Rates among indigenous populations defy genetic boundaries, and have been related to personal and community-level trauma (Ferreira 2006), individual stress levels (Surwit 1993; Korn and Ryser 2006), loss of traditional food sources (Scheder 2006a) and the means of their production (Scheder 2006b), and industrialization (Weidman 1989). This constellation of factors has led some to call diabetes a "disease of colonialism" (Scheder 2006c) rather than a "disease of civilization" (West 1974).

8 See, for example, Accurso et al. (2008); Arora and McFarlane (2005).

9 Alcoholism "can induce [type 2] diabetes through chronic pancreatitis" (Pietraszek et al., 2010). Heavy alcohol consumption may be associated with increased risk of type 2 diabetes (Howard et al., 2004), increased risk for some complicating factors (Young et al. 1984), and lack of compliance with self-care for chronic conditions. Gitxaała has declared itself a dry community – alcohol is banned – but alcohol consumption occasionally creates problems in the community nonetheless. Many project participants have struggled with alcoholism – either their own or a family member's.

In Gitxaała, tradition is understood as adaptable and responsive rather than static – traditions must be relevant to be maintained. People use the term "traditional" to refer to a variety of culturally important foods, some of which have emerged from the community's interactions with non-aboriginal cultures. These include chow mein, often served at community feasts and made with either beef or seal meat; *eets'm anaay*, a home-made flour-based dough that is deep-fried and served with syrup, much like a doughnut; and of course, the potato, a starch that gained a place of prominence in Gitxaała's gardens and diets since it was obtained from the Haida in the late 19th century (Garfield 1939:329), after Euro-Canadian traders introduced it to the Haida. The term "traditional foods" was too inclusive to refer to the original Gitxaała diet free of starchy, sugary introductions.

When I asked people about their favourite foods, many answered, "I like all our own traditional foods" or "all our own foods."

People were very consistent in their use of the terms "our foods" and "our own foods"; these terms referred to a class of food resources that could be harvested within Gitxaała territory or be exchanged as part of a traditional economy, and could be preserved or "fixed" by traditional as well as modern means. The terms "our foods" and "our own foods" were never used for store-bought foods or semi-traditional foods such as chow mein or *eets'm anaay*. I began to pay close attention to the use of the term "own," to see if I could glean a greater understanding of the Gitxaała mental category "food."

"Own foods" have three qualities or aspects that set them apart from other food-like substances, and that reveal complex relationships between diabetes, colonialism and community.

Firstly, foods categorized as own foods are those for which Gitxaała people own the means of production. They are the food resources that Gitxaała people maintain, harvest, preserve, exchange, prepare, and consume themselves.

Secondly, the possessive "own" is used liberally in the colloquial to indicate ownership, in statements such as "that's my son's own toy" or "we went out in Jimmy's own boat." When Gitxaała people use the term "own" to refer to a particular category of foods in their daily parlance, they are making an ownership statement about resources the colonial government has taken every opportunity to appropriate.

Finally, the possessive "own" is also used to indicate one's "own" people, that is, family on the mother's side or one's tribe (what anthropologists usually refer to as the clan; Garfield 1939; Dunn 1984:43). These are the people to whom one belongs. Thus, a father will refer to his children as "my wife's own children" as they belong to his wife's tribe. To apply the term "own" to a category of foods indicates the sense of belonging associated with these foods. Own foods, like one's own family, are building blocks of identity.

The Means of Production: A History of Colonial Economies and Foods

Since time immemorial, Gitxaała people have nourished themselves with the products of their own labour. Harvesting and preserving foods such as those listed above, and managing food resources so that they continue to produce, is hard work and time intensive; a collective effort is necessary to render it efficient. Over the millennia, Gitxaała people perfected their processes until their skill at transforming their territory's seasonal salmon runs and other bounty into preserved food, available year-round, made them a wealthy and powerful nation. They exchanged this bounty for products and delicacies not available within their own territory but produced by the labour of their neighbours – such as the superior oolichan grease made in nearby Kitimat, moose meat from Gitxsan territory, or the wapato tuber grown in distant southeastern British Columbia – thereby establishing the fruitful relations that contribute to peace and prosperity between nations. This powerful connection to food through labour, and the control of and responsibility for every link in the chain of production, determined many aspects of life: the seasonal round, the extent of Gitxaała territory, family affiliations, international relations, the *ayaawk* (laws), life and death.

However, the strength of Gitxaała people's connection to food through labour was undermined as they became entangled in the colonial economies encroaching on their territories. Colonial policies began to restrict Gitxaała people's traditional economic activities. At the same time, compelling new goods became available, but they could only be acquired through a novel kind of exchange. The wage labour economy had come to Gitxaała shores. Control of the means of production shifted, entailing a shift in the kinds of foods Gitxaała people consumed.

In the early years of Tsimshian contact with European traders, Gitxaała people dominated trade and freight industries within their territories (McDonald 1984:42-45), and supplied foods to arriving Europeans. As the European presence stabilized within Gitxaała territory, so too did the presence of European foods. When the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) arrived in 1826, (Garfield 1939:169; Martindale 2003), the Gitxaała role in the fur, forestry and freighting industries (Menzies and Butler 2008) gave them the financial means to experiment with flour, rice, lard, molasses, sugar, salt, and tea, and to begin integrating them into their diet. By the close of the 19th century they were obtaining potatoes from the Haida (Garfield 1939:329); this pattern was ongoing in the 1930s (Garfield 1939:199), and began trading them *to* the HBC once they started producing their own (Martindale 2003:26). Flour, sugar, liquor, and tobacco gained prominence in potlatching ceremonies in the 1800s and early 1900s (Garfield 1939:208, 249).

The first cannery opened on the Skeena River in 1876, and many others followed.[10] Ties to canneries restricted Tsimshian fishermen's movements over their territories during the commercial season; for their wives, cannery work became a sensible alternative to going out in camp in summer (McDonald 1984:48), waiting instead until the whole family could go out together in the fall to process their own foods. Because the harvesting of plant foods was largely women's work (Garfield 1939:199; Martindale and Jurakic 2004), women's engagement in the canneries deeply undermined this component of the diet and knowledge base. Tsimshian men's involvement in the commercial fishery, by contrast, allowed them to continue practicing their fishing knowledge.

In the early 1900s, when markets were found for species of salmon which run in the spring and late fall (Newell 1993:65), fishery and cannery work began to infringe more seriously upon time spent out in camp. However, not all family members engaged in the new cash and wage economies, and such work was still integrated into the traditional economy rather than the other way around.[11]

In the 1920s and 30s, when this project's oldest participants were young, the foods consumed in Gitxaała were still, for the most part, foods produced in Gitxaała territory and preserved in the traditional manner. Community leader *Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill reports the late Chester Bolton estimating that 30,000 pieces of fish were dried each year for each house, that is, for thirty or forty people's regular consumption and whatever was needed for feasts, guests, and trade (*Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005, p.15). Berries were sun-dried in compressed cakes called *ga'l uunax* (*Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.13). Most cooking was done by boiling, stewing, baking or roasting; any frying was done in seal grease (*kba uula*), not lard or oil (*Saygyooks* Martha Lewis, 17.06.2005).

Once or twice a year, after the fishing and trapping seasons, families would convert their labour into store bought foods and other goods. They purchased 100 pound bags each of sugar, flour, rice, potatoes and onions, and smaller quantities of salt, baking soda, tea, and lard or – if they could afford it – butter (Agnes Shaw, 04.07.2005, p.8; *Saygyooks* Martha Lewis, 17.06.2005, p.8). Salt was used for preserving meats (*Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.6). Sugar was used for preserving fruits (Agnes Shaw, 04.07.2005, p.11) and making pulled-sugar candies (*Saygyooks* Martha Lewis 18.06.2005, p.7; *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.15). Bread-making was the primary use for flour; potatoes and rice were eaten with boiled seaweed, stews, or fish egg soups (for example, Agnes Shaw, 04.07.2005, p.4).

10 Some were built on traditional Tsimshian territories and fisheries (Darling 1955:44; Menzies and Butler 2008:138).

11 See McDonald (1984) for an analysis of Tsimshian involvement in the early commercial fishery and its impact on food-gathering.

The introduction of baloney and wieners, the only store-bought meats available in the 1920s and 30s (*Saygyooks* Martha Lewis, 18.06.2005, p.15), provide a perfect example of how a shift in the means of production affected the Gitxaała diet. Traditionally, clams were dug up in winter months and smoked or dried. Around this time, canneries began to buy them fresh for commercial use. As Gitxaała people transformed a traditional food source into a source of cash, they needed to replace this protein staple with something else – and their new income made baloney and wieners available (Agnes Shaw, 04.07.2005, p.9). The process of commercializing a traditional food source and substituting its place in the diet with a purchased, processed alternative was established; it continues to this day.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, Gitxaała people relocated to centres of Euro-Canadian industry as canneries consolidated; by the 1950s, cannery unions and the mechanization of the canning process transformed fishing and canning into year-round pursuits (Newell 1993:128). These factors distanced Gitxaała people from their harvesting sites and from the traditional knowledge embodied in them. Both the popularity of canning and jarring salmon (more time efficient and less weather dependent than drying or smoking; McDonald 1984:48-49), and the importance of store-bought meats such as baloney (*Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005[1], p.26), grew as people adjusted to their displacement from harvesting sites and the time demands of the commercial fishery (*Saygyook*s Martha Lewis, 18.06.2005, p.12).

In the 1940s – the decade in which diabetes was first recorded in Aboriginal populations in Canda – through the 1960s, the ratio of own foods to store-bought foods in household diets began to change. Elder *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown (now in his 80s) says of his early years:

> Oh, I was part of the change. I was born in '35, and there was quite a change there then. We bought most of our food from the grocery store… the sugar was very in demand then, flour, potatoes, rice … That was the main thing in our way of life, was sugar, flour, tea, and the rest were all seasonal food. [*Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005 35:40, p.6]

Ernie Bolton, a fisherman in his 50s, reported that all he consumed as a child in the 1950s and early 60s were his own foods, only eating store-bought meats once or twice a month as a treat: "Back then we can't afford to buy store food. So we had to rely on our own." However, this changed when he started working for cash at the age of 16. Even though store-bought foods had to be shipped in from Prince Rupert, Ernie found that they were "easier," that procuring them fit better with his work schedule: "Basically I guess most of us are like that at my age group, ever since we started working we depend on store bought groceries." (Ernie Bolton, 08.06.2005, p.3). In part because he learned to cook during the years in which store-bought foods became important for him, they still constitute the majority of his family's foods today.

Through the 1960s, families based in the village who relied on seasonal fishing and trapping for income still only purchased store-bought foods twice a year (Cliff White, 14.07.2005, p.20). But participants who were children during these decades recall sugar having a prominent place in their diets; this included its incorporation into traditional dishes,[12] the invention of new dishes,[13] and having candies as snacks. Even the practice of drying berries into cakes in the traditional, labour-intensive manner (free of refined sugar) was replaced almost completely by the sugar-based jarring process (*Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.13).

By the 1950s, technological advances allowed the fishery to be harvested at rates unmatched even by the prosperous pre-colonial fishery, and its state of collapse was undeniable. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)[14] responded to these pressures by closing many areas to commercial drag seining[15] – a practice that had fit well with the Gitxaała seasonal round – in 1964. For community elder *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown, this meant 1964 was the last summer spent out at fish camp, where his family could harvest a variety of their own foods while he drag seined commercially; they then moved back to the village full time. It spelled the decline of community-wide relocation to family camps for the large-scale production of Gitxaała people's own foods.

In 1968, the DFO implemented the Davis Plan,[16] reducing the number of salmon licenses in British Columbia. The resulting rises in license prices made it increasingly hard for small-scale fishermen to enter the fishery independently, exacerbating dependence on the canneries. As fishing technology became increasingly expensive, many fishermen bought everything with credit from the fish processors and canneries (Sam Lewis, 15.06.2005, p.7); this was especially true for First Nations fishermen who could obtain no loans against reserve land. Those who missed payments due to a bad season often had to give up their boats, their licenses, and their livelihoods (Sam Lewis, 15.06.2005, p10).

Then, advances in refrigeration and freezing created a way to get fresh fish to market – dealing a final blow to the canneries and resulting in massive unemployment in the region. Gitxaała went from being a community in which residents owned 13

12 Such as: dipping salmon berry shoots (*ooył*) in sugar; including it in a recipe for the leafy green *klux'otsmgyet* or cow parsnip (see Agnes Shaw, 04.07.2005, p.13); and including it in the traditional desert of salmon berries and oolichan (sometimes spelled eulachon) grease.

13 Such as: sugar dumpling soup (brown sugar wrapped in dough and boiled in water) which was sometimes served for dinner (Ken Innes, 05.06.2005 12:10, p.5); and cored apples filled with brown sugar and baked.

14 A federal Canadian regulatory body.

15 Drag seining involves dragging a net out from the beach using a boat and winching back to the beach. This technique, usually carried out at traditional title-held harvesting sites, was complimentary to families' other harvesting activities in camp. When it was banned, families had to assure their income by other means (such as work in the cannery) that did not enable them to also participate in their traditional economies.

16 See Newell (1993:148-180) for a comprehensive look at the Davis Plan and its implications for First Nation fishing communities.

drag seining licenses (Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax Allan Brown, 20.07.2005, p.100) and many gill-netters (Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax Allan Brown, p.25), and there was 100 percent (seasonal) employment to one in which few people have a job or ready access to a boat with an outboard motor. The means of large-scale, commercial food production had been wrenched out of Gitxaała hands.

When Gitxaała residents had initially involved themselves in colonial economies, they had been able to integrate new colonial foods into their own diet. Purchasing sugar, flour, potatoes, and other goods presented a method of procuring, preserving, and preparing food that fit well with the new blend of traditional economy and wage labour activities in Gitxaała; many of the foods resulting from these various income and food sources are considered "traditional" today. However, as people became increasingly distanced from traditional means and places of production, involvement in wage labour turned into reliance, and the means of production shifted into colonial hands. These changes increased the importance of store-bought products: at first they became essential to the efficient preparation of traditional foods, and now, despite Gitxaała residents' continued reliance on their own foods and the economic hardship in which many of them live, store-bought foods supply the bulk of the diet in many households.

In these circumstances, to call foods "our own" can be unpacked as a re-assertion of Gitxaała people's reduced but tenacious independence from the colonial economies that have entangled them, undermined their traditional economies, marginalized them, and generated the food insecurity which is so directly and negatively impacting their health. The term "own foods" is a clue to the connection between ownership of the means of production, community level food security, and health.

Resource Ownership: Gitxaała's Own Foods, Gitxaała's Own Resources

Gitxaała people have an ancient and venerable set of *ayaawk* (laws) that regulate access to and responsibility for food resources, formalizing a deep and meaningful connection with food and food production. The *ayaawk* provide a set of guidelines for proper behaviour towards resources, including how much may be taken, when, and with whom it must be shared (these guidelines were referenced by almost every participant when interviewed for a parallel research project about the effects of climate change on resources; for example, see *Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill 05.07.2005). The *ayaawk* also delineate the rights and responsibilities of a *walp* (house, or extended family) or a hereditary name[17] to a particular resource (Darling 1955; Garfield 1939:174).

The traditional Gitxaała idea of "ownership" centres on the concepts of access and responsibility, allows for overlapping territories, and is maintained through activity

17 In the Tsimshian tradition, a person is given to a name, rather than the other way around; see Garfield (1939, p.192, pp.221-229) for an analysis of naming practices and the legalities surround them. See Menzies and Butler (2008) for a discussion of the harvesting practices associated with the Walp.

and recital of rights at public gatherings rather than written documentation. The colonial system of ownership did not recognize the *ayaawk* or any of the rights laid out therein. Gitxaała people have been divested of much of their traditional rights of access to food resources by colonial restrictions and the wholesale redistribution of their lands to settlers – to say nothing of the industrial and environmental changes that have devastated those resources to which they do retain access. Hunting territories, traplines, forest food resources, and shellfish harvesting camps have all been infringed upon, but perhaps the most compelling example of the demise of a traditional food resource is the colonial appropriation of the fishery.

After Confederation, federal and provincial laws began to redraw the map of access rights and recast the legalities surrounding fishing, oblivious to pre-existing *ayaawk*. In 1888, the Candian government decreed that "Indians shall, at all times, have the liberty to fish … for the purpose of providing food for themselves, but not for sale, barter or traffic, or by any means other than with drift nets, or spearing" (as in Sharma 1998:35). In one move, the state outlawed the main Gitxaała methods of harvesting salmon and the underpinning of their economic prosperity.[18]

Gitxaała people's main fishing technologies were outlawed: – the drag seine, weir[19] and trap, all used in rivers and at creek mouths – were banned (Newell 1993:49-51) with the side effect of dismantling a critical forum for transmitting traditional ecological and food knowledge. The need to acquire and learn new technologies was costly and destabilized community-level food security. Forcing Gitxaała people out of the creek and into the boat distanced them from the places in which salmon spawn, dismantling an important forum for the transmission of knowledge about resource stewardship and harvesting.

By making the "Indian" right to fish for food separate from a license to engage in the commercial fishery, the state created a food fishery, an artifice used to keep subsistence activities under tight colonial control.[20] In 1894, Aboriginal fishermen were required to obtain permits for the food fishery, and by 1910, the colonial government began to impose regular closures on the food fishery (Sharma 1998:35). The DFO has since continued to restrict Gixaala people's access to their own foods. Fishing

18 The significance of this economy is often underestimated, but the oral, ethnographic, historical and archeological records leave no doubt about the wealth that Gitxaała accumulated through trade (Garfield 1939; *Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005) and the distance their surplus traveled inland and along the Pacific Rim (*Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005[1], p.3, p.26). These traditional economies of exchange are based on familial ties and long-term relationships rather than short-term gain.

19 See Langdon 2006.

20 Sharma (1998) argues that the food fishery was created "to accord the commercial fishery priority and ensure that Aboriginal communities were able to feed themselves lest they become a burden on the public purse" (1998:29). Harris (2004) equates the food fishery to the reserve system in that the colonial government set aside a fraction of the original resource in order to commercialize the rest (155); he further argues that the DFO has since done all it can to block aboriginal fishermen from accessing the food fishery (158-176).

at creek mouths and the catch of certain species of fish (such as steelhead salmon) are both illegal, certain areas are closed to cod fishing (Keith Lewis, 15.06.2005; *Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005, p.12), and there is a complete ban on picking abalone (for example, see Cliff White, 14.07.2005, p.2; see also Menzies 2010). Some scholars argue that the DFO had been deliberately dismantling the Aboriginal fishery in favour of the commercial fishery.[21]

By outlawing many of the traditional means of production and markets of exchange that made Gitxaała wealthy, the colonial state forced Gitxaała fishermen to participate in the commercial fishery if they wished to continue exchanging their fish for other goods. At the same time, the state-controlled commercial fishery – the main industry in Gitxaała territory – has continually marginalized First Nations enterprise, ensuring Aboriginal labour power for the settler enterprises instead. Gitxaała fishermen became even more reliant on loans provided by commercial fish processors than did non-native fishermen, making them feel most keenly the collapse of local canneries and processors and, ultimately, the collapse of the fishery.

The artificial distinction between the food and commercial fisheries is a cause of economic tension at the community level.[22] Reliance on mechanized boats for fishing concentrates the ability, and responsibility, to harvest food fish among those few villagers who have managed to retain their boats despite the collapse of the fishery. Because the same boats are used for both the commercial and food fisheries, the food fishery sometimes suffers on those occasions that the commercial fishery is open, forcing the community's need for food fish into competition with individual fishermen's need for capital gain (Julia McKay, 16.07.2005, p.19).

Food security in Gitxaała has also been undermined by a dramatic restructuring of the commercial fishery. In the 1980s and '90s, the DFO attempted to reduce the pressures on the fishery and reduce the number of fishing licenses by implementing a buy-back program. Many Gitxaała fishermen accepted the DFO's offer to "buy back" their small-scale licenses and their boats due to the increasing expenses associated with fishing[23] and the decreasing number of fish.[24] Reliance on Social Assistance skyrocketed and Gitxaała people's ability to access their own foods by boat

21 See Harris 2004:177-213; Sharma 1998:52-54; Newell 1993; and Menzies and Butler 2008 for a more complete discussion.

22 It also provides fertile ground for tension between Aboriginal and non-native fishing communities; see for example Coates 2000, or Menzies 1994.

23 It can cost over $500 to fill up a gill-netter (Sam Lewis, 15.06.2005, p.10), or nearly $300 to fill up a motor-boat (Ken Innes 05.06.2005, p.17). This is next to impossible on Social Assistance, which barely covers the basic cost of living (Tim Innes, 03.07.2005, p.20).

24 Menzies and Butler 2007.

was greatly diminished.[25] Project participants judge the current lack of boats in the community to be one of their biggest barriers to traditional resource access. In the end, the DFO conglomerated the small-scale licenses and sold them to international companies running massive operations farther offshore.

The DFO cast its buy-back programs and its policy restrictions on space, time, species, and technologies as measures to ensure stable fish stocks, but these policies are often at odds with the *ayawwk* and Gitxaała people do not see them as beneficial to the resources. Rather, Gitxaała people have experienced an alarming decline not just in their access to resources but in the resources themselves since these policies have been implemented. Gitxaała residents make direct links between the conglomeration of fishing licenses after the buy-back programs and the collapse of salmon stock,[26] which came to a revord low in 2009.

In a pattern all too familiar to Gitxaała fishermen, the commericalization of one species after another has resulted in a disheartening series of collapses. While most DFO and non-native scientists pinpoint the beginning of the fishery collapse to a time between the 1950s and the 1980s, Gitxaała fishermen have had a much longer timeframe in which to establish a base line, and they track the collapse to the beginning of commercialization. Elder *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown elaborates:

> Ayawwk, which is law… in Gitxaała we're not allowed to take lots. We just take enough for our food, to survive. We're told to take just what we need. And then some of the things are so commercialized now, that's the beginning of the troubles we have, it was commercialization. Abalone is a really good example of that because it's been commercialized, now it's gone. [Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax Allan Brown, 20.07.2005, p.8]

More than one participant suggested to me that nowadays, putting in enough hours or making enough money to qualify for EI was the only secure financial benefit to be gained by working in the failing fishery (for example, see Sam Lewis 15.06.2005, pp.7-8). While all fishermen have felt the effects of collapse, First Nations communities are disproportionately affected due to a series of policies that stretch far beyond the fishery and that have undermined First Nations' cultural as well as economic independence.

The division of the fishery into food and commercial fisheries, the ever-increasing restrictions on the food fishery, the marginalization of First Nations within the commercial fishery, its restructuring, and the dramatic decline of critical resources

25 A motorized boat is necessary for many harvesting activities including line-fishing, shellfish harvesting, and deer and seal hunting, and has become increasingly critical as local resources thin out and harvesters must travel farther afield to access their own foods. A boat is also useful for transportation to Prince Rupert for access to store-bought foods and health services.

26 Salmon spend between 1.5 and 4.5 years in the deep ocean, where they are prey to large offshore fishing operations, before returning to the creek in which they hatched in order to spawn.

have all seriously impacted the community of Gitxaała's access to its own foods. The colonial government has appropriated Gitxaała resources for its own enrichment – to Gitxaała's great disadvantage. Many settlers who live and work within this system have been sadly miseducated about how it has profited them at the expense of others.

In calling these foods "our own," Gitxaała people remind us that they have never lost a war, signed a treaty, or transferred the rights to these resources to anyone else. They remind us that these food resources do not rightfully belong to the Crown but belong inherently to Gitxaała people. To say "our own foods" is to make a powerful, political ownership about food resources, and reclaim them from disenfranchisement.

Belonging: Own Foods as Gitxaała Identity

In Gitxaała, the consumption of own foods is understood to contribute not only to an individual's physical health, but also to the health of one's identity as Gitxaała. Own foods are a building block of identity, as are family, tribe, nation, and attachment to the land and seascapes that make up Gitxaała territory. In the past, each of the foods served at a feast represented the territory in which it was collected,[27] reminding the guests of the hosts' lineage and the territories attached to it (Garfield 1939:213; Darling 1955:12). These are resources with which Gitxaała people have shared a history stretching back to time immemorial, resources which sustained them and contributed to their wealth and political importance in the region. These are resources that define Gitxaała people.

In Gitxaała, own foods and food practices embody not just lineage but the values at the core of what it means to be Gitxaała. Elder *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown provides an example:

> On my first [deer] kill for food, my mother's relation would thank my dad's tribal house for providing me [by distributing dry goods and our own foods to them]. That was the law; I don't think they do it anymore. They call it dzidzups'k which, translating, is to go build up a person's status. [Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax Allan Brown, 22.07.2005, p.9]

Part of the colonial enterprise is the assimilation of colonized peoples; food knowledge, practices, and preferences in Gitxaała – and the values they embody – were not exempt from this undertaking. While Gitxaała people entered the 20th century rich in food-related values and knowledge, and with a strong preference for their own foods, assimilationist programs such as food assistance, residential school and foster care undercut these and many other aspects of their culture.

27 The community continues to use feasting to mark important public events, although some of the formalities around the foods eaten have changed.

Flour and sugar[28] feature signficantly in the diet supplied by the colonial state, in sharp contrast to the prominence of fish and meat in the traditional diet. In the 1920s, 30s, and 40s, many First Nations on the North Coast (and indeed, across Canada) were requesting assistance from the Department of Indian Affairs; in Gitxaała, residents struggled in these decades as access to ther trap lines and fisheies – the main industries that provided economic independence – were drastically restricted. Rather than change policies to enable the harvesting of traditional foods, the Canadian state supplied processed colonial foods. Kelm (1998) reports that in 1928, relief rations for an adult for one month were "twenty-four pounds of unenriched flour, two pounds of sugar, one pound each of baking powder, salt, and tea, in addition to however much beef, pork, fish, bacon, or beans $2.00 could buy, and $1.20 worth each of lard, rice, molasses and macaroni" (34).

More than any other policies or programs, project participants referred to the residential school[29] and foster care[30] systems to explain the difficulties in their relationships with their own foods, with traditional food knowledge, with their community, with their bodies, and with diabetes. A significant number of people who are adults today were removed from Gitxaała as children, and every single participant interviewed about diabetes spoke about residential school, whether or not they had attended it. At times moving, often painful, participants' narratives made clear and powerful links between these sufferings and the community's current health status.

Residential schools were a direct attempt by the colonial state to assimilate Aboriginal children into "Canadian" society (*Txa-la-łaatk* Matthew Hill, 05.07.2005(1), p.31). They imposed Euro-Canadian ideas about "proper" food; most forbade traditional foods.[31] Potatoes, gruels, breads, and biscuits[32] provided the bulk of the impoverished diet; meats and fruits in good condition were rare (Gilbert Hill,

28 Both white, 'refined' products resonate with Christian ideas of purity; both are now linked to diabetes.

29 Beginning in the 1870's, it became Canadian Federal policy to send Aboriginal children to residential schools – run by the churches – so they could become literate, numerate, 'hygienic,' and 'civilized.' Some were sent by their families who wanted them to be educated, and some were forcibly removed from their communities by Indian Agents. Children were often contractually obliged to remain for a certain period of time despite the physical, emotional and sexual abuses suffered by many. Attempts to run away were punished severly. The Canadian government ceased this partnership with religious organizations in 1969, and most residential schools were finally closed in the mid-1970s (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2004. The Canadian state only officially acknowledged the harm this policy has inflicted on Aboriginal individuals and communities in a 2008 apology, and the more recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

30 As traumatized young people emerged from residential school with few positive parenting experiences of their own and began to have families, the state frequently deemed them unfit for parenthood. Rather than recognize the culturally accepted practice of adoption within the extended family, or try to place them within their communities and cultures, the state removed many children from Gitxaala and from other Aboriginal communities in Canada and placed them in Euro-Canadian communities. This practice is sometimes referred to as "the 60s scoop."

31 Children were also forbidden to speak their own languages or practice any of their own cultural or religious traditions (Grant 1996; Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996).

32 All starchy carbohydrates; all linked to diabetes.

14.07.2005, p.28; Kelm, 1998:71-73; Campbell 2003:119). In addition, nutrition was insufficient in some residential schools and absolutely unfit in others (Gilbert Hill, 14.07.2005, p.28), resulting in both immediate and long-term illnesses. Hunger and being forced to eat rotten foods were only some of the abuses suffered by aboriginal children in residential schools.[33] The body was experienced as a source of pain and shame. Dissociation from the body and from food – so much a part of many people's residential school experience – is still making itself felt in Aboriginal communities today.

The residential school experience was expressly designed to interrupt the transmission of traditional knowledge and values by physically removing children from their families, communities, and territories. Rather than learning to harvest their own foods, students did agricultural work, which sometimes went to supplying the school's coffers rather than its larder (Kelm 1998:71).

Traditional food knowledge, like all forms of ecological knowledge, is best acquired by 'doing' (Menzies 2006); its transmission therefore requires an appropriate forum for experiential learning and continued practice with skilled experts. Separated from these forums and their teachers, many project participants carried their traditional knowledge like a slow match[34] through their residential school, foster, and urban experiences. Participants now in their 50s or older who were sent to residential school described long periods after leaving school during which their traditional knowledge and values were submerged under self-damaging behaviours in an attempt to numb the pain of their experiences. They were proud to rekindle their harvesting knowledge once they had chosen to begin their healing or had returned to Gitxaała.

Tim Innes argues that the effects of being removed from the community continue to undermine the transmission of traditional knowledge and values, not only in his own life, but in the community as a whole:

> I guess the reason why all this information [i.e. traditional food knowledge] is not shared, cuz ah, the older, older people, became not to trust, trust us. Like I said there's, I'm not too sure how many in the community went to residential school, and that's where we lost our culture. [Tim Innes, 03.07.2005, p.7]

> Our values are different, today, the young generation, they have no values. None. We didn't teach 'em. I didn't, cuz I didn't know. I wasn't taught that… And it created a big cavity. I had to confront the truth in order for me to step out. I went to two residential schools. And that's an important part in what you're doing [i.e.

33 Refer to Grant (1996), or Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996, vol 1, part 2, section 10) for a review of the conditions in residential schools and the abuses many aboriginal children experienced there.

34 A slow match is a piece of cork or bark that smoulders during a long voyage and is used to ignite a fire at a new location (Gottesfeld 1992).

> the research project] for us people that went to residential school, to acknowledge that. [Tim Innes, 03.07.2005, p.7]

Many project participants deplored the erosion of traditional values, such as the *ayawwk* of *dzidzups'k* ("building up status") as described by *Lax Skiiq Gilaskamax* Allan Brown at the beginning of this section, and the way in which cash has also encroached on the traditional value of food sharing. Ernie Bolton explains:

> EB: Yeah, you pretty much have to buy it these days you know, anything you get now, the young people as soon as they get something they sell it to you. I think that's our problem now, everything with money.
>
> RA: Whereas before maybe…?
>
> EB: Whereas before we always shared… anything that can be picked we always had to give to someone that don't have a boat or couldn't get out on their own… I've heard so much about those young people now that they, they sell it to [their elders]. And I feel really bad, like, when I hear. Not only elders but to some young people that can't go out, their own brother, sister, they have to buy it. And it's really sad to hear. [Ernie Bolton, 08.06.2005, p.19]

There are also young people in the community who ignore tradition and marry inside their tribe, or who partake in marijuana or alcohol. They are perceived by others as marginalizing themselves within the community, and they have the most difficulty of anyone in Gitxaała in accessing their own foods. These young people, many of whom have young families, are less likely to be gifted food, are less likely to be invited out on others' boats, and have fewer opportunities to learn by doing. Their lack of traditional knowledge and lack of engagement in the reciprocal cashless economy surrounding the sharing of own foods compounds their marginalization. These disaffected youth struggle with their Gitxaała identity, and their relationship with it is discussed and debated in the community.

Many participants stressed the urgency of conveying traditional food knowledge and values to the community's youth. Rather than being framed in terms of a fear of losing the knowledge "before it was too late," it was expressed as a fear of losing the youth (Tim Innes, 03.07.2005, p.7). Participants expressed concerns that the youth would not know who they were without their identity being placed in the context of food harvesting and preservation knowledge (for example, see Butch McKay, 11.07.2005, p.42).

The strong connection between foods, values, and Gitxaała identity has been continually undermined by the introduction of colonial foods. The residential school and foster experiences wrenched many Gitxaała children away from their families,

their foods, and the knowledge, practices and values embodied in their own foods, leaving deep scars on the Gitxaała identity.

For Gitxaała people to reassert that own foods are their own, just as their families or tribes are their own, is to reclaim these foods and the resources that produce them as building blocks of Gitxaała identity. It is to reassert that the knowledge and values embodied in their own foods continue to be important to "being Gitxaała."

Own Foods, Decolonization, and Healing

Many participants talked about how their own foods were contributing to healing for themselves and their community. The most obvious examples are the participants who were successfully managing their diabetes by incorporating more of their own foods into their diet, in tandem with reducing sugar intake.[35]

Own foods are also healing Gitxaała socially and spiritually. Some participants spoke of the steps they were taking to redefine their relationships with both food and community. They are going out to family camp sites to harvest their own foods, sharing foods they have harvested with other community members, teaching others to harvest and preserve their own foods, talking to their children about Gitxaała values and traditions by talking about food, eating together as a family, having guests over for meals, and getting the whole community together for celebratory feasts and occasions such as weddings.

Gilbert Hill, a project participant who had been marginalized in the community in his youth due to his alcohol and drug use, talked about how sharing his own food contributed to his social healing:

> When I first used my smoke house last year I had over 40 sockeye in there and they were all ready. We were [taking the fish] home with a wheelbarrow... My wife said to me this is the first fish we smoked in our smokehouse she says, what do you think we should do? I said what do you mean? She says I think that since it's your first one, you should give it out, to the people. I thought okay lets go, I'll push the wheelbarrow and you walk around and tell me where we're going to go, who you're going to give the fish to. We walked around the whole community giving fish away to mostly the elders and people who can't get out in boats. We got home, we were talking, we were happy, we didn't even get to keep one fish for our meal I said. I looked at her and she looked at me and we smiled. Now we'll wait until next time. And you know it really works what we do because… it all came back to us. People are always offering me fish now. [Gilbert Hill, 14.07.2005.]

35 See Arora and McFarlane (2005) for the benefits of a low carbohydrate diet in managing diabetes; see Accurso et al. (2008) for the importance of increasing fat when decreasing carbohydrates. See also the documentary film "My Big, Fat Diet" about Dr. Jay Wortman's work with the Namgis First Nation in Alert Bay, B.C., which chronicles the success of a community-wide return to a high fat, low carbohydrate diet in managing diabetes (Bissel 2008).

Gilbert Hill's story encapsulates how the production and consumption of own foods contributes not only to an individual's physical health, but also to the health of one's identity as Gitxaała, and thereby to the community's health. Gilbert's act of sharing his harvest is an act of decolonization. He is asserting his ownership of and right to harvest these foods, using and sharing the traditional food knowledge available to him, participating in a traditional cashless means of production and exchange, and combating community-level food insecurity – as well as strengthening his Gitxaała identity by honouring the principle behind *dzidzups'k*. All of these were nearly beaten out of him in residential school. Gilbert is both healing and decolonizing, all with his own foods.

Own foods are used to maintain family ties and Gitxaała identity across considerable geographical distance. They are shipped at great expense to Gitxaała relatives in Prince Rupert, Terrace, Vancouver, and beyond; by mapping the distribution of own foods, we are able to map the Gitxaała diaspora. Shipments to those who will be "missing their own foods" are a reminder of belonging and identity and constitute a living tie to the community that many still consider "home" no matter where they are staying.

Gitxaała people are finding new ways to ensure that their youth know their own foods. In the past, youth would have learned these vital skills from their aunts and uncles in fishing and berry-gathering camps and on hunting trips. Today, in the context of year-long residence in the village, outboard motors, and a full school day, youth are sometimes able to access this knowledge through programs in the community center or the Lach Klan School. The community has participated in the creation of localized curricula with Forests and Oceans for the Future (Ignas 2004). Also, children are being taught more and more by their parents who take them out rather than their aunts and uncles as is traditional (Butch McKay 15.06.2005, p.16), reflecting the very gradual shift away from the extended matriline and toward the nuclear family as the primary family unit. While some project participants expressed concern regarding the generally declining role of the family in teaching these skills, other participants were proud to mention community initiatives that took on this role.

As the political, technological and ecological environments continue to change, Gitxaała people will continue to find new ways to formulate and transmit their knowledge about the resources they have relied upon for countless generations. Such knowledge becomes a means to maintaining healthy territories, a healthy community, healthy families, and healthy bodies free of diabetes.

Conclusion

Ultimately, I came to understand own foods as real foods produced by the practice of traditional foodways, foods capable of nourishing and healing. I believe that

much of what Gitxaała people consume today is not really included in their cultural or mental category of "food"; it is produced far away, by a capitalist economy, it is disconnected from any sense of what it means to be Gitxaała, and it is killing them. On a symbolic level, diabetes in Gitxaała is a symptom of the extreme disconnection between Gitxaała people, their bodies, and their foodways – results of colonial, assimilationist, and capitalist enterprises.

Health authorities rooted in Euro-Canadian frameworks of health are urging people in Gitxaała to make healthier "choices." But the choices they suggest are difficult to come by in Gitxaała and do not necessarily make sense there. They do not line up with Gitxaała's category of own foods, nor do they account for the historical, economic, and political factors that structure Gitxaała's access to food. A clearer focus on diabetes reveals not poor choices, but community-level food insecurity engineered by a history of entanglement with colonialism.

True healing must also involve decolonization, and "own foods" is a linguistic clue to the foods that heal. Do the parameters that define own foods – right to access the resource, ownership of the means of production, and embodiment of the values that constitute identity – hold true for the healing foods of other Aboriginal peoples? Do other cultures suffering from diseases of colonization such as diabetes carry other linguistic clues to healing?

Gitxaała people are conducting their own decolonizing experiment, in which the power of own foods is yet to be determined. That the people of Gitxaała continue to harvest, preserve, and distribute their own foods under adverse conditions is testament to the strength of their identity, the richness of their heritage, and their ability to maintain a dynamic and flexible culture.

References

Acurso, Anthony, Richard K. Bernstein, Annika Dahlqvist, Boris Draznin, Richard D. Feinman, Eugene J. Fine, Amy Gleed, David B. Jacons, Gabriel Larson, Robert H. Lustig, Anssi H. Manninen, Samy I. McFarlane, Katharine Morrison, Jørgen Vesti Nielsen, Uffe Ravnskov, Karl S. Roth, Ricard Silvestre, James R. Sowers, Ralf Sunderberg, Jeff S. Volek, Eric C. Westerman, Richard J. Wood, Jay Wortman, and Mary C. Vernon

2008 Dietary Carbohydrate Restriction in Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus and Metabolic Syndrome: Time for a Critical Appraisal. Nutrition & Metabolism 5(9).

Adelson, Naomi

2005 The Embodiment of Inequity: Health Disparities in Aboriginal Canada. Canadian Journal of Public Health 96(Supplement 2):S45-S61.

Arora, Surender K. and Samy I. McFarlane

2005 The Case for Low Carbohydrate Diets in Diabetes Management. Nutrition & Metabolism 2(16).

Baliunas, Dolly O., Benjamin J. Taylor, Hycinth Irving, Michael Roerecke, Jaydeep Patra, Satya Mohapatra, Jurgen Rehm
2009 Alcohol as a Risk Factor for Type 2 Diabetes. American Diabetes Association.
Bazzano, Lydia A., Mary Serdula, & Simin Liu
2005 Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes by Diet and Lifestyle Modification. Journal of the American College of Nutrition 24(5):310-319.
Bennett, P.H.
1982 The Epidemiology of Diabetes Mellitus. *In* Diabetes Mellitus and Obesity. B.N. Boldoff & S.I. Bleicher, eds. Baltimore: Williams &Williams.
Benyshek, Daniel
2005 Type 2 Diabetes and Fetal Origins: The Promise of Prevention Programs Focusing on Prenatal Health in High Prevalence Native American Communities. Human Organization 64(2):192-200.
Benyshek, D., J. F. Martin and C. Johnston
2001 A Reconsideration of the Origins of the Type 2 Diabetes Epidemic Among Native Americans and the Implications for Intervention Policy. Medical Anthropology 20:25-64.
Bisell, Mary (director); with Dr. Jay Wortman (researcher)
2008 My Big, Fat Diet. Produced by Barb Cranmer, Christian Bruyere and Mary Bissell of Bare Bones Productions in association with CBC Newsworld.
Brown, Kip, Alex Nevitte, Betsy Szeto, Arijit Nandi
2015 Growing Social Inequality in the Prevalence of Type 2 Diabetes in Canada, 2004–2012. Canadian Journal of Public Health. 106(3):132-139.
Campbell, Kenneth
2003 Persistence and Change: A History of the Tsimshian Nation. Prince Rupert, BC: Tsimshian Nations and School District 52 (Prince Rupert).
Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Vol. 1. Ottawa: The Commission.
Canadian Diabetes Association
2007 Electronic document, http://www.diabetes.ca/Section_About/prevalence.asp. Accessed May 2007.
Canadian Diabetes Association Clinical Practice Guidelines Expert Committee
2013 Canadian Diabetes Association 2013 Clinical Practice Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Diabetes in Canada. Canadian Journal of Diabetes 37(suppl 1):S1-S212.
Coates, Ken
2000 The Marshall Decision and Native Rights. Montreal and Kingston, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Canadian Public Health Agency
2007 Diabetes. Electronic document, http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ccdpc-cpcmc/diabetes-diabete/english/ndss/index.html. Accessed May 2007.

Coates, Ken
2000 The Marshall Decision and Native Rights. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Darling, John Davidson
1955 The Effects of Culture Contact on the Tsimshian System of Land Tenure During the Nineteenth Century. M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia.

Dunn, John Asher
1984 Tsimshian Grandchildren: Redistributive Mechanisms in Personal Property Inheritance. *In* The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors of the North West Coast. J. Miller and C. Eastman, eds. Pp. 36-57. Seattle, W.A.: University of Washington Press.

Fee, Margery
2006 Racializing Narratives: Obesity, Diabetes, and the 'Aboriginal' Thrifty Genotype. Social Science and Medicine 62:2988-97.

Ferreira, Mariana Leal
2006 Love in Colonial Light: History of Yurok Emotions in Northern California. *In* Indigenous Peoples and Diabetes: Community Wellness Empowerment and Wellness. Marriana Leal Ferreira and Gretchen Chesley Lang, eds. Durham, California: Carolina Academic Press, pp.357-386.

Garfield, Viola
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Publications in Anthropology, 7(3). Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University. 167-340.

Gibson, O.R and L. Segal
2015 Limited Evidence to Assess the Impact of Primary Health Care System or Service Level Attributes on Health Outcomes of Indigenous People with Type 2 Diabtese: A Systematic Review. British Medical Journal 15

Gottesfeld, Leslie
1992 Short Communication: Use of Cinder Conk by the Gitksan of Northwestern British Columbia, Canada. Journal of Ethnobiology 12(1):153-156.

Grant, Agnes
1996 No End of Grief: Indian Residential Schools in Canada. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications.

Hamm, M. and A. Bellows
2003 Community Food Security: Background and Future Directions. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour, 35(1):37-43.

Harris, Cole
2002 Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
Harris, Douglas
2004 Land, Fish and Law: The Legal Geography of Indian Reserves and Native Fisheries in British Columbia, 1850-1927. Ph.D. Thesis, York University.
Howard, Andrea A., Julia H. Arnsten & Marc N. Gourevitch
2004 Effect of Alcohol Consumption on Diabetes Mellitus, A Systematic Review. Annals of Internal Medicine. 140:211-219.
Ignas, Veronica
2004 Opening Doors to the Future: Applying Local Knowledge in Curriculum Development. Journal of Native Education 28(1/2):49-60.
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
2004 Comparison of Socio-Economic Conditions, 1996 and 2001: Registered Indians, Registered Indians living on reserve, and the total population of Canada. Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada. Electronic document. http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/gs/schl_e.html. Last updated on: 2004- 04-23. Accessed on: March 1st 2007).
Korn, L.E. and R. Ryser
2006 Burying the Umbilicus: Nutrition Trauma, Diabetes and Traditional Medicine in Rural West Mexico. *In* Indigenous Peoples and Diabetes: Community Wellness Empowerment and Wellness. Marriana Leal Ferreira and Gretchen Chesley Lang, eds. Pp.231-277. Durham, California: Carolina Academic Press,
Kelm, Mary-Ellen
1998 Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
Langdon Steve J
2006 Tidal Pulse Fishing: Selective Traditional Tlingit Salmon Fishing Techniques on the West Coast of the Prince of Wales Archipelago. *In* Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management. Charles R. Menzies, ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
Martindale, Andrew
2003 A Hunter-Gatherer Paramount Chiefdom: Tsimshian Developments through the Contact Period. *In* Emerging from the Mist: Studies in Northwest Coast Culture History. R. G. Matson, G. Coupland, and Q. Mackie, eds. Pp.12-50. Vancouver: UBC Press.
Martindale, Andrew and I. Jurakic
2004 Northern Tsimshian Elderberry Use in the Late Pre-Contact to Post-contact Era. Canadian Journal of Archeology 28:254-280.

McDonald, James A.
1984 Images of the Nineteenth-Century Economy of the Tsimshian. *In* The Tsimshian: Images for the Past, Views for the Present. M. Seguin, ed. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
1994 Social Change and the Creation of Underdevelopment: A Northwest Coast Case. American Ethnologist, 21(1):152-175.

Menzies, Charles R.
1994 Stories from Home: First Nations, Land Claims, and Euro-Canadians. American Ethnologist 21(4):776-791.
2006 Ecological Knowledge, Subsistence, and Livelihood Practices: The Case of the Pine Mushroom Harvest in Northwest British Columbia. *In* Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management. Charles Menzies, ed. Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
2010 Dm sibilhaa'nm da laxyuubm Gitxaała: Picking Abalone in Gitxaała Territory. Human Organization. Society for Applied Anthropology 69(3):213-220.

Menzies, Charles R. and Caroline F. Butler
2007 Returrning to Selective Fishing through Indigenous Fisheries Knowledge: The Exampled of K'moda, Gitxaala Territory. American Indian Quarterly. 31(3):441-464.
2008 The Indigenous Foundation of the Resource Economy of BC's North Coast. Labour/Le Travail. 61(Spring):131-149.

Moore, Donald
2005 Suffering for Territory: Race, Place, and Power in Zimbabwe. Durham, London: Duke University Press.

Neel, James
1962 Diabetes Mellitus: A "Thrifty" Genotype Rendered Detrimental by "Progress." American Journal of Human Genetics 14:353-362.

Newell, Dianne
1993 Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Pietraszek, A., S. Gregersen, & K. Hermansen
2010 Alcohol and Type 2 Diabetes. A Review. Nutrition, Metabolism & Cardiovascular Disease 20:366-375.

Public Health Agency of Canada
2011 Diabetes in Canada: Facts and Figures from a Public Health Perspective. Ottawa, Canada. Available at: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/diabetes-diabete/index-eng.php

Scheder, Jo
2006a Emotion, Grief, and Power: Reconsiderations of Hawaiian Health. *In* Indigenous Peoples and Diabetes: Community Wellness Empowerment

and Wellness. Marriana Leal Ferreira and Gretchen Chesley Lang, eds. Pp 33-51. Durham, California: Carolina Academic Press.

2006b A Sickly-Sweet Harvest: Farmworker Diabetes and Social Inequality. *In* Indigenous Peoples and Diabetes: Community Wellness Empowerment and Wellness. Marriana Leal Ferreira and Gretchen Chesley Lang, eds. Pp 279-311. Durham, California: Carolina Academic Press.

2006c The Spirit's Cell: Reflections on Diabetes and Political Meaning. *In* Indigenous Peoples and Diabetes: Community Wellness Empowerment and Wellness. Marriana Leal Ferreira and Gretchen Chesley Lang, eds. Pp 335-355. Durham, California: Carolina Academic Press.

Sharma, Parnesh

1998 Aboriginal Fishing Rights: Laws, Courts and Politics. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

Surwit, Richard S.

1993 Role of Stress in the Etiology and Treatment of Diabetes Mellitus. Psychosomatic Medicine 55:380-393.

Szathmary, Emoke J.E.

1994 Non-insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus Among Aboriginal North Americans. Annual Review of Anthropology (23)457-482.

Turner, Nancy J.

1995 Food Plants of Coastal First Peoples. Royal British Columbia Museum Handbook, Victoria, BC. (Revised from 1975 edition, Food Plants of British Columbia Indians, Part 1: Coastal Peoples). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.

Weidman, Dennis William

1989 Adiposity or Longevity: Which Factor Accounts for the Increase in Type II Diabetes Mellitus When Populations Acculturate to an Industrial Technology? Medical Anthropology 11:237-253.

West, K.M.

1974 Diabetes in American Indians and Other Native Populations of the New World. Diabetes 23:841-55.

Young, R. J., D. K. McCulloch, R. J. Prescott and B. F., Clarke

1984 Alcohol: Another Risk Factor for Diabetic Retinopathy? British Medical Journal 288:1035-1037.

Young, T.K., J. Reading, B. Elias, B. and J. O'Neil

2000 Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in Canada's First Nations: Status of an Epidemic in Progress. Canadian Medical Association Journal 163(5):561-566.

Eating Gitxaała, Being Gitxaała: Food and Cultural Security

Danielle Gendron

I was sitting at the kitchen table when the news came. This was the day that Gitxaała people had been waiting for, the Government of Canada's announcement of the final decision for the Enbridge Northern Gateway oil pipeline project.[1] As the television journalist spoke the focus of everyone in the room shifted from the projected image on the screen towards the large picture window overlooking the very place that would be affected. Silence. A somber voice came on the VHF radio: "It was approved" and clicked off.

That evening as family members gathered around the kitchen table, conversation turned to the implications of the approval of the Enbridge project for Gitxaała Nation and its territory. First, the conversation focused on what it would mean for the territory, the water, the animals, and the plants. Destruction. Devastation. It then shifted to what it would mean for the food harvested from the territory. Inaccessible. Inedible. This was a conversation about what it would mean for the people living in the territory, the Git lax m'oon,[2] the future of their lives and their grandchildren's lives, the transmission of culture, and ultimately the future of Gitxaała Nation.

1 The Enbridge Northern Gateway oil pipeline project is to build oil and gas pipelines that would span over 1000 km, from the Alberta oil sands to Kitimat, B.C. Natural gas condensate would be imported via eastbound pipelines; diluted bitumen would be exported via westbound pipelines. While there are an abundance of environmental and cultural concerns related to the different components of the project overall, it is the tanker traffic that would navigate through Gitxaała territory that is of particular concern to the Gitxaała Nation and therefore of relevance to this thesis.

2 'People of the saltwater' in Sm'algyax along with Gitxaała being a name that refers to the people of the Gitxaała Nation.

"What other reason do we have to live here? Without the food I wouldn't live here," one man lamented referring to the food harvested from the territory. This response to the Enbridge project decision, perhaps more than anything else I witnessed, illuminated the centrality of the territory-based food system to the culture and identity of Gitxaała Nation.

Projects like Enbridge have created a sense of anxiety among Gitxaała people. Such projects are understood as real tangible threats to Gitxaała territory, governance, and culture. The community and its research agents have tirelessly engaged proponents through education, meetings, and tours of Gitxaała territory to try to show them the beauty and wealth of Gitxaała culture and land. Community members often discuss how proponents "just don't understand" the value and deep connection of Gitxaała resources, and foods, to Gitxaała people. Gitxaała foods are interwoven throughout multiple facets of Gitxaała culture and are fundamental to everyday life. Gitxaała food is a topic that permeates daily conversations throughout the village. Much like the weather is a conversation opener for city folk, the foods currently being harvested are a typical way to engage in short casual conversations in the village. Each time I trudged down one of the roads in the village I would come upon someone; pleasantries were often followed by comments on how the weather related to harvesting or processing of food. "Oh it's a stormy day out there, not a good day for picking"; "Sun is shining perfect for drying."

Gitxaała foods and resource management are central in discussions surrounding the body of academic research conducted with Gitxaała Nation. When Git lax m'oon speak of their foods they are not only talking about sustenance, they are speaking about themselves, their traditions, laws, and culture. Any threat to their territory and resources is also a threat to Gitxaała people themselves, their culture and traditions. Food is an intricate component to understanding and being Git lax m'oon.

The concept of food security is a popular buzzword when discussing the needs and well being of Indigenous peoples, particularly among those in locations inaccessible by road and/or without local access to grocery stores. Food insecurity is identified to be a problematic issue among many First Nations throughout Canada (Power 2008). Territory-based foods are understood as a steady and reliable source of food, although there are a host of issues surrounding the inability to consume such foods, including costs associated with harvesting, time required (away from work) to harvest food, environmental contaminants, climate change, and other threats related to territory and ability to access territory. Typically, academic, governmental and public policy discussions of food security recognize the cultural importance of eating territory-based foods but often fail to consider the unique cultural significance and importance in each stage of Indigenous food systems: harvesting, processing and storing, cooking and eating, as well as sharing. Embedded within each of these stages are cultural values and teachings unique to the place and the people who are

engaging with the food system. Furthermore, it is through these practices where relationships are established and maintained.

Involvement in the entirety of the food system and its activities, from harvest to consumption, are all acts which Alfred and Corntassel (2005) would consider as vital to living and 'being Indigenous.' These are the very practices that forge connection and relationships to the land and allow individuals and communities to understand what it means to be of the *laxyuup*,[3] while providing the means to interact with, build, and understand the community makeup. The Gitxaała food system is a principal channel through which the Git lax m'oon are able to connect with and practice what it means to be of the Gitxaała Nation.

The importance and centrality of Gitxaała foods to the lives of the Git lax m'oon is quite evident upon visiting Lach Klan. As I would wait at the seaplane base or the ferry terminal to travel to Lach Klan I was always provided with insight into what was going on in the village, especially in relation to Gitxaała foods. Talk of Gitxaała food seeps into most discussions of those waiting to go to Lach Klan; details of who has gone where and what (and how much) they harvested are exchanged, how the weather has affected ability to smoking fish or drying *ła'ask*,[4] and who has had the latest brush with the DFO[5] over harvesting Gitxaała foods were all topics of conversation I overheard. Conversations that included mention of the Enbridge pipeline or other resource extraction projects almost inevitably lead to discussion of Gitxaała foods. The vignette on the reaction to the pipeline approval in the opening of this chapter exemplifies the typical feelings community members have towards Enbridge.

Following Power's (2008) call for qualitative research to determine Indigenous perspectives and definitions of food security, my research originally set out to find a Gitxaała specific definition. Power (2008) highlights the importance of the intricacies of the cultural elements embedded in food that are vital for Indigenous people's connecting to cultural traditions and ways of life. My research was conceived with interest in how food figures in understanding and being Gitxaała.

I took on the role of an apprentice[6] in order to learn about the centrality of Gitxaała foods. As an apprentice there was a lot of time spent observing and little time spent doing. I used this time to video-record harvesting and food processing practices to create film vignettes for the community. My goal was to follow Gitxaała foods from ocean to fork, and to understand each stage of their food system: harvesting, processing and storing, as well as cooking and eating. Sharing is a vital component of the Gitxaała food system that is pervasive through each of the other stages.

3 *Laxyuup* is the translation for "territory" in Sm'algyax, the language of the Gitxaała people.

4 *Ła'ask* is the Sm'algya̱x word for the red laver seaweed (*Porphyra abbottiae*) typically picked May. Both *ła'ask* and seaweed are used in the local vernacular to refer to the particular species eaten.

5 Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

6 See Jarvenpa (1998) for ethnography of apprenticeship on Dené hunting.

I was able to approach Gitxaała's food system from two entry points. While in the village of Kitkatla I stayed at a bed and breakfast operated by a community elder. Annabelle continually provided me with some of my most flavourful (pun intended) fieldwork experiences. In her home I was introduced to many foods and dishes that I had never tasted or had even heard of before arriving in Lach Klan. From her I learned about eating Gitxaała foods. Annabelle is a fabulous cook, who prides herself in the preparation of each meal in her kitchen for her family and for guests. As a guest in her B&B I would often help prepare meals. I learned a lot about the many new foods that I encountered in Lach Klan and the many different ways that they can be prepared and eaten.

My second entry point into the food system was through spending time with a harvester. Cyril graciously taught me and allowed me to video record teachings about food. I took on the role of an apprentice who watches intently, does very little, and even got in the way once or twice. I was first introduced to Cyril while being shown around the village by Caroline Butler. Upon mentioning that he was drying *ła'ask* later that day, Caroline jumped at the opportunity to arrange for me to tag along to film and to learn. A few hours later I apprehensively opened the door to the home that matched the description I was given. As soon as I opened the door I could smell a strong unfamiliar scent that I would later recognize as the smell of *ła'ask*. A familiar voice greeted me as I moved down through the doorway, "Hello! I'm in the basement, just about to get started."

Food Security And Cultural Importance

Food security is defined by the World Health Organization as "when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life" (World Health Organization 2016) and is considered to exist on three separate levels: individual, household, and community. Food security is maintained when its four pillars are upheld: (1) *access* to food source (2) *availability* of food (3) *utilization* of food and (4) *stability* of food supply (World Health Organization 2016).

Such a conceptualization of food security is the typical definition used throughout Canada when considering nutritional needs; it is widely used throughout the public health system, and research examining food practices and food availability in Indigenous populations. This definition excludes the practices associated with food outside of consumption, and also fails to incorporate the perspective of Indigenous peoples. Sociologist Elaine Power (2008) argues that Indigenous peoples of Canada have unique food security considerations related to harvesting, sharing, and consuming (I would also add processing) of their own foods and proposes that cultural food security be another level of food security to be included in working definitions of the concept.

When the Git lax m'oon talk about their food, they are talking about themselves. The harvesting, processing, and consumption of Gitxaała foods are not just about the physical act of fishing or smoking or eating, each act is an experience that encompasses language, story, history and relationships. These are all acts of cultural practice and transmission that assert Git lax m'oon identity and differentiate them not only from *K'amksiwah*[7] but also from other Nations. Ensuring the security of Gitxaała foods is vital to ensuring the continuation of Gitxaała cultural practices and values; therefore Gitxaała's food system can be understood as a source of cultural security.

Gitxaała Food System

My analysis begins with the Gitxaała food system as a whole. This approach provides a wide view into the significance of the territory-based food system. Each stage of the food system is embedded with different bits of cultural knowledge. Just as processing, storing, cooking, and eating expose knowledge not revealed by focusing solely on harvesting, each of these stages provides insight into each of the other stages that would not be realized without studying the system as a whole. Each and every stage of the food system embodies cultural values, relationships, and knowledge in unique ways.

The Gitxaała food system has several stages: harvesting, processing, storing, sharing, selling, cooking, and eating. Each stage, however, is not distinct and the stages often overlap. *Syt güülm goot*, which can be understood as sharing, is not a distinct stage but a vital component of the food system as a whole; *syt güülm goot* is foundational to the continued practice of the Gitxaała food system. I attempted to follow food from ocean to fork and involved myself in food practices wherever and whenever opportunity arose. I did not learn in sequential order; my first point of entry was sitting around a table eating a meal. I first realized that there was much to be learned on the importance of food sharing simply by sitting on a couch listening to the VHF radio and people's offers, requests, and sales of food. I watched a lot of meal preparations and cooking before I was able to join a harvesting trip.

This chapter is organized to focus on harvesting, processing and storing, and cooking and eating and discuss the sharing that is pervasive throughout each of these stages. Sharing and selling of Gitxaała foods are critical components of the food system, which permit access to food for those who cannot or do not harvest. The sale of foods within the community is not considered legal according to Canadian law;[8] however it reflects the long traditions of barter and sale between households within Gitxaała Nation and between First Nations.

---

7 The Sm'algyax word for Euro-Canadian settlers.

8 See http://cfnrfm.ca/dfo-cracks-down-on-illegal-seafood-sales-on-facebook/ for recent clash with DFO over sale of Gitxaała food amounting to a total of $150.

The fragmented way in which I present the Gitxaała food system speaks to the experience of many individuals living in Lach Klan. Very few individuals are involved in each of the stages from harvest to consumption. Further, due to an abundance of sharing and selling individuals are able to process food they did not harvest, they may eat food they did not take part in harvesting or processing, and individuals harvest food that they will never eat. In this chapter I rely on the example of *ła'ask* to demonstrate the importance and interconnectivity of all the stages of the food system at Gitxaała. *Ła'ask* is the food that I interacted with most; I was involved in all stages from ocean to fork. Each of the following stages embodies Gitxaała culture and social relations in a multitude of ways.

Harvesting

Cyril placed two empty white pails into his skiff before he hopped in it. He turned back toward me and took my video camera and backpack, then placed them on the bench before I stepped off the float[9] and into the skiff. We readied ourselves, arranged our gear and buckled up our lifejackets. Then, Cyril let the motor rumble. As we zipped away from the float, Cyril looked into the lens of the camera that I held in my lap and smiled "We're headed out to what we call our deep freeze." Sometime later we arrived at an exposed rock. He jumped out of the skiff onto the rock and pointed out the *dzik'wi'its,*[10] *bilhaa*,[11] and *'yaans*[12] and explained how these are foods that can only be picked at low tide. He cracked open *dzik'wi'its* on the side of the rock, split it apart, carefully slid the delicate golden brown roe out onto his fingers and placed it straight in his mouth. "Breakfast" he said. He picked up a *bilhaa* off the rock, turned to me and said, "We're not allowed to eat these," and told me about the current day DFO moratorium on their harvest (See Menzies 2010, 2015 for more detail). That particular morning we had set out to pick *ła'ask* so he leapt back into the skiff and continued to search for an exposed rock that would allow us to pick.

Ła'ask grows on tidally submerged rocks. It is somewhat iridescent and has a deep dark green hue. Its appearance and texture reminded me of VHS tape that was wavy along its edges. It hung from the sides of the exposed rock at low tide in different lengths. Cyril showed me how to pick the seaweed off of the rock.

> A young nephew of mine asked his grandma "how do you pick seaweed?" She said "I'll show you…" She then rolled the roots of his hair close to his scalp around her fingers and pulled down quickly. "…that way you won't forget."

Ła'ask is graded as it is picked. Some grows too fuzzy, some too thick; among the seaweed that is being picked to eat grow other kinds of seaweed. Learn-

9 The floating dock, the major entry point to the village of Lach Klan.

10 The Sm'algya̲x word for sea urchin. Typically *dzik'wi'its* is used in the local vernacular

11 The Sm'algya̲x word for abalone. Both *bilhaa* and abalone are used in the local vernacular.

12 The Sm'algya̲x word for chiton. Typically *'yaans* is used in the local vernacular.

ing how to dry *ła'ask* taught me what a desirable harvest looked and felt like, enabling me to grade as I picked. I wedged myself in crevices before picking, out of fear that I would slip off the rock. Cyril walked easily about the rock picking seaweed. As he worked he told me about safety on rocks only exposed at low tides:

> Three women paddled a boat out to an exposed rock not far from here at low tide to pick seaweed. Each woman jumped out onto the rock and busied herself picking seaweed. When the baskets were filled and they were ready to paddle back, the boat was gone. Each woman had assumed that the other had secured the boat's anchor to the rock. The tide soon rose and the women vanished.

These are cautionary tales about the knowledge and attention to detail required for interacting with places that are temporarily accessible. The act of harvesting and being present in these particular places brings up particular stories. The act of harvesting keeps the oral traditions alive, relevant, and ensures that they are shared.

Ła'ask can only be picked in early spring. Harvesters are able to identify that *ła'ask* is nearly ready to be picked by the budding of particular plant species in the village. This speaks to the close relationship that the Git lax m'oon have with their *Laxyuup*. Being in tune with the life cycles of different species acts as a way of 'telling time' to identify when certain activities can be practiced. Through harvesting, the Git lax m'oon are enabled not only to live within the territory but to also interact with it, to know the territory and its ecosystems intimately. Ultimately it enables *syt güülm goot* to be practiced and lived.

Harvesting requires the use of a boat; maintenance and fuel expenses associated with operating a boat make the cost of harvesting prohibitive to many members of the Gitxaała Nation. There is no shortage of people wanting to harvest; however there is a shortage of opportunity for those who do not own boats. Harvesters typically harvest with others to share the workload. Harvesting trips are a practice of relationship building. I spent several hours salmon fishing with five men on a wet, cold day. Cyril's own skiff is too small to carry all the gear required for salmon fishing, let alone the catch. He borrowed his nephew's boat for this harvesting trip. We left Lach Klan before sunrise in order to arrive at the site while the tide was low. Cyril, his son-in-law, his cousin, his friend, and I sat under the hood of the borrowed boat. Cyril's son rode alone in the smaller skiff.

We arrived at End Hill, a popular fishing spot, just after dawn. After setting up the net there was not much to do but wait. We all tried to stay warm and dry under the hood of the boat. Periodically two men would hop into the skiff and pull fish out of the net and place them into Rubbermaid tote bins. Eventually we got out onto the rock to which we had tied to stretch our legs. A small fire was made atop of the rock, we stood around it to dry and warm ourselves. We spent the majority of the several

hours with not much to do but wait; we sipped hot coffee from a thermos, shared food and snacks, all the while sharing stories and jokes. After the fish were taken out of the net one last time and the net hauled back into the boat, we gutted the fish on a rock. Knives slit through fish bellies, guts were pulled out and left to wash out to sea, roe was set aside to take back with us. About 170 cleaned fish were put back in the totes before we headed back to Lach Klan. "A small haul" I was told. Several more harvesting trips would be required to get the fish they needed for themselves and their families. Upon arrival back at the village the fish were divided up. Each of the six of us got a share of the fish. The next day a few of these same men went out and distributed that day's catch between themselves and a few aunties.

Harvesting offers a vantage point to understand the life cycles of the territory and how all within this territory connects and shares life. Harvesting provides an opportunity to connect with people and is a time of relationship building. Harvesting brings people together where they share stories, knowledge, equipment, gear (such as boats and nets), and ultimately the catch itself.

Processing And Storing

Food harvested from the sea is understood as food as soon as it is harvested; long before it is processed. After being harvested there are multiple different methods of processing to provide different uses and flavours of the food. *Ła'ask* is dried, pressed, chopped or frozen. Fish can be smoked, dried, jarred, or frozen. I group these different activities all under one heading 'processing and storing' for ease of organizational purposes. No person I encountered in the village uttered the word 'processing' but instead referred to a specific activity such as, smoking, jarring, chopping *ła'ask*, et cetera.

This stage of the food system is a tremendous amount of work. Beyond the effort involved, significant amounts of time and knowledge are required in order to ensure the quality (taste as well as health and safety) of the food. After *ła'ask* is picked there are multiple stages for its processing before it is ready for storage and consumption. Some *ła'ask* is placed immediately into Ziploc bags and into a freezer for storage. Drying *ła'ask* begins shortly after its harvest.[13]

My very first interaction with Gitxaała food, other than eating it, was laying *ła'ask* out to dry. Handfuls of *ła'ask* were taken from a mesh-lined bucket and spread out on the *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask*, a square slatted cedar board. Since it was overcast and rain was expected at any moment each of the *ła'ask* covered *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask* were left balanced on top of a box, freezer, wooden beam or washing machine in the shelter of the basement, until they could later be put out in the sun. These *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask* once belonged to Cyril's father who had made them. He told me how just a few weeks prior he had repaired the *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask* as some of the cedar slats had come loose

13 *Ła'ask* used to be dried on the side of rocks, however this is done less frequently in recent times.

or worn. After laying out a few squares, Cyril turned to me and asked if I wanted to try. *Ła'ask* is a little bit slimy. It has a green-black colour and, when pulled, resembles the texture and feel of thin film plastic. As it is spread out on *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask* the *ła'ask* is graded, I was shown which pieces of *ła'ask* to discard; thicker and/or fuzzier pieces are not included to be dried. Learning to lay *ła'ask* out to dry prepared me for harvesting it. Other than eating, this is usually the first interaction that Git lax m'oon children have with *ła'ask*.

There are many ingenious methods used to dry *ła'ask*: drying it in the oven at the lowest temperature, in a dehydrator, using a mesh screen instead of *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask*, and some people even take the nearly dried squares off of *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask* and clip them to laundry hangers to finish drying. The number of squares is the local vernacular for describing and understanding how much *ła'ask* a family picked. Once squares are completely dry, some are folded up and placed into Ziploc bags for dry storage, some are then prepared for chopping.

Squares of dried *ła'ask* are layered into a box with fresh seawater sprinkled on top of each layer in order to help the layers stick together to make a cake. Once the box is filled to the top the layers of *ła'ask* are compacted to make a cake. I saw this done by placing a piece of clean cardboard atop the *ła'ask* and then the cardboard being repeatedly marched upon. A weight was then left on top of the compressed layers of *ła'ask* before it was left to dry. Once the "cake" dries it is ready to be chopped. A large dried out log had been made into a chopping block. It arrived via wheelbarrow from a family members' home. The top of the block had been encircled with rubber to prevent the bits of chopped *ła'ask* from falling off the side of its flat surface. The homemade chopping knife was fashioned from a repurposed logging saw; the teeth of the saw were placed into a long piece of wood that served as the handle and the smooth side of the saw was sharpened and used as a chopping knife. Before *ła'ask* is chopped it is again sprinkled with fresh saltwater. I filmed as an Elder sat down on a short stepstool and chopped *ła'ask*; "There are other ways of doing this," she told me, "I do it this way because that's the way my parents always did." Her arm was in a constant steady motion bringing the large knife down onto the *ła'ask*. I soon offered to take over the chopping. It is physically exhausting work. As the *ła'ask* was chopped, the *ła'ask* flakes were laid to dry in the sun on a tablecloth. Annabelle told me that I had chopped the *ła'ask* too much; that the pieces were smaller than she prefers. This was not a complaint or a judgment that I had ruined the *ła'ask* but was a matter of fact statement so that I would learn and change what I was doing. Once dried, the chopped *ła'ask* was funnelled into large glass jars that once stored pickles and was placed into the pantry.

I followed Cyril through a gate and into a backyard. As we turned around the back of the house there was an extended family all working towards a common goal. There were five women, the homeowner, her three daughters, and one granddaughter.

They sat around tables set up under a blue tarp cutting up the fish they had caught the previous day. One man, the husband of one of the daughters, was preparing wood for a fire. After being introduced to everyone I held up my video camera and I asked whether it was okay to film what they were doing. All attention was then focused toward the matriarch of the family. "It's up to her," I was told by a woman sitting on a stool beside me as she continued to cut fish on top of a Rubbermaid tote bin. I was given a nod from the matriarch to acknowledge that it was indeed fine for me to start filming.

Jarring fish is a yearly tradition for this extended family. They harvest salmon together, and then smoke and jar fish together. Work and family obligations have caused two of the sisters to live outside of Lach Klan, but each year they take time away from their regular schedules to get their fish. "We've all worked in the cannery at some point or another and none of us would ever eat that fish. We've seen the way it looks when it comes in," I'm told as the women continue to cut the fish up, preparing it to be put into jars. Children run around the back yard playing, yelling, and periodically peeking their eyes up above the table.

Hours later, after all the fish is cut up and rinsed clean; it is ready to be packed into jars. A few pinches of salt are put into the bottom of each jar before they are packed with salmon. The rim of each jar is wiped clean, and then a brand new lid is placed on top of each jar before having a ring twisted on to ensure the lid stays in place. Younger kids become more involved more at this point, periodically helping to fill jars, wipe clean the rims, and place lids on top of jars. Once the jars are packed with salmon and the lids are on they are ready to be sealed.

After about seven hours of cutting and packing jars full of salmon, the incredible number of jars were ready to be sealed. This was each of these five families' supplies of jarred fish for the year. Two large metal barrels that had been set up above a fire pit were filled with jars. There was not enough room to fit all of the jars so the rest were set aside for second batch that would fill another barrel and a half. The barrels were then filled with water from the garden hose, sheets of metal were placed on top of each barrel, and a fire was lit beneath. To seal the jars safely the jars need to be boiled for four hours. It was about six o'clock in the evening by the time the fire was started. From this point it would take several hours to get the frigid water to boil. The fire needed to be tended to all through the night.

This family wasn't just jarring fish. Their backyard smokehouse was also filled with fish. As the jars were being loaded into the drums by the grandkids, other family members were taking the smoked fish out of the smokehouse. A grandmother packed ziploc bags with smoked fish and then divided the bags into separate piles for each of the families involved in the workload to take home. A young woman entered the room; she had not been around all day. A noticeably smaller share of fish was slid towards her and she was told, "If you want more for your family next year, you need to be here and help."

Months later at a Canada Day celebration in a Prince Rupert park I saw one of the women that had been jarring fish that day in the backyard. She and I had a brief conversation, but she made a point to tell me that my presence and interest in something that was seemingly so ordinary to her (jarring and smoking fish) caused her to reflect on what it meant to her. She explained that it was something deeply important for her to do each year, to go home for smoking and jarring salmon. It was not only for the fish that she would get to eat throughout the year but also an opportunity to interact with the land and water, and to connect with her family.

Processing food is an exemplary practice of *syt güülm goot*. All are expected to share in the efforts to get all of the work done and to receive a share in the food. The idea that everyone is involved together is not only to share the workload but also to ensure the practice is continued. Furthermore, it is a practice that enables individuals to connect with and affirm relationships with ancestors, through practicing techniques that had been taught and passed through the generations or by using *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask*, knives, or jars that had been previously used by loved ones.

Cooking and Eating

As I spread out *ła'ask* on the *ha'li'lax si'ła'ask*, I turned to Rose and said, "there's no way I need all of this. You should take some of it." She looked at me and shot me a smile of disbelief. For dinner that night Annabelle took a Ziploc bag filled with dried *ła'ask* out of the pantry and taught me how to deep-fry it. *Ła'ask* is prepared by cutting the large square up into smaller pieces. Deep frying *ła'ask* is a delicate process; place it in oil for too long and it's burnt, not long enough and it's not crispy just greasy. Each morsel is placed into a pot of hot oil, flipped over, taken out of the oil, and then dropped into a bowl lined with paper towels in a matter of seconds.

"Do you see the colour of this?" Annabelle said to me as she held up a piece of fried *ła'ask*. It was a brighter green after being fried "this is the colour it gets when we know it's ready".

"See this one," pointing to a morsel that had brownish yellow bits around the edges "was cooked too long."

She dipped another piece of *ła'ask* into the hot oil with tongs and took it out without flipping it over, "see this colour? Wasn't cooked long enough." It was still nearly black. "Now, taste it," she said handing me a bite-sized piece cooked to the bright green colour. It was crispy, salty, it melted in my mouth; it was reminiscent of a potato chip but far more satisfying. After I crunched into my first piece I said: "I don't think that I got enough to last me very long." Everyone in the kitchen laughed, "We knew you would change your mind once you tasted it." "We've got a little Indian giver here." Rose could not contain her delight, "Just a few hours ago she was giving it away, now she wants more." I was affectionately teased about this time and time again.

Gitxaała foods are luxury foods coveted by outsiders: sockeye salmon, Dungeness crab, abalone, sea urchin, halibut, and herring roe, just to name a few. The love and gratitude that outsiders or the Git lax m'oon who no longer live in the village have for the quality, taste, and ease of access to Gitxaała foods is a channel through which people living in Lach Klan reflect on their appreciation for the steady supply of Gitxaała food. The very first time I visited Lach Klan the woman with whom I stayed lamented about how eating Gitxaała foods, which are often considered high quality delicacies by outsiders, is part of the everyday and ordinary in Lach Klan. She reflected that it is outsiders' taste and desire to only eat Gitxaała food while staying in the village (and also leaving the village with a supply of Gitxaała food) that helps to bolster the Git lax m'oon's appreciation of their own food while also hindering Gitxaała foods from being considered ordinary.

Gitxaała foods are incorporated into many different types of meals. From my observations I could note that the vast majority of meals eaten in Lach Klan include Gitxaała foods. Countless hours are put into transforming Gitxaała food from something that is living in the *laxyuup* to something that is stored in the pantry or freezer. *Ła'ask* is a food eaten frequently in numerous types of ways. *Ła'ask* that is placed straight from the sea into Ziploc bags and stored in the freezer is added to stir-fries. Chopped *ła'ask* can be used to make broths, added to soups, or sprinkled on top of rice. Dried *ła'ask* squares can be crisped in the oven by baking at a low temperature, or deep-fried in oil. Jarred sockeye salmon is used to make salmon sandwiches or eaten straight out of the jar with rice. Smoked salmon can be made into sushi rolls. Frozen salmon is fried, baked, broiled, poached, and made into soups and chowders.

There is more to cooking than purely acquiring necessary ingredients and having the knowledge and ability to follow (or recall) a recipe; cooking is a social act embedded with cultural meaning. Relationships are reaffirmed through the act of cooking Gitxaała foods. The knowledge and skills required to cook Gitxaała foods are typically passed down from mother to daughter. Each time a meal is cooked there is more than just a meal being prepared but it is also a practice of strengthening and honouring relationships. There is much thought put into what will be cooked and for whom. Ensuring that family members are fed their favoured foods is an act of love and appreciation. It is inevitable that family members visiting from outside of Lach Klan will eat most if not all of their favourite Gitxaała foods and dishes while in the village, and will be provided with enough to take some home.

The amount of food prepared for a meal is not simply for those expected to eat, but a surplus tends to be made for leftovers, in case of an unexpected dinner guest, or to be shared with others. Many nights around dinner hour you can hear offerings over the VHF radio, "I've got enough boiled seal meat here for about four people. Bring a pot or container over if you want some." Cooking is not just an act of food preparation but is an exercise in remembering and connecting with both, ancestors and family.

When a large bowl of fried *ła'ask* was placed in the middle of the dinner table along with a pot full of rice, a few jars of sockeye, and soya sauce everyone in Annabelle's kitchen quickly found a seat at the table. This was a meal I had on several occasions while staying with Annabelle; I was told it is a preferred meal for many of her family members. Annabelle's adult son popped off the lid from a jar of sockeye and proclaimed his love for the contents,

"The best there ever was, the best there is, the best there ever will be."

The jars of sockeye were scraped clean, the mountain of fried *ła'ask* quickly dwindled. Annabelle and her four family members thrilled at my love for this meal. Sitting around the table is also a time for conversation and political conversation: family members talk about memories of previous harvesting trips and future plans to harvest, but also about the future of Gitxaała's food system. Often casual conversation about the food would lead to discussion of how projects in the territory would affect the health of the *laxyuup* (tanker traffic introducing invasive species affecting the ecosystem, tanker spills), the continued ability to engage in harvesting practices (environmental degradation and increased vessel traffic in waters limiting Git lax m'oon's access to sites and resources), and thus capacity to eat Gitxaała foods (the health, safety, and quality of foods). These dialogues contained more than concern for food but also an anxiety for the impacts such a future would have on the Gitxaała Nation and its cultural practices.

I was offered the last piece of fried *ła'ask* left on the oil soaked paper towel and I cheerfully accepted. Everyone around the table smirked as I proceeded to finish off the last of the crumbs in the bowl. Rose turned to me laughing and said, "I guess we should have mentioned to you earlier that eating seaweed gives you real stinky farts." The room roared. A few fart jokes were made. I thought they were all teasing me, which had become a regular occurrence. They were not.

I was thankful later that night to have a bedroom all to myself; these were by far the most pungent smells I had ever created. This, however, was not the first time that I was warned of the after effects of eating Gitxaała foods. The first time I ever ate cockles I was told of the delicious flavour of the saltwater that they were cooked in. As a few others slurped up the salty broth I was cautioned against tasting any, as that they didn't want me to be embarrassed by the resulting unpleasant odours on the ferry I was about to take from Lach Klan to Prince Rupert.

The aromas (or stench) that food creates after digestion is not something regularly considered part of a food system; in fact this is a facet of human life that has rarely been studied in the discipline of Anthropology.[14] However, due to the distinct smell that the saltwater foods create after digestion individuals are mindful of what they eat, when they eat it, and around whom they eat. Thus the resulting flatulence is understood to be part and parcel of eating particular Gitxaała foods.

14 See http://popanth.com/article/silent-but-deadly-farts-across-cultures for a discussion on the under-theorization of flatulence in Anthropology

There is much more happening in the kitchen other than cooking and eating; it is where the assemblage of time, effort, knowledge, and relationships culminate. Eating is the final and necessary act in the Gitxaała food system that demands the continued practice of all the efforts completed in order to provide the meal. It is the desire to eat Gitxaała foods that warrants that Gitxaała food continues to be harvested and processed, and in turn ensures that the knowledge and relationships embodied within these practices continues to live.

Conclusion

On more than one occasion I was informed that Gitxaała *ła'ask* is the best tasting. For instance Annabelle told me when she and Rose were teaching me to fry seaweed: "When we were in Bella Bella last year for the canoe journey, everyone wanted to eat our fried seaweed. Gitxaała is known to have the best tasting seaweed. We're the best at cooking it too." Declaring that Gitxaała *ła'ask* as the best tasting emphasizes the wealth of the Laxyuup while also confirming the value of the Git lax m'oon's knowledge and relationship of/with the Laxyuup that enables them to ingest laxyuup. Ingesting food that came from the laxyuup allows for Git lax m'oon to become literally made of laxyuup and thus forges deeper connections and strength in the Git lax m'oon's relationship with one another as well as with laxyuup.

The principle of *syt güülm goot* is present in each of the stages of the food system. Each time food is harvested it is shared between all whom are present at the time of harvest and also with friends and family members. Before returning with their harvest to their homes, harvesters drop portions off at several other homes first. Those who process food do not then pack their own pantries and freezers full but share the food with friends and family members who reside in and outside of Lach Klan. Food is cooked and then shared at mealtime; leftovers are often offered to the wider community. It is not only the distribution of the food itself that is guided by *syt güülm goot* but the transference of knowledge and skill surrounding food and the stages of the food system is also guided by this philosophy: how and where species sought for harvesting grow and live; when and how food is to be harvested; how fish is supposed to be cut for smoking as opposed to jarring; how fish is to be hung for smoking. Additionally, the sharing of vessels, equipment, and gear required for harvesting and processing food are propelled by the value of *syt güülm goot*.

This concept lies at the core of understanding the significance of the Gitxaała food system to Gitxaała culture. *Syt güülm goot* connects and integrates the Git lax m'oon with one another and with Laxyuup Gitxaała. It guides actions and thereby fosters respectful relationships that are caring and mutually supportive. The food system breathes life into the concept of *syt güülm goot*; it is through actions that this value becomes more than an abstract idea, but a way of life. Thus, the food system is a necessary channel for culture to be practiced, understood, and transmitted. The

Gitxaała food system assures cultural security for the Git lax m'oon and Gitxaała Nation.

Given this connection between food and cultural security, it is no surprise that food becomes a focus in any discussion of the risks associated with development projects planned in Laxyuup Gitxaała. Food is a vehicle used to discuss the impacts and threats that are posed by projects in Laxyuup Gitxaała. The Git lax m'oon lament over how tanker traffic would affect their ability to navigate through waters and access harvesting sites, what invasive species would be brought into the territory by tankers and how would they affect the foods they harvest, and what kind of devastation a potential spill would bring and which harvesting sites are most vulnerable. When the Git lax m'oon speak of the risks to their foods and their continued consumption of them it is not just about their diet, it is a reflection of a fear about the ways in which such projects could alter their way of life, strike at the heart of what it means to be Gitxaała.

Eating their own food and being able to feed people their own food is a source of pride among Git lax m'oon. Most Gitxaała foods are not unique to the *laxyuup* but their flavours and methods of processing are Gitxaała specific. Many of these same types of foods can and are harvested elsewhere. For instance the same species of seaweed as *ła'ask* is widely available in supermarkets; Japanese nori is not harvested in Laxyuup Gitxaała and is processed in a way that not only alters the taste but also its use. It is not enough for Git lax m'oon to have *ła'ask*, salmon, or any other type of Gitxaała food. It is food harvested from particular places within Laxyuup Gitxaała and processed in particular Gitxaała ways that are desired not only for taste preferences but also are necessary for the continuation of culture. That is, the Gitxaała food system is an embodiment of Gitxaała culture; its sustained practice provides cultural security for Gitxaała Nation.

References

Alfred, T. and J. Corntassel
2005 Being Indigenous: Resurgence against Contemporary Colonialism. Politics of Identity 9: 597-614.

Jarvenpa, R.
1998 Northern Passage, Ethnography and Apprenticeship Among the Subarctic Dene. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.

Menzies, Charles R.
2010 Dm sibilhaa'nm da laxyuubm Gitxaała: Picking Abalone in Gitxaała Territory. Human Organization, 69(3):213-220.
2015 Revisiting "Dm Sibilhaa'nm Da Laxyuubm Gitxaala (Picking Abalone In Gitxaala Territory)": Vindication, Appropriation, and Archaeology. BC Studies 187:129-155.

Power, Elaine M.
2008 Conceptualizing Food Security for Aboriginal People in Canada. Canadian Journal of Public Health, 99(2):95-97.

World Health Organization Food Security
2016 WHO.Int. http://www.who.int/trade/glossary/story028/en/.

Newcomer Self-Provisioning on the North Coast of British Columbia

Caroline F. Butler
Linda Mattson
Charles R Menzies

Introduction

Canadian resource management regulations and urban imaginations continue to implicitly categorize the harvesting of food species in racialized economic terms. Commercial fishing in British Columbia was structured legally as a non-Indian activity (Harris 2008; Newell 1993) through the regulatory distinction between commercial and 'food fishing.' 'Subsistence' and harvesting for food is understood as an Indigenous activity. Hunting and fishing by non-Aboriginals are thus conceived of as recreational pursuits. In rural resource economies, such as Gitxaała territory on the North Coast of British Columbia, these social and regulatory categories constrain both the understanding of land-based activities and their practice by community members. To the north, the state of Alaska has recognized the cultural and economic importance of food harvesting to all its citizens and protects the subsistence rights of non-Indigenous state residents. In British Columbia, rural residents who strive to enhance their economic and social wellbeing through self-provisioning, find themselves caught between legal and social categories, and relatively invisible in resource management structures and land use planning processes. Their activities are non-commercial but economic, and social but not really recreational and intricately connected to their identities as members of northern coastal communities.

This chapter focuses on the self-provisioning pursuits of the Gitxaała Nation's non-Indigenous North Coast neighbours. Drawing upon interviews with the non-Indigenous residents of the North Coast, this chapter explores the value of the region's land and resources to them and extent to which the lands and resources affect their livelihoods and lifestyles. Their responses reveal that economic considerations do

motivate residents to participate in wild food harvesting. However, equally important motivators are self-reliance, strengthening of social networks, reinforcing regional identity, and transference of knowledge and skills. To understand how participation in wild food harvesting has affected cultural, economic, and social aspects of the experiences of non-Indigenous residents of the North Coast, conceptual frameworks related to informal economy are applied in both the research and analysis. This combined with ethnographic methods enabled a more inclusive analysis, facilitating the identification and discussion of the diversity of factors motivating North Coast non-Indigenous residents in their use of the region's land and resources.

Self-provisioning on the North Coast provides the settler residents with an alternative source of goods (i.e., primarily food), expands the capacity of individuals and the community they form, and serves to promote social and cultural well-being. Focussing on the self-provisioning pursuits of the non-Indigenous residents reveals the diversity of factors that motivate them to hunt, fish, and gather, as well as the conditions on the North Coast that facilitate these activities that are very much shaped by the geography of the region. In the process goals, values, and aspirations of the residents are brought to light, those of: respect for the land and nature; sharing as a strategy for families and the community; reciprocity; retaining and passing on knowledge and skills.

Geographical Setting

The North Coast area, as defined here, encompasses northern British Columbia at the southern end of the Alaska Panhandle, bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Coast Mountains to the east. The Skeena River bisects the mainland and ocean straits, channels and inlets slice through the rocky landscape and separate the mainland from the many islands. Within the area are also small to mid-sized lakes and many streams and small rivers originating in the mountains to the east.

Prince Rupert, located on the coast with a natural deep-sea port, is the largest town in the region, with a current population of about 12,000. The region has a large rural population, with about 43% of the region's residents living outside municipal boundaries. This is proportionately higher than in any other region of British Columbia (British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management 2005:15). These smaller settlements are diverse with particular histories and contemporary experiences. The largest outlying communities are the First Nations reserve villages of the region – some on the sites of ancient villages, others located according to colonial priorities and forces. At the other end of the scale are the single cabin sites where independent and sometimes reclusive individuals have sought alternate off-the-grid lifestyles. These peaked in number during the 1970s but some still remain. There are also a number of outlying settler communities that were established during the early 1900s. Icelandic and Japanese fishers settled Osland, on Smith Island.

Hunt's Inlet on Porcher Island dates back to the late 1800s. Neither of these communities has retained any permanent residents since the 1970s, and the cabins are now weekend or summer homes for people in Prince Rupert, and increasingly, Alberta. Scandinavian boatbuilders, fishermen and loggers settled Oona River in 1909. While a growing proportion of residents are retirees, there remains a permanent population of fishers and loggers who engage in the formal local resource economy. Dodge Cove and Crippen Cove are located across from Prince Rupert on Digby Island and are home to a colourful mix of resource workers, artists, and professionals such as nurses and teachers who commute to Prince Rupert daily.

Not surprisingly, the outlying settler communities have a particularly strong tradition of self-provisioning and extensive resource use that complemented their natural resource work in the formal economy. Individuals who live in those places, those who grew up there, and those who retain cabins on the islands, numbered highly in the research sample. However, it is not just the 'pioneer' families with a multigenerational history of natural resource extraction that have meaningful engagements with the land and resources of the north coast. Harvesting and preserving local food is a common activity for many North Coast households, imbued with significant economic and social value. The research for this chapter sought to make visible those values and relationships in the context of land use planning.

Methods and Approach

Data for this chapter was initially gathered as part of the North Coast Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) planning process. Overall the purpose North Coast LRMP plan was to:

> Foster economic and environmental sustainability through an ecosystem-based management (EBM approach which relies on traditional, local and scientific knowledge.
>
> Deliver a comprehensive system of area specific management direction
>
> Identify economic, environmental, social and community transition requirements and strategies. [BC BC Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management 2005:17]

The North Coast planning area is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the Coast Mountains to the east. It covers a diverse area between Princess Royal Island to the southwest and north to within five kilometres of the town of Stewart (ILMB 2001: NCLRMP BACKGROUNDER). The stakeholder groups at the North Coast planning table included:

- Community Economic Development
- Major Forest Companies
- Small Business Forestry

- Labour
- Mining and Exploration
- Local Government
- Provincial Government
- Federal Agencies
- Nisga'a, Haisla, Gitxaała, Tsimshian First Nations
- Conservation and Environment
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Tourism[1]
- Recreation

This was a body of stakeholders designed to represent the variety of interests and rights that intersect in the region. While originally envisioned as an 18 month process, the NCLRMP table was convened in January 2002 and final recommendations were released in February 2005.

As part of the LRMP planning process the British Columbia government commissioned studies which considered all potential uses and functions of land and resources in the various regions of the Province and invited stakeholders in these regions to participate in the decision-making process.

As indicated earlier an ethnographic research approach was used in the collection of data. The researchers applied qualitative methods to gather their data. As part of the process, a common sampling method known as snowball sampling or chain referral sampling was used. In this method, participants with whom contact has already been made by the researchers, use their social networks to refer the researchers to other individuals who could potentially participate in or contribute to the study (Bryman and Bell 2007; O'Reilly 2005).

As an exploratory study, the ethnographic nature of the research was critical. Non-Indigenous hunting in BC particular is understudied and poorly understood by academics and policy makers. The project required a methodological approach that allowed for the narrative self-positioning of resource users to be analyzed.

The goal of the research was not to quantitatively assess the role of self-provisioning in the North Coast – project resources and timelines did not allow for this. Rather, a preliminary investigation of the scope of activities and how they were understood and valued by participants was designed to inform the land use planning. Essentially, the research aimed to prove the existence of these activities and social relations and to highlight their economic, cultural and social importance in the region. Land use designations that attend to uses and values in addition to Aboriginal rights and title, commercial value, and recreational interests were needed.

Interviews with non-Indigenous residents were conducted in Prince Rupert, Port Edward, Oona River, and Dodge Cove between August 2002 and January 2003. The

1 Due to conflicts, this seat was eventually split into two, representing large-scale commercial and small-scale local tourism operations separately.

primary field researcher was Caroline Butler. Her work was supplemented by research conducted by Daniel Dawson, Rebekah Leakey, and Charles Menzies. The researchers started with names provided by NCLRMP Planning Table Representatives. Specifically, support for the research and identification of key participants came from the Fish and Wildlife Habitat sector. The researchers also drew upon personal contacts in the community.

Twenty-five primary interviews were conducted, supplemented by participant observation in Prince Rupert. Interviews were conducted at the research participant's home or, in the case of self-employed, at their place of work. Several of the interviews were group interviews, with the largest being a gathering of five recreational hunters in the 30 to 45-age range. The majority of research participants were men, ages 33 to 73. Most of the interviews were structured around the seasonal round, beginning in November or January, and following the harvest activities throughout the twelve months of the year.

Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, which provided a basic framework for conversation through a list of prepared questions, while still allowing for the natural flow of conversation that can offer unexpected information. Interview questions sought to establish each participant's background information, including age, occupation, and length of residence and use of the North Coast. Maps were used as a resource, but spatial data was not the focus of the interviews. The maps provided an opportunity for participants to demonstrate their knowledge of and relationship with various locations within the region, discuss resource use within specific areas (e.g., Anger Island, Gil Island area, Hecate Strait, Kennedy Island, Otter Pass, Smith Island), and identify specific threats to access.

With an emphasis on narrative inquiry as a primary analysis tool, interviews strove to not only identify the degree to which fishing, gathering, and hunting makes material contributions to households (i.e., catching your own fish and hunting for your own meat reducing food costs). Interviews also sought to determine additional motivations and benefits of land and resource use (e.g., strengthening connections to the land; contributing to social capital and social networks through networks of exchange and reciprocity)

Two strong currents inform the analysis. As suggested earlier in the document, the literature on informal economy in North America, in particular that of self-provisioning, informed the analysis (e.g., Ellison et al. 1997:259; Gerxhani 2004; McLain et al. 2008; Reimer 2006; Teitelbaum and Beckley 2006). Equally important was drawing upon analytical tools of social scientist and use ethnographic analytical methods.

The chosen analytical framework reflects the applied context of the research. As the land use planning process was being launched in the North Coast region, research priorities were identified to supplement the "Current Conditions" and background

reporting that had been done prior to stakeholder engagement. Dr. Charles Menzies of UBC identified the lack of information about non-Indigenous, non-commercial resource use as a particular area of concern. The research project was contracted to provide a profile of such practices and land use values. Informal economy was chosen as the label for these activities, rather than subsistence, to emphasize the economic value and to differentiate the activities from Aboriginal and recreational practices.

These activities and their limited integration into Provincial policy and spatial planning need to be understood against the backdrop of Aboriginal claims and resource competition. Land use planning in a pre-treaty context such as that of the North Coast of British Columbia hoped to respect Aboriginal rights and traditional uses, designate particular areas for conservation, open others for development such as forestry, while preserving visual quality and access for tourism and recreation. Local knowledge was identified as a key information source but was expected to be primarily integrated into the planning through the representative stakeholders who sat at the planning table. The non-Aboriginal community-based research opportunities were limited.

Historically, self-provisioning activities, which "form a subset of behaviors broadly subsumed under the heading 'informal economy' " have played an important role in rural life (Teitelbaum and Beckley 2006:114). Informal economy is defined in various ways in non-academic and academic literature, with researchers differing in their views about what types of activities are informal economic activities and therefore what to measure and/or observe when studying informal economic activities (McLain et al. 2008:4). While the formal economy encompasses activities and transactions that are systematically recorded or regulated by the government, the informal economy generally refers to the "production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that have economic value, but are neither protected by a formal code of law nor recorded for use by government-backed regulatory agencies" (Reimer 2006:23).

In this chapter we use Reimer's definition of informal economic activities that in the "most general terms refers to the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services that 'we do not count.' " Given that informal economic activities are not counted "participation in the informal economy must be inferred from information regarding the activities of the respondents" (Reimer 2006:29).

Informal economic activities are generally performed for self-consumption or for relatives, friends, and/or acquaintances (Ellison 1997:257). Furthermore, and of relevance to this study, because informal economic activities are not recorded and therefore undetectable to conventional economic analysis, their value is also invisible (Berkes 1994:357). For the purposes of this chapter, analysis will focus on the subset of activities that fall under the heading of "informal economy," that of self-provisioning (Teitelbaum and Beckley 2006). Further, an examination of

the informal economy (i.e., wild food harvesting) is undertaken from the point of view of activities rather than currency. However, currency as it relates to the various harvesting activities will be identified.

A number of specific conditions are required to advance the operation of informal economies (see Ellison et al. 1997 and Reimer 2006). These conditions are analogous to those required for operation of formal economies, "but they have some special aspects that favour the more informal approach to economic behavior" (Ellison et al. 1997:258). The conditions that augment informal economies are (Ellison et al. 1997:258-259; Reimer 2006):

- Access to tradable resources (availability of wildlife, fish and edible fruits; equipment; cash; time);
- A wide range of knowledge and skills;
- Social networks;
- Social norms that support informal exchange; and,
- Levels of exclusion from participation in the formal economy.

Drawing upon interviews with wildlife harvesters on the North Coast and informed by the literature on informal economies, this section discusses the conditions (i.e., resources, knowledge and skills, social network, social norms, and economic need) that support informal economic activities in the North Coast region.

It should be noted that many of the research participants also cultivated significant harvests of vegetables on their properties in Prince Rupert or other communities. Gardening activities were not included as foci of the project because they were not directly relevant to the land use planning process. However, it should be noted that small-scale cultivation has a long history in the region and contributes significantly to the informal economy. While the range of vegetables that can be grown in the North Coast climate is small, residents have seen a great deal of success with raised beds and using local resources (fish carcasses, seaweed, and starfish) as fertilizer, and greenhouses are not uncommon.

Provisioning Needs: Components of the Informal Economy

In the following section, we explore the requirements of participation in the informal economy of the North Coast: access to natural resources, access to material resources, time and flexibility, skills and knowledge, and social networks.

Access to Natural Resources

Participation in the informal economy requires access to resources – natural resources as well as the means of production, and time to engage in self-provisioning activities (Ellison et al. 1997:257-259; Reimer 2006). Land provides the opportunity to produce or procure food for consumption or exchange. Equipment is required and may be either simple or complex. Modes of transportation (e.g. boats, trucks)

are required for access to harvesting sites or for distributing a product. Although, informal economies appear to function outside of regular economies, the availability of some cash is required for them to operate. Finally, time is an important resource for the process (Ellison et al. 1997:258-259; Reimer 2006:27), which requires a particular relationship with the formal economy, with participants being neither too 'under' nor 'over'-employed.

The North Coast of British Columbia has historically provided all of the resources required for successful self-provisioning to a sizable portion of the local population. A large public land base and marine area, with both marine and road access hosts a diverse array of abundant food species. Industrial development has not significantly inhibited harvesting activities; in fact, the construction of logging roads has been identified as a benefit to terrestrial hunters, improving access and encouraging wildlife movement. Commercial fishing participation provides a portion of the settler community with the means of production for household provisioning through the use of boats and nets, and commercially-caught fish enter the informal economy through gifts, trade, barter and informal sales. The industrial wage economy has provided high-paying seasonal jobs that can fund the purchase of harvesting equipment and fuel, and that provide the flexibility necessary to engage in multi-day harvesting activities at various times throughout the year.

The North Coast region also supports the social resources and relations that underpin an informal economy. Despite experiencing some youth outmigration and transient worker populations, multigenerational kinship networks are strong and common, promoting resource sharing, food distribution and knowledge transfer. For those residents who do not have longterm ties to the area, tightly knit labour communities often provide similar social networks – millworkers or fishermen create hunting parties. And the history of boom and bust economies and the unpredictability of key commercial fisheries have encouraged self-provisioning and the supplementing of cash income through resource harvesting. Finally, the intersections between First Nations and settler families and communities result in the integration of First Nations traditional knowledge of local resources into the non-Aboriginal informal economy.

First and foremost, wild food harvesters require access to a land base that holds products they seek. During the interview process, residents described the various locations on the North Coast that support their self-provisioning activities. North Coast settler harvesters use a vast area to provision their households and communities. Interview participants living in the region described a harvesting range that stretched from Camaano Sound in the south, Dease Lake in the north, and Houston to the east, and west to Haida Gwaii, and including marine, riverine and freshwater areas. Harvesting areas were accessed by boat, truck, all-terrain vehicle, and airplane.

North Coast settler harvesters identified a wide variety of resources that they

consume. (See figure 1.) This list is somewhat shorter than that generated by their First Nations neighbours, and involves a smaller range of processing and preparation methods. However, the number and diversity of types of species accessed by settlers in the region indicates the breadth and flexibility of the informal economy.

Terrestrial	Birds	Marine	Plants
Deer	Ducks	Salmon	Mushrooms
Moose	Geese	Steelhead	Huckleberries
Caribou	Grouse	Trout	Salmonberries
Elk		Halibut	Blueberries
Mountain Goat		Rockfish	Soapberries
Bear		Crab	
		Prawn	
		Shrimp	
		Seaweed	
		Starfish	
		Clams	
		Cockles	

Figure 1. Resources consumed by North Coast Settler Harvesters.

While every research participant did not use all of these resources, each did access more than one species. Some of the fishermen did not participate in terrestrial hunting but almost every hunter also fished. Ducks and geese are harvested primarily in marine areas, from boats. Of the larger land-based species harvested, interviews reveal that the area's residents most frequently harvest deer, closely followed by moose. However, a moose yields more meat than the deer; 450 lbs vs 45 lbs of edible meat per animal.

Access to ungulates is achieved through hunting permits issued by the Provincial Wildlife Conservation. Some of the species listed above are limited entry. Hunting trips to Haida Gwaii were often motivated by the higher bag limit for deer on the islands. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans permit recreational fishing federally.

During the interviews, North Coast residents identified what they perceive as threats to the resources and areas upon which they have come to depend. Threats included resource competition, spatial restrictions, and resource or habitat depletion.

> Fishing is very different from when I first started out, there was so much more opportunity. Resource space was very much more open then, as compared to now.

> Part of the problem in fighting for this kind of stuff is that kids growing up now won't have lived it, so they think that the way things are now is as good as it gets. The resource base has shifted away from local use to southern or international, not that the resource has diminished much.
>
> Provincial proposed coastal zoning plan - a number of areas I once frequented may become limited or be removed from my access due to sport fishing/fish lodges or salmon aquaculture.
>
> Khtada Lake - sportsfishing. Logging is a concern. Selective logging would be okay. You can catch 10 rainbow trout in there. We use airplanes. A few people hike in there. There are goats and bears too.
>
> There are 10-12 cabins between Kwinitsa and Exchamsiks. The biggest threat to the area is increased access. The animal population would decrease. Logging couldn't impact it.
>
> Access is a concern for the future. There was an article in the Daily News that said that people were willing to pay more to use resources. Not everyone is.
>
> The Gitnadoix River is classified water – you need a separate license to access that area. The guides wanted that to happen. They got so many hours on a license to take people there to fish. The areas are reserved for guides. I am worried that will happen with hunting and only the wealthy will be able to afford to do it. Any kid making $2.50/hour should be able to do this. I have no problem with the guides but I wouldn't want to see us kicked out of areas.

Preservation of extensive habitat for key species was a primary concern for research participants. Limits on the type and extent of development in the region were identified as necessary.[2]

Access to harvest areas appeared to be an increasing concern for research participants. This reflected, to some degree, the land use planning context of the project. The North Coast LRMP's objectives of categorization and zoning of land for particular activities and to manage for competing uses was understood by residents as having the potential to both protect their harvesting activities, and to inhibit them. While some participants were hopeful about the protection of important habitat from logging and mining or other development impacts, the creation of parks and conservation areas were seen as a threat to their economic activities. The designation of areas

2 At the time of the interviews, development in the region was at a low; the forest and mining industries were in decline and few new forms of development were being proposed. Since that time, mining claims have increased, and various forms of energy development and transport have been proposed. Public expressions of concern and debates regarding terrestrial and marine impacts of development have increased.

for commercial guiding was also seen as a looming reduction to recreational areas. Provincial-level planning was thus described as something of a double-edged sword.

The ratification of the Nisga'a Final Agreement also contributed to some participants' concerns about access to both area and resources. Prince Rupert residents were concerned about the potential to lose hunting areas through the transfer of Crown land to First Nations' land claims. Some feared that further permitting and/or fees would be required for hunting in First Nations treaty lands. Land claims and processes such as the LRMP produced the perception of a spatial squeeze on non-Aboriginal, non-commercial hunting and other provisioning pursuits.

Federal restrictions on sportsfishing in terms of gear, area, and catch limits had impacted fishing opportunities in both ocean and riverine areas since the late 1990s. Competition for catch share with commercial and Aboriginal fisheries, and the increased power and presence of commercial recreational operations were identified as threats to the ability of North Coast residents fishing for food catches. The ongoing debate regarding salmon aquaculture in northern waters was considered both another potential spatial loss and a more general threat to the viability of salmon populations.

Several hunters described a complicated relationship between hunting and logging in the region. Logging reduced habitat for large ungulates, and had also, historically, impacted salmon-producing watersheds. However, hunters had benefited considerably from the improved access to backcountry areas provided by logging roads. Furthermore, Prince Rupert hunters were pleased with the increasing numbers of moose encountered in coastal areas, as interior logging pushed the population west. Interview participants did note, however, that increased road development eventually resulted in increased numbers of recreational users, leading to overcrowding, resource depletion, and area avoidance. Those with ATVs and jetboats, allowing them to access the more remote hunting areas, were reluctant to see some of these places opened up to a wider population through road development. Furthermore, the development of amenities at particular sites, such as washroom facilities or boat ramps, was identified as a trigger for increased usage, resulting in spatial and resource competition.

Resource harvesters who regularly and significantly participate in the informal economy differentiate themselves from recreational resource users. They consider themselves distinct from the more numerous, less frequent, less well-equipped hunters and fishers who use more accessible areas. The increased spatial incursion of this other category of users was perceived as a threat to their economic activity.

Access to Material Resources

The harvesting and related processing of wild foods require various forms of specialized equipment and transport. Data derived during interviews suggests that self-provisioning activities in the form of harvesting game and fish have the potential to be expensive undertakings. Marine fishing requires the largest capital expenditure

in the form of a vessel, if one does not have access to a commercial fishing boat. Hunting can involve large expenditures for all-terrain vehicles or jet-boats to access remote locations. Other activities require a minimal investment. River or lake fishing can be done without a boat or with a smaller vessel. Harvesting berries, mushrooms and non-food resources such as wood, involves simpler and less expensive tools.

Hunting	**Fishing**
ATV	Boat
Jetboat	Trailer
Rifles with scope	Rods
Bow	Reels
Decoys	Lure, jigs etc.
Binoculars	Nets
Tent/Trailer	Cooler
Misc. camping equipment	Chestwaders/boots
Chestwaders	Lifejackets
Clothing	
Meat saw	
Meat grinder	
Compressor cooler	

Figure 2. Equipment and transportation investments

Those who travel to specific harvest sites to hunt and fish, often use the opportunity to pick berries and mushrooms and to beachcomb logs.

Vehicles such as pickup trucks were not identified by most participants as expenditures for harvesting activities, although some did indicate that they had purchased more powerful or larger vehicles to support/facilitate their resource use activities. The investment in hunting is considerable. You need a truck, so instead of a $15,000 vehicle, you have a $45,000 truck.

Quantitative data for activity and equipment costs were beyond the scope of the research, but participants quantified some aspects of their gear costs while contextualizes their provisioning activities. The initial capital outlay for equipment varies by activity, species of focus etc. but can be sizable. Participants indicated spending up to $500 for high quality binoculars, or over $50 000 for a fishing boat. Fisherman may have ten $200 fishing rods, and hunters may have several rifles worth over $1000 each. Clearly, high level participation in the informal economy requires participation in the formal economy. Wild food harvesting must be subsidized by a form of regular wage employment for most community members. However, these costs tend to be discounted over time, complicating the possibility for individuals to accurately identify

the costs of wild foods.

Several participants commented that they expected that a precise calculation of their terrestrial hunting expenses would show that the meat was actually more expensive than a store-bought equivalent. However they cited both the superior quality of the meat and the enjoyment value of the activity as discounting the expenditure.

However, various individuals also pointed out that harvesting big game in particular was not necessarily cost-effective. As discussed earlier, the cost of big game hunting and fishing can be considerable. In regard to the procurement of game meat, hunters stated: "It's a heck of a lot cheaper to go and buy meat. I hunt for both meat and recreation." The investment in hunting is considerable.

Most participants confirm that big game hunting is an extremely expensive recreational activity – a luxury. Price per pound, game meat is usually more expensive than store-bought meat. Most participants suggested that their hunting activity decreases in times of economic hardship. Several noted that there are few people hunting this season because the pulp mill in Prince Rupert has been shut down and many people are out of work. Several suggested that this was quite noticeable in the fewer number of people traveling to Dease Lake for moose.

Harvesting of wild foods also includes gathering of mushrooms, berries and wood. Harvesting these wild foods tends to be more cost-effective because the process requires simpler tools. Furthermore, as stated previously, gathering berries and mushrooms is sometimes engaged in while hunting, thereby decreasing site access costs.

Time and Flexibility

The time and flexibility to participate in informal economic activities is an equally important requirement as the resources to fund them. Participating in the wild food harvesting requires that harvesters follow a schedule dictated by nature and/or resource management regulations. Some animals can only be hunted at specific times, in specific areas. Marine species are subjected to both seasonal closures, and seasonal abundance. Berries and mushrooms can only be gathered during particular times of the year.

The individuals interviewed were generally long time residents of the region who often list more than one significant occupation. Furthermore, their occupations, current and former, allow a certain degree of flexibility. Seasonal workers such as commercial fishermen or cannery workers can have long periods of unemployment or underemployment, allowing for informal economic activities. Shift workers such as firemen, or those working at the pulp mill or coal or grain terminals can also schedule multi-day harvesting trips throughout the year. Independent tradesmen such as carpenters enjoy the ability to schedule their own work. A harvester's relationship with the formal economy and wage labour is a critical determinant of both the

financial and time resources available to their land use activities.

The majority of wild food harvesting excursions are conducted as day trips, however the hunting of large ungulates, a key activity, is predominantly undertaken as a multi-day expeditions. This is primarily because the prime moose and deer hunting areas involve several hours of travel from Prince Rupert. Oona River residents were the only participants engaged regularly in short day trips of deer hunting. Mushroom picking, which occurs in the autumn, in mainland areas northeast of Prince Rupert, was also often a multi-day activity. Furthermore, this activity straddles formal and informal activities given the lucrative export market for pine mushrooms (Menzies 2006).

One particularly avid hunter provided a snapshot of part of his seasonal round:

> "January [is the] end of the migratory bird season. …
>
> June, July and August are dead months for hunting. When I was younger I went goat hunting in August …
>
> September: Start hunting in a little more earnest. Duck hunting up the river. …
>
> November: I go to the Charlottes [Haida Gwaii] on November 11 for a 10-day trip, 3 of us."

The most active participants in the informal economy held flexibly scheduled or seasonal jobs which allowed for several multi-day excursions at various times of the year, and regular day trips. This factor of seasonality and scheduling dovetails with the class-based association with the informal economy. While annual sports fishing charter trips were associated with middle and upper middle class professionals, hunting and regular recreational fishing activities were clearly the domain of the working class in Prince Rupert. Few of the individuals recruited for the study held traditional white-collar or '9-5' jobs. The resource-based economy of the region and its work structure supports the ability of workers to combine formal and informal economic activities.

Skills and Knowledge

Participation in informal economic activities generally requires a wide range of knowledge and skills. The majority of research participants harvested a variety of resources throughout the year. Detailed knowledge of the land and animals is required: species identification and behaviour, habitat identification, migration patterns, and outdoor survival. Participants also require the skills to operate gear and equipment, and to process and preserve their harvests. They are also familiar with regulatory processes including permitting, size and harvest limits, gear restrictions etc.

Consider the following quote from an avid 31 year old hunter:

> I usually take a spring bear – they are easiest to butcher. The fall bears are feeding on berries. They have a great flavour but the meat is marbled and the fat goes rancid quickly.

> March/April: start gearing up for bear season, which starts mid-April. ... I am looking for a good hide. I like to use every thing I can, other than the stomach. We make sausage, roasts. I want to make bear hams – they are supposed to be very tasty. In a 250 lbs. bear, you lose 50 lbs. to skin and fur, 30 lbs. to head, 40 lbs. guts, and 40 lbs. bones, unusable. That's what, 90 lbs left over. That's generous in terms of edible meat. ...spring bears are good – they have good coats. 3-4 weeks into the season they lose patches of fur – to rubs. They are nice and lean at the beginning too. Bear fat ... if you render it down, it is great for waterproofing leather, and I'm told that the lard is fantastic for baking.

This passage points to the hunter's very detailed knowledge of a bear carcass and his ability to extract multiple food and non-food products from it. Furthermore, it indicates an extensive knowledge of other potential uses and products that have been shared with him by other hunters. North Coast harvesters' ecological knowledge shapes their harvesting efforts. They closely monitor health of resources and adjust their activities accordingly.

> For the population dynamics, because of the wolf population, the bag limit is reasonable. The wolf population is getting bad. When we were hunting, we gave the stressed fawn call to lure a buck. Two wolves showed up. Now we find wolf tracks where there used to be only deer tracks.

Resource users are thus assessing populations, and managing for their abundance. Area avoidance, reduced harvest, and targeting harvesting are mechanisms for local resource management.

Knowledge and information are passed between hunters across and within generations, and across and within communities. While settler resource harvesting practices often differ from local First Nations hunting and fishing in terms of method, gear, and locations, there is also a considerable amount of knowledge transfer between these populations. The residents of outlying communities such as Oona River and Osland enjoy the benefits of almost a century of localized resource use by their families. Non-Aboriginal harvesters married into First Nations families and communities access millennia of ecological knowledge and skills.

The interviews undertaken with harvesters in the region reveal an intimate and developed knowledge of the region's land and resources. This knowledge is vital to effectively engage in self-provisioning activities on the North Coast.

Social Networks

A significant element in the operation of informal economies is the "availability of a social network" (Ellison et al. 1997:259). A social network creates "contacts for exchanges, access to resources, information, and skills, as well as the conditions for enforcing obligations" (Ellison et al. 1997:259). These social networks advance social norms that "support the value of generalized reciprocity and social obligation" (Reimer 2006:28). The informal exchanges that occur "rely on common values affirming the importance of honouring commitments, helping others, and local self-sufficiency" (Reimer 2006:28). Reimer adds that the low mobility and social homogeneity of smaller centres favours the emergence of norms such as social obligation. The thesis is that: "Since one cannot expect the immediate repayment of most exchanges or services, it is necessary to have the confidence that one will benefit over the long term. This can only be accomplished through informal norms and constraints that maintain the value of helping one another" (Ellison et al. 1997:259)

Interviews with wild food harvesters reveal a social system supporting informal exchanges in the North Coast region and which facilitates exchanges of goods and services related to wild food harvesting. The activities in the informal economy are both social and collaborative. Groups pool resources and labour to provision for their households, but also approach many of these activities as social and recreational.

The interviews reveal that harvesting tends to be an extremely social activity. Most fishing and hunting activities that interviewees spoke about happen in pairs or larger groups of family and/or friends. Many of the more distant hunting trips are organized well in advance and provide an opportunity for friends to spend time together, often friends who live in different communities. Some of these kinds of trips are repeated every year – there is an annual moose hunt in Dease Lake, or a mountain goat trip in the Kutzemateen.

The social groups that go hunting together are built in a variety of fashions. Some are based on kinship; brothers or brothers-in-law often hunt and fish together. Others are built around groups of people who work together in the formal economy, such as a number of mill workers. One deer hunting group consisted entirely of commercial fishermen who were finished fishing for the season. Some of these fishermen work collaboratively when fishing, other members of the group were family or simply acquaintances from the dock. Some participants suggested that they have sought out other retired individuals for hunting partners. Other groups reflect residency patterns, for example, a group of Hunts Inlet residents hunt together yearly on the mainland. Similarly, Oona River residents often hunt together close to the community. Harvesting activities thus reinforce ties of kinship, community, and work.

A key commercial species of the region – sockeye – is also a central resource in the informal economy. Many community members jar sockeye each year. This

fish appears to move primarily through the informal economy – sockeye is bought directly from or traded for with a commercial gillnet fisherman. People buy fish from the same fishermen every year, an acquaintance or family member. The processing of fish is often collaborative; people who fish independently may work together to jar or smoke their salmon.

Based on the interviews it would appear that exchanges as they relate to game, fish, mushrooms, and berries take various forms. However, all of these exchanges appear to lack a formal accounting system, such as one would find operating in a formal economy. Data from interviews suggests that food is regularly shared without expectation of immediate repayment with friends, neighbours and extended family.

> Crab – I give away 6-12 every time I go out.
>
> Salmon and halibut- basically I take what I need. I eat it fresh, give it away, send it to my parents, and smoke it. I freeze it to send away or to smoke.
>
> We can the sockeye. 16 cases, but we'll only eat one. My parents get 4.
>
> I smoked 15-20 fish, most were given away.
>
> I send 100s of crab to Prince George, live, on the bus, to my family.
>
> Fishing: Now I do very little. My friends bring me fish. We eat it twice a week in the summer.
>
> We do some berry picking. Soapberries- we give those away, blueberries, mushrooms for home use. Some years we jarred a few cases.

However, some participants did identify specific exchanges of tradeable goods. For example, one individual stated that his household provided fish to family members in exchange for assistance around his property. There are exchanges of materials (e.g., skins) derived from the harvest animals for a service to be determined. One gentleman explained that he had given the skin from a bear he had harvested to his friend to make a drum.

Given that hunting and fishing are expensive undertakings there also appears to be a sharing of resources such as vehicles, in the sense that two or more individuals may hunt or fish together. There are instances as well where individuals who do not own their own boats or all terrain vehicles go hunting and fishing with friends. Finally, in a group of people, sometimes only one will receive a moose tag in the license lottery. A group or pair will go out to hunt that one tag, thus pooling access to the resource.

Values of the Informal Economy: Motivations and Benefits

As stated earlier, informal economic activities are generally not recorded for use by

government-backed regulatory agencies and therefore undetectable to conventional economic analysis. As a result the motivations of those benefits of participating in an informal economy along with their motivations are also not recorded. This section strives to make visible the value of the informal economic activities that take place on the North Coast. It will be argued that: wild food harvesting provides an alternative source of goods and services; the process of wild food harvesting also expands the capacity of communities and individuals; wild food harvesting promotes social and cultural well being; and wild food harvesting contributes to the formal economy.

Wild food harvesting becomes a way to complement purchased goods, providing nutritional supplements to purchased foods, lowering food costs and/or supplementing income (Teitlebaum and Beckley 2006). One of the seniors interviewed, claimed that harvesting did supplement his income:

> I like wild game. It has no additives, no hormones. I don't enjoy killing anything. Harvesting does supplement my income, which is meagre for senior citizens. My moose costs $4.50/lb., not including the vehicle, the gun etc. We can berries, and mushrooms. We pick all kinds except pine mushrooms. We can them or dry them – a dozen cases. We pick black seaweed on some beaches and dry it. It is twice as good as that east coast dulse. ... We take all the seafood legal to us. Salmon, ground fish, sole, red snapper. If it is edible, we'll eat it.

For commercial fishermen particularly, using some of their catch as "food fish" is a key source of winter food. This would reflect both a preference for eating fish, and the benefits of 'free' protein. Although it was not possible to quantitatively analyze the changes over the last few years, there were indications that take-home sockeye has increased slightly due to the lower prices harvesters receive for their catch – the economic gap between selling a fish and taking it home as food has decreased.

However, the shift of some fisheries to a quota system has impacted fishermen's ability to take home fish for food. In the halibut fishery, all fish must be weighed and validated. Those fish that are not validated are illegal. Many fishermen lease a halibut quota at approximately 70 percent of the market value of the fish. If a take-home fish is validated, it effectively costs them up to $2.50/lb – it is not free. The quota system has thus limited the ability of non-Aboriginal fishermen to secure a winter supply of fish. Participation in recreational fishing, therefore allows access to marine species for food with relatively little permitting cost.

Terrestrial hunters in particular, highlighted the value of alternative protein sources. Interview data indicates that hunting households generally consume game meat at least twice a week. Fish harvested in the region and store bought chicken and/or pork supplement this meat. However, there are households in the region that buy little or no commercial meat. Those that do harvest and consume game meat appear to use it as a replacement for beef and maintain that it is superior to store

bought meat. This belief is articulated in various ways as is evident in the following excerpts:

> The game meat is leaner and healthier than store bought beef for example. Everyone is pushing free-range animals, yet they are still against hunting.
>
> I believe game meat is better for you – less additives, injections.
>
> … it [game meat] has no additives and hormones.
>
> Wild game has no cholesterol. And with red meats, there is a definite health concern for older people.
>
> We bought some commercial meat but very little. Over 75% of our protein, I caught. It is way better for you, high protein, and low cholesterol.
>
> … My daughter moved out and went to buy a big roast to have a party. Then she looked at the price and bought a tiny one. Now she wants meat from home. She never realized what it cost.

In addition to game meat, North Coast households' protein is also derived from a weekly consumption of fish. The fish is either procured by household members or given them by family, friends, or acquaintances. Sockeye salmon, as a net-caught fish was primarily procured from commercial fishermen or Aboriginal harvesters through trade, gift or informal sale. Coho and Spring salmon can be caught with a rod, and were a more common product of recreational fishing, as were the jigged fish (cods, halibut, red snapper). Shellfish (crab, prawn and shrimp) are caught in traps, commonly left to soak while fishing for other species. While there are daily bag limits on all recreationally-caught marine species, the ability of local residents to make many trips per season means that they can easily fill their freezers, jars or smokers with significant amounts of fish and shellfish.

Berries provide homemade jam and preserves, offering alternatives (such as huckleberry and salmonberry) to the ubiquitous strawberry and raspberry store-bought varieties, and pesticide-free ingredients.

Value of Informal Economy (Wild Food Harvesting) - Expanding the Capacity of Individuals and Communities

Interviews with active harvesters of the North Coast indicate that participation in an informal economy creates an opportunity for both greater self-reliance and co-reliance. Interviewees explained the extent to which their household were sustained by local resources:

> In the summer we eat fish almost everyday. In the winter we eat more moose.

> The rest of the year we eat fish once every 2 weeks. Either the canned fish, or fresh fish that friends give us. When we get a halibut we will eat that 3 days in a row.
>
> I take one moose a year, the odd goat and the odd bear.
>
> I take my moose in Dease Lake. I have been doing that for 30 years, with one partner. … I have it butchered. We eat game twice a week [household has 3 adults, one infant]. And I provide meat to 2 other households.

In addition to being a source of food, the resources on the North Coast also serve other purposes. Interviewees identified the many ways they use the land:

> Prince Rupert Harbour, Digby Island and the Kinahan Islands - It's our home. We used to get our firewood here when we used to heat with wood. We still use it for food gathering, picnicking, camping, beach combing; skating on lakes when frozen, rock collecting and seaweed collection for our gardens. We also visit old army sites, which are part of Prince Rupert's history.

People share food, strengthening ties between family and community members.

> I share my seafood with anyone walking by when I'm unloading.
>
> I don't do any bartering.

The preceding passages explored the social networks within which wild food harvesting, consumption, and distribution occur were revealed. These social networks need not only be used for harvesting purposes. In fact these social systems can be maintained beyond the activity of hunting or fishing and may instead be transformed to fulfill many purposes and functions. As stated previously, the social groups that go hunting and fishing together are developed in a variety of fashions. Some of these alliances are established and nurtured around groups of people who work together in the formal economy, such as a number of mill workers or commercial fishermen.

The formation of alliances in the wild food harvesting processes provides opportunities for individuals who are seeking work to create an impression or to establish contacts. For those individuals who work together in the formal economy, harvesting provides an opportunity to strengthen social bonds that will be of consequence in the work environment. The formation of productive alliances and the building of capacity at the individual level ultimately enhance the capacity and resilience of the community. In the scholarly literature Reimer (2006:42) claims that:

> The exchanges and service activities of the informal economy require a level of reciprocity that affirms trust and continued interaction. It is a context in which new relationships can be formed and tested without high risk, information is passed between and among employers and employees, and new ventures can be explored.

The informal economy thus supports the physical and economic wellbeing of households, but also reinforces social connections and enhances individual and community capacity. At the time of the research, the resource-based economy of the North Coast was at a low. Self-provisioning provided a supplement to household incomes, but also was also a source of pride and social and environmental connection. Harvesting enhances the quality of life by getting people out on the land in a social activity. Those interviewed emphasize how healthy this is - not just in the healthiness of the meat, but of the activity itself. One participant said he began hunting because he didn't like the bar scene. Some of the men interviewed were in their 60s and 70s, but continue to be physically active out of doors. One of the interviewees explained:

> I go hunting to get up into the mountains. I enjoy it. I go often just for the hike. It's more for fun at my age.

Harvesting also serves to strengthen family ties and provides an opportunity for the transfer of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next concerning the land and resources of the region. Many interviewees spend a great deal of time hunting and fishing with their children. One of the hunters interviewed stated:

> I take my 4 grandsons moose hunting and my 4 granddaughters wanted to go. I started taking the girls to the Charlottes. I'll go for goat soon, with my daughter.

Harvesting activities are often incorporated into family vacations, as one of the residents explains that the:

> May long-weekend is a traditional family outing. We go camping in the Kitwancool area and target cutthroat fishing in the lake. We keep an ice cream bucket full and smoke them, fry them. We go motor biking and have small boat. I have a jet boat, fiberglass boat, car topper and a raft.

Each of these resource-dependent activities serves to strengthen family ties and provide opportunities for the transfer of socio-cultural knowledge, in particular knowledge about the land and resources. Anthropologist Milton Freeman writes:

> It is through the seasonal and annual repetition and transfer of appropriate knowledge and behavior to succeeding generations that important aspects, indeed core values, of the culture of the group are reproduced over time, and the cultural identity of the individual and society thereby assured. [Freeman 1993:246]

While Freeman's land use research focused on Indigenous peoples of the Arctic and Subarctic, it is critical to recognize the social and cultural value of harvesting in non-Aboriginal families and communities. The multi-generational patterns and tra-

ditions of resource harvesting in the North Coast are a key aspect of regional identity, particularly in differentiating the lifestyle from that of urban British Columbians. The region's relatively poor climate and lack of infrastructure are consistently downplayed by reference to the benefits of the land-based lifestyles and unique opportunities for recreation.

Harvesting has the potential of improving an individual's quality of life by enhancing an individual's sense of self-worth and is related to the notion of self-reliance discussed in previous passages. Being in a position to harvest one's food is empowering. This notion of procuring food as empowering is articulated in the following ways:

> We bought some commercial meat but very little. Over 75% of our protein, I caught. It is way better for you, high protein, and low cholesterol.
>
> Hunting is not a finance thing. I can buy all I need from Safeway. It's a preference. 75% of it is because it is fun and I enjoy it. However, if you took away the incentive [procuring meat], I wouldn't be out there as much. Meat is definitely the driver. ... Bringing something home for the table is part of your nature.
>
> There is no such thing as [pure] subsistence in this day and age ... Because everyone can afford a freezer and can afford to buy meat. It's about priorities. At the same time, while it is a sport, it is critically important because it is ingrained in people, this hunter-gatherer instinct. Still bringing something home for the table is part of your nature. It's a bit hard to describe.
>
> Before, I hunted harder because I had a family to feed. I kill less now because I don't need it. My kids were brought up on wild meat. If you thought about what it cost, financially, you would do something else. I am not a trophy hunter. Everything I take, we eat. The meat hunter shoots anything he has a recipe for.

The research participants from outlying communities, such as Oona River, were particularly proud of their self-reliance, and minimal dependence on the industrial food system. There is a confidence associated with knowing that one can feed oneself on local resources, and a pride in the skills necessary to do so. Harvesting thus enhances community resilience economically and socially. During the downturn in the fishing and logging industries, workers were able to maintain their ability to provide food, and maintain their self-worth.

Finally, harvesting has the potential to improve one's quality of life by creating a sense of belonging and attachment to place. As stated earlier, interviewees viewed maps of the region as they were being interviewed. While looking at the maps of the region, one of the individuals stated:

> It's all my home. …The most spectacular scenery in North America. The Rocky Mountains do not compare to this place, it's unexplainable. … It is so pristine there you can hear silence, if you know what I mean.
>
> Kwinitsa and Exchamsiks. – Every one of these river valleys, I've hunted and fished up. They are beautiful. …The more the rest of the world goes crazy, the more people will want to see our systems.
>
> We make our living working the entire coast, so everything is important to me. The whole coast, all the way from the Alaskan border down to Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands is our work and our pleasure.
>
> It's difficult to determine costs of fishing because it is part of our lifestyle. Fish is a critical part of our nutritional intake, our health depends on it, we wouldn't be able to maintain this lifestyle without fish, it is an integral part of our lifestyle.

Harvesting creates an intimate connection between people and the land and resources. Participation in the informal economy thus connects people with each other, and with their ecosystem.

Conclusion

The harvesting and traditional economic activities of the Indigenous peoples of the North Coast have been a focus of academic research for over a century and a half. The commercial resource-based activities of the settlers of the region have been investigated during the last three decades. However, the informal economy and subsistence use of the land base by non-Indigenous residents of the region has been relatively ignored. The Gitxaała Nation co-exists in a shared space with its non-Indigenous neighbours and is increasingly required to collaborate with them to plan for the protection of both the resources and the resource-based economy through land and marine use planning processes. Awareness of each other's values, goals, and aspirations is critical to co-existing in a shared space and planning for the future. Research focused on the self-provisioning practices of the non-Indigenous residents of the North Coast serves as an introduction between the two groups a practice engaged in between neighbours. As they discussed their self-provisioning practices, the non-Indigenous residents also revealed their aspirations, priorities, and values. Interviewees articulated extensive knowledge of, as well as, respect for the land and nature. They talked about sharing of food, tools, and knowledge, and the reciprocal relationships such sharing creates.

Some of those interviewed have lived on the North Coast for many years, or their families have lived there for generations. Their grandparents and parents harvested the land as they do now, using knowledge and skills passed on from these preceding

generations. Individuals interviewed expressed concern about changes (e.g., increased access; logging; pollution) that have the potential to further stress the land and waters that provide them with food, fuel, a sense of belonging, and pleasure. Such an exchange of information between neighbours is important and can serve to inform decisions and practices that have the potential to affect the North Coast regions that different groups share.

Activities associated with the informal economy are not measured and therefore their value is largely invisible. By focusing on harvesting from the point of view of activities rather than currency, this study sought to make visible both the informal economic activity on the North Coast as well as the benefits of participating in wild food harvesting. This research demonstrates the extent and persistence of wild food harvesting on the North Coast as well as the significant benefits it provides. Furthermore, it emphasizes that an informal economy exists on the North Coast because a significant resource of the land is wild food. Therefore, future land management plans should ensure the sustainability of this renewable resource, thereby enabling and supporting wild food harvesting as a contribution to the formal economy and the general good of the region's residents.

References

British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

2005 North Coast Land and Resource Management Plan: Final Recommendations. Available at: https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/ncoast/docs/

Berkes, F., P.J. George, R.J. Preston, A. Hughes, J. Turner, and B.D. Cummins

1994 Wildlife Harvesting and Sustainable Regional Native Economy in the Hudson and James Bay Lowland, Ontario. Arctic 47(4):350-360.

BC Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

2005 North Coast Land and Resource Management Plan: Final Recommendations. Available at: https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/ncoast/docs/NCLRMP_Final_Recommendations_feb_2_2005.pdf. Accessed June 2016.

Bryman, Alan and Emma Bell

2007 Business Research Methods (2nd Edition). New York: Oxford University Press Inc.

Ellison, Barry, Michel Arsenault, and Bill Reimer

1997 The Informal Economy: Metro and Non-Metro Comparisons. *In* The Sociology of Labour Markets: Efficiency, Equity, Security. Axel Van Den Berg and Joseph Smucker, eds. Pp. 255-270. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada.

Freeman, Milton
1993 The International Whaling Commission, Small-type Whaling, and Coming to Terms with Subsistence. Human Organization 52(3):243-251. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.17730/humo.52.3.f12883h2r7ur6504

Gerxhani, Klarita
2004 The Informal Sector in Developed and Less Developed Countries: A Literature Survey. Public Choice 120:267-300.

Harris, Douglas
2008 Landing Native Fisheries: Indian Reserves and Fishing Rights in British Columbia, 1849-1925. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

McLain, Rebecca J., Susan J. Alexander, and Eric T. Jones
2008 Incorporating Understanding of Informal Economic Activity in Natural Resource and Economic Development Policy. United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, General Technical Report, PNW-GTR-755, June 2008. Available at: http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr755.pdf. Accessed June 2016.

Menzies, Charles
2006 Ecological Knowledge, Subsistence, and Livelihood Practices: The Case of the Pine Mushroom Harvest in Northwestern British Columbia. *In* Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management Charles R. Menzies, ed. Pp. 87-106 University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London.

Newell, Diane
1993 Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

O'Reilly, Karen
2005 Ethnographic Methods. New York: Routledge.

Reimer, Bill
2006 The informal Economy in Non-Metropolitan Canada. The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 43(1): 23-49.

Teitelbaum, Sara and Thomas Beckley
2006 Harvested, Hunted and Home Grown: The Prevalence of Self-Provisioning in Rural Canada. Journal of Rural and Community Development, 1:114-130.

What If? Speculations about an Old Neighbour, the North Wind Wolf

John A. Dunn

> We must by indirections find directions out.
> Jonathan Bate, *Soul of the Age*, 2009

> Of course it's true; our stories have always told of it.
> Gitksan Chief, 2001

Some Stories

In January of 1939, William Beynon sent to Franz Boas three texts he had collected, written down and translated some time before. He was at this time working with Amelia Sussman, a Boas-trained linguist, re-transcribing materials he had collected earlier. William Beynon (1888-1958), whose royal Wolf Clan name is *Gwis K'aayn*, through much of his life collected Tsimshian ethnographic and oral narrative materials for nearly every anthropologist and linguist who researched the Tsimshian in the first half of the 20th century (Winter 1984). In the group of three texts he sent to Boas in January of 1939, the third was the 227th of the Tsimshian oral narrative texts Boas had received to date from Beynon. It is a story told him by John Nelson and James Lewis of Gitxaała. It is entitled "About the Wolf Clan at Kitkatla." Some excerpts from Beynon's translation follow.

> The Wolf phratry was very powerful ... ages ago ... And it was these people who really governed this country as they were so many and they were the first on the coast. It was after the Deluge that the other phratries came down to the coast from the head-waters of the Skeena and they came upon the other encampments. [94]

> The Wolf clan had no respect for any strangers, instead whenever they saw any strangers they would at once kill them. [95]

> All the other phratries were weak as they were all separated when they came to the coast, and it was this that made it impossible for them to protect themselves. After many years of this, these different phratries started to unite as one body, and it was then they were able to overcome the Wolf Clan in fighting. And it was then that the powers of the Wolf Clan began to go back. [96]

> The Wolf Clan ... went to strange countries and there they made new villages and lived there and whoever was the leader or headman of the group became the chief of the newly made village. [99]

> And although *Gwis K'aayn* had returned back to the Stikine as he was now really defeated in battle with the Tsimshians ... many of this people stayed behind and now lived in the direction of the Kitkatlas. [102]

> The Wolf clan of the Stikine River lived very close by a Kitkatla chief who was *Ts'ibasaa* ... One day while canoeing about the Wolf Clan suddenly met with the Kitkatla ... Now there was peace between the two tribes and they invited each other to each others feasts. And it was then the house of *Ts'ibasaa* took in marriage women from the house of the Wolf Clan chief and the Wolf Clan chief did the same from the house of the Kitkatla chief. [103]

The next text Beynon sent to Boas, in February of 1939 (text 228), is a corroborating companion story, this time told by Heber Clifton of Hartley Bay. It is entitled "The Power of the Wolf Clan at Gitk'a'ata." Excerpts follow.

> All the country around here on the coast was governed by the Wolf Clan, as they were really so numerous, and they came from the *Gida-Ga-niits-k* '[people] of the Northwest Wind. [1]

> And where the Gitk'a'ata live now was the real village of the Wolf Clan, and it was from here their authority began and ended away up to Kitamat. [2]

> When the Gitk'a'ata came to Kitamat Arm, they came over from the headwaters of the Oxtal River when they escaped when the great cold winter came upon the Skeena River. A great many people died of starvation on the Skeena River. It was then that the deep snow came and buried the village, as the snow was so deep. Then the Gitk'a'ata left the Skeena River and went over the headwaters of the Oxtal River. Then they found the headwaters of one river. Then they followed this river down and found the mouth of it. Here they made a village at the mouth,

> and this is now known as Old Town. When the Gitk'a'ata had made their village here, it was then they knew that people lived down below at the mouth of Kitamat Arm. And there were a great many of them and only a few Gitk'a'ata. The people who lived below them were very warlike, and they knew the ways of war ... and the people knew that their chief was of the Wolf Clan. [3-5]
>
> The Wolf Clan went away up to the head of Kitamat Arm and raided them. The Wolf Clan now had many Kitamat captives. And all the tribes that would go to Kitamat were always watched by the Wolf Clan, and now there were many Wutsda, Gitlop, Kitamats, and Gitk'a'ata who were killed by the Wolf Clan. [6]
>
> All of these tribes were now worn out at what the Wolf Clan had done to them, and they were really afraid to go anywhere close to the Wolf Clan village. Then *Nta Wii Walp*, chief of the Gitk'a'ata called for help. He visited all of the chiefs of the Wutsda, Gitlop, and Kitamat, and they discussed the thing that they will do to the Wolf Clan who were about to destroy them. [7]

William Barton told Beynon another Wolf Clan story (text 211) given the title "The Snow Feast of the Wolf Clan at Kinkolith." In it he retells the legend of the origin of the Stikine Wolf Phratry among the Tsimshian. An excerpt follows.

> When the Wolf Clan left *Lax Wii Yip* at the headwaters of the Stikine River, they were pursued by the Raven Clan who attacked them. They very nearly overtook all of the Wolf Clan when they came to a huge glacier across the Stikine River. The Wolf Clan People found an opening under the glacier. Though it seemed dangerous, there was nothing else they could do as those that would attack them were close by. They escaped by going under the glacier. When they got through, it was then that the Wolf Clan chief *Gwis K'aayn* took the glacier to be his own crest as this was how they escaped. [2f]

This same legend appears in another text, Beynon 93, "The Narrative of How the Wolf Clan Came to the Tsimshians," told by Joseph Bradley.

Abel Derrick, of the house of *Wii Xaa*, Wolf Clan of Kitwankool, told Beynon yet another story about the origins of the Wolf Clan among the Tsimshian (text 203).

> And this the Wolf Clan *saw*, so then they scattered and took flight. Some of the Wolf Clan went down the river and some went up into the hills and were going over the other side of the mountains towards the south wind, and *Gwis K'aayn* led those that traveled down the Stikine. [68]

The Tsimshian Wolf Clan indeed traces its origins to the Stikine River in upper British Columbia and Alaska. The many Tsimshian Wolf Clan oral narratives tell

of a beleaguered people driven from place to place along the Stikine River (Beynon 93 cited above). There was always trouble between the Wolf Clan and the Raven Clan, the young men of the Wolf Clan being violent and 'hot-headed', but badly out-numbered (Beynon 203.67). The most salient factor in the Wolf People's troubled relations is the fact that they are more proficient in hunting and fishing (Beynon texts 93, 227, 234). The other factor is the Tsimshian common motif of the Wolf prince who is the secret (unnatural, animal, foreigner) lover of a chieftainess, wife of a Raven Lord. In the context of this theme running through the vast body of greater Tsimshian oral narrative, the subtext is not one of intra-phratral incest so much as it is that the Wolf paramour is foreign, outside ordinary society, terrifying.

In the following version the people who murder the Wolf prince, take possession of his paraphernalia, forcing the Wolf People to adopt them (Beynon text 143 "Myth of the Prince of Wolves" told by Fred Ross, *Niis Gwaana, Giludzaaü*):

> And when it came night the tribeswoman of her husband saw a young man come in and go to where the chief's wife slept, and slept with her and staid there all night. And now every night when all of the people of the house were asleep, the man came in and slept with the chief's wife.
>
> ... And his tribeswoman said "Yes, every night she co-habits with one who is a stranger. Nobody knows who he is. And it is with him she now sleeps." Then the chief quietly approached where his wife slept and saw that a stranger slept beside her, and he killed him by cutting off his head. It was then that he saw the strange dress of this man. He wore an armour of leather which was all covered with hoof of mountain goat and deer. And his helmet was a wolf [lit. and the hat this helmet-wolf]. This the young chief saw and he at once took possession of this, but he never spoke of the acts of his wife, because it had brought valuable things to him. Well it was now daylight and then he gathered together all of his shamans, to know who this man was, whom he had killed. And then an aged man said "What you have done is not good. Our master has killed the Prince of the Wolves and it will be well that we build a large palisade around the village. The wolves will attack us, when they know what has happened [to] their Prince." And that very same night the people heard a woman weeping in the hills. "Oh my child, Oh! Oh my child! Only give me the garments of your brother, dear man. Oh! What has happened to *Giyam Waan*." And this the woman kept saying throughout the night. No one in the village made any noise. When it came day, the people were afraid that the Wolves would now retaliate, so they at once built a large palisade around the village. All of the men made timbers and the women gathered stones to use as weapons when the Wolves would attack the village. Well when it was night, the people heard the yelping of a great many Wolves, opposite the village, and then the voice of a woman came crying out, "Give me the garments of your

> brother, my dear man. Oh! My son! Oh! My son! Oh my son! Oh! What has happened *Giyam Waan*? Oh! Give me only the garment of your brother, my dear man. If you do not do so, we will attack you." The Wolves had now surrounded the palisades of the people. Then the young chief spoke and said to the mother of the Prince of Wolves, "I will not do as you say. I have taken possession of the garments of my brother. Then the mother of the Prince of Wolves wept and said, "Give me only the body of your brother." But the young chief would not do so. And it was then that the many Wolves attacked the palisades of the people. And then the people of the village used the stones and killed many Wolves. It now seemed as if the people would lose and the Mother of the Prince of Wolves said, "Give me the body of my child, *Giyam Waan*, the body of your brother. The young chief replied, "I will not do so as I have finished putting the body of my brother away. And all his possessions I will take and will keep them as my own crests." Then the mother of the Prince of Wolves again wept and then she started in to sing a dirge. It was then that the people heard the Dirge of the Armour of the Prince of Wolves and of the Wolf Hat. And then the great many Wolves stopt attacking the village. And then one of the large Wolves stood and said, "Well, dear man, you will now take *Giyam Waan's* place, and you shall be related to us … and they now knew that their chief was related to the Wolves and it was now that the Wolf Phratry started. [65-77]

Eventually this man, adopted as the brother heir of the Prince of the Wolves, receives two Wolf Women to be his adopted sisters. It is the descendants of these two clan-founder women who are the matrilineal Stikine Wolf Phratry among the Tsimshian. Beynon text 147, "When the Wolves helped Gwis K'aayn," told by Ethel Musgrave, also speaks of the adoption of the Gwis K'aayn as brother to the Prince of Wolves and his concomitant/resultant elevation to lordship of the Wolf Phratry.

All these stories comprise a widely and firmly held tradition about the origin and history of the Wolf People among the Tsimshian.

The Archaeological Correlative

Andrew Martindale and Susan Marsden have developed a splendid synthesis and integration of the vast archaeological work done in the Tsimshian territory by a large group of distinguished scholars, most notably Kenneth Ames, David Archer, Jerome Cybulski, Richard Inglis, and George MacDonald (Martindale and Marsden 2003, Martindale 2006). The Tsimshian Wolf People tradition speaks of events that are similar to archaeological events dating from 500 BC to AD 500 and reviewed in Martindale and Marsden 2003:30-32. Martindale and Marsden, among others, have already made these connections. This paper focuses on specific details in the Wolf People stories.

The Chronology

1. after 500 BC
   evidence of status differentiation, differentiation in grave goods, restricted use of copper beads and sheets may indicate a northern connection
2. 500 BC – AD 100
   abandonment of egalitarian villages
3. up to 0 BC
   growing communities, new artifacts, practices of social distinction
4. after AD 1
   regional warfare
5. AD 1-500
   warfare intensifies, northern Tsimshian communities retreat from coastal villages, substantial log construction (perhaps indicating fortification), settlement shift to defensible village locations, large percentage of skeletal remains show injuries due to inter-personal violence, significant settlement shifts, including a period of complete abandonment of sites in Metlakatla Pass
6. AD 200
   body armor made of copper-wrapped sticks
7. AD 100-400
   re-occupation of sites by settlers with greater hierarchical organization

Is there evidence here of the coming of the Wolf Clan from the north and their establishment of a dominant political presence? Does the presence of warfare and copper herald the coming of the Wolf Clan into Tsimshian territory? Does the abandonment of old sites and founding of new ones indicate the 'military' ascendancy of the Wolf Clan on the coast and the displacement of some of the ancestral Tsimshian? Does the re-occupation of old sites represent the Tsimshian recovery from Wolf hegemony and the incorporation of the Wolf remnant into Tsimshian society as indicated in the texts above from Gitxaała and Hartley Bay? What if the Tsimshian Wolf narratives are indeed about events so remote in time? What if, furthermore, the Wolf People who came down from the Stikine included not just Tlingit, but others more foreign?

The Indo-European Connection

The fact is that the Tsimshian language (TS) has a systematic and extensive sound-meaning relationship with the reconstructed pre/proto-Indo-European language (PIE). The similarities between the two are of such a magnitude that they cannot be coincidental. PIE *p,*b,*bh = TS p~b; PIE *t,*d,*dh = TS t~d; PIE *k,*g,*gh = TS q~~; PIE *r,*s = TS *s; TS tends to move word-final elements, esp. laryngeals, toward the beginning of the word, a process which has a parallel in a PIE phenomenon

called by some _Schwebeablaut_ or 'floating ablaut.' The similarities are quite conservative, i.e., archaic. TS is directly relatable to the reconstructed ancestral PIE and only very remotely similar to the modern intrusive European languages in British Columbia in the current (17th through 21st centuries) colonial period. The PIE-TS connection cannot be due to loan words from the recent period. There must have been an older interaction between the ancient Tsimshian community and some archaic Indo-European group. The purpose of this paper is not to prove the linguistic relationship (see Dunn 2002 for that argument), but rather to speculate as to the real time and place event that might account for it. There follow some especially significant illustrations of the relationship between PIE and TS (there is not the space in this brief paper for a full description of the relationship).

The pre-IE a-colouring reconstructed laryngeal, often written _H2_, in word initial position relates consistently to the attested laryngeal /_h_/ in TS. Pre-IE word initial *_H2e_ became in proto-IE *_a_. The pre-IE laryngeal was lost as such in all the known IE languages except Hittite where it is still phonetic [h]. TS is like Hittite in that it maintains this [h]; TS thus has pre-IE features that are most archaic, even as archaic as those found in Hittite. Sources for pre-IE and proto-IE are Watkins (W) 2000, Pokorny (P) 1959, and Beekes (Be) 1995, for TS Dunn (D) 1978 [1995], Boas (Bo) 1908, and Nisga'a Dictionary (N) 2001; all source numbers are page numbers, except for D where they are dictionary entry numbers.

> pre-IE * _H2e_ 'not' = TS _ha-_ in _ha-baal-t_ 'despair, lit. 'not trying', and in _ha-saa-k-l_ (_saa_ < _tsaay_) 'long for', lit. 'not satisfied, not full, not burping' W57, P756, D662, D762
>
> pre-IE *_H2egh_ 'depressed, afraid' = TS _haa-k_ 'be in misery, overburdened' W1, P7, D655, Bo261
>
> pre-IE *_H2el_ 'beyond > other of more than two' = TS _hel-t_ 'many' W2f, P1.24,2.37, D800, Bo262
>
> pre-IE *_H2eldh_ 'get well' = TS _haldaaw_ 'cure' and TS _hald-m-oot_ 'savior < oolachen' W3, P2.26, D706, D707, Bo261
>
> pre-IE *_H2elu-t_ 'words relating to sorcery, magic, possession' = TS _haleyt_ 'shaman' W3, P33, D709, Bo261
>
> pre-IE *_H2engh_ 'tight, constricted' = TS Nass Dialect _hanx_ 'be thin'; TS Coast Dialect _hani._ W4, P42, D758, N68
>
> pre-IE * _H2erku_ 'bow and arrow' = TS _hakw-dak_ 'bow' W5, P67, D702, Bo275
>
> pre-IE * _H2es_ 'burn, glow' = TS _haas_ 'fireweed' W5, P68, D647

pre-IE * *H2et* 'go' = TS *ha?at-ks* 'swim', lit. 'go in water', -ks < aks 'water' W5, P69, D666, Bo261

pre-IE * *H2et-al* 'mother, race, family, noble fostering' = TS *Gan-hada* 'Raven phratry (matrilineal)' W5, P71, D 391, Bo279

pre-IE * *H2eyes* 'a metal, copper or bronze' = TS *hayets-k* 'a copper, i.e., copper feast medallion' W6, P15, D790, Bo260

pre-IE * *H2eyu* 'vital force, life' = TS *hayu-k* 'soul, spirit' W2, P17, D660, Bo260

After a stop consonant and at the ends of words PIE *r* relates consistently to TS *s*.

*PIE *bher 'cut, pierce, bore, cleft' = TS bas-a-Gan 'divide, split, separate' W10, P3.133, D139, Bo262*

*PIE *dhragh, *dhreg 'draw, drag, pull, glide' with derivatives meanings 'drench, drown' = TS dzo-a 'across'; dza-m, dzo-m 'ashore, in (moving from water to land)'; TS gi-ts?oy 'bow of a canoe' W20, P257,273, D267, D268, D469, Bo270, Bo277*

*PIE *g(e)r 'bend, curl, a round object, vessel, container' = TS Goos 'a basket, finish a basket' W27, P3.385, D483*

*PIE *gerH 'cry hoarseley, shriek, crane = TS q?as-q?oos 'sandhill crane, heron, stork W27, P2.383, D416, D886, Bo279*

*PIE *gher 'scrape, pointed stake, sea bream'; PIE *kar 'hard, keel of a ship' = TS ees-k 'anal fin' W30, P2.439,2.441, D461*

*PIE *ker 'horn, head, horned animals, projecting parts' = TS a-aws 'horn, antler, stag' W40, P1.574, D320*

*PIE *kor, o-grade of *(s)ker 'leap, jump about' = TS q?os 'jump, hop' W78, P3.935, D942, Bo280*

*PIE *ner > *andr 'man, vital energy, used in personal names in Latin and Greek' = TS gyi-naas 'boy, infant boy's name (address word)' W58, P1.765, D619, Bo277*

*PIE *pēr 'fear' = TS baas 'fear' W66, P2.818, D128, Bo262*

*PIE *perk 'tear out, dig, furrow' = TS be?aq 'tear out, tear up', cf. TS Nass dialect pis(t) 'be torn' W66, P3.821, D151.2, Bo262, N21*

*PIE *terH 'cross over, pass through, across, over, beyond' = TS do?os 'opposite side' W91, P5.1075, D224, Bo265*

*PIE *tragh 'drag, draw, pull, glide = TS ts?oo[ts?a]X-t 'pull out of a skin' W93, P1089, D1968, Bo271*

*PIE *treb 'dwelling, village, hamlet' = TS ts?ap 'town, tribe, village' W93, P1090, D1922, Bo271*

Numeral system.

The PIE words for *2* and *8* were inflected as duals. In Avestan and Sanskrit, e.g., the word for *8* means 'four fingers dual' (Beekes 1995:212f). The PIE word for *thumb* meant 'swollen finger' and was used in counting as a 'second-place-digit number.' In Germanic, *thus* 'thumb or swollen finger', is part of the word for *thousand*, i.e., *thus-hundi* 'thumb-hundred' (Watkins 2000:92). TS also had an old, now morhpologically submerged, counting system based on *four*, thus a finger counting system. The TS word for 'thumb' was also used in counting as a second-place-digit-number. These facts alone, while interesting, do not indicate a relationship between PIE and TS, as such finger counting systems must be widespread and relate to the nature of the human hand. What does indicate a PIE-TS relationship is the fact that three of the numeral root words, *one, four,* and *eight,* show a PIE-TS connection.

*PIE *kwetuor 'four' = TS kwst, ksti (used only in morphologically complex number words) W45f, P642, Be 212,214*

*PIE * Hoi(H)nos 'one' = TS u?uns (used only in morphologically complex number words) Be212,214*

TS kwst-uns, kst-u?uns 'five', literally 'four-one' D1026, Bo275

TS moos 'thumb' D1446, Bo264

TS ksti-moos 'nine', literally 'four-thumb' D980, Bo275

Then there is this amazing correspondence:

*PIE * H3ekwteH3 'eight' = TS yukwdee-l-t, yiwkwde-l-t 'eight' Be214, D2236, Bo258*

In addition there are some other possible relationships in the counting system.

*PIE *du-plek 'duple' = TS t?apX-aat 'two' W21f, P228, D1828, Bo266*

*PIE *gleubh 'split, torn apart, cleft' = TS gu?pl 'two' W32, P401, D 498, Bo279*

*PIE *ghazdh-o 'measuring rod' = TS q?awts-Xan 'one (of long objects)' W28, P1.412, D891, Bo278*

What if the PIE-TS relationship illustrated here is a real, non-coincidental connection? If so, is the event that accounts for it forever lost to us?

Who are the Wolf People?

In Beynon 93, Joseph Bradley makes a distinction between the Wolf People and the Tahltan:

> *Ada 'niisga 'Ganhada diildit a Lax-wi-yip*
> *Ada 'nii Te-t'a·n 'we·m Tsaps dipgwa'a*
>
> And it was *these*, the Raven People, they [the Wolf] mated with at *Lax-wi-yip*
> And it was *these* whose village name was Tahltan. [p1. Dunn's translation]
>
> The [Wolf] people knew he [Wolf Prince] had gone secretly to visit his paramour, who was the wife of the Tahltan Chief. [4]

The message of the language in these passages is clear: the Wolf People are not Tahltan.

After the Wolf People have escaped under the glacier across the Stikine, they come to the Stigiin people at the coast. *Seks*, the Stigiin *Gisbuwudwada* 'Killerwhale' chief remarks of the Wolf people, they are

> *libaait n li 'al'aolksgm gyeda*
> these drifting-in-from-nowhere people. [Beynon 93.10]

In his notes for this text, Beynon states of this passage, "This term is about as bitter a slur one can cast upon another. It is equivalent to 'person of unknown or obscure origin'" (Beynon 93.20). The equivalent present-day expression is *'wah noo* 'without a mother,' used as an insult to refer to persons, mostly Europeans, outside the matrilineal society.

The notion of the alien nature of the Wolf People is further expressed in the stories that include the 'secret lover' motif (Beynon 93 and 143). This pervasive Tsimshian motif consistently portrays the secret lover as foreign and of mysterious (often supernatural) origin. It speaks of a conjunction between ordinary human society and an outsider who brings with him [supernatural] benefits to the people. Coming into Tsimshian society, The Wolf People were foreigners. What if they were foreigners as well, coming into the Stikine? Foreigners constantly spurned and driven on.

The Wolf People coming from the Stikine into Tsimshian territory are called *Gida-a-niits-k* (Beynon 228.1). *Gida-a-niits* is the word for the northwest wind. The *–k* suffix gives the meaning '[those] of the northwest wind.' *Gida-a-niits* has no transparent TS etymology, though it appears to be a Tsimshian word; it might mean something like 'people each one looking about/watching.' The royal name of the paramount Wolf chief, *Gwis-k'aayn*, is likewise semantically opaque; it has no recognised TS etymology. But it does have a possible PIE etymology:

*PIE *gwerH 'mountain, coming from the north, north wind' ... TS gwis 'meaning uncertain' W34, P3.477*

*PIE *genH 'beget, derivatives referring to familial and tribal groups' ... TS k?aayn 'meaning uncertain' W26, P1.373*

TS Gwis-k'aayn perhaps 'Begotten of the North Wind / Mountain'.

The TS roots here are perfect correspondences of the PIE roots in terms of their systematic phonological relationships. This hypothetical meaning relates directly to *Gwis-k'aayn*'s crest: the great, mountainous glacier across the Stikine.

What if this is the etymology for the Wolf royal name? Then *Gidi-Ga-nii-t-s-k* and *Gwis-k'aayn* are almost equivalent in meaning: 'of the northwest wind', 'begotten of the north wind.' There is then a synecdochal relationship between the Wolf Prince and the People his name represents. The following passage in the story told by John Nelson and James Lewis of Kitkatla (Beynon 227) is transparent synecdoche:

> And although *Gwis K'aayn* had returned back to the Stikine as he was now really defeated in battle with the Tsimshians ... many of this people stayed behind and now lived in the direction of the Kitkatlas. [102]

The poetics structure of the following passage then shows a lovely parallel and contrast, a parallelism of the type so characteristic of the word-crafting of Tsimshian poetry.

> So then they [Wolf People] were scattered and took to flight down the river, and some went up into the hills, going over the other side of the *mountain* towards the *south wind,* and [he who was *Begotten of the North Wind / Mountain*] *Gwis K'aayn* led those that traveled down the Stikine. [Beynon 203.68]

In summary there are three things to consider, 1) the PIE-TS linguistic relationship, 2) the prehistory of the Tsimshian coastal territory, 3) the oral-narrative history of the Tsimshian people. What if they all tell the same story?

3500-2500 BC: the Afanasievo Culture, an Asian Indo-European outlier, developed in Siberia. Its descendants, the Tocharians, spoke a very archaic dialect of Indo-European. What if, in the same time frame, there were other, as yet undiscovered, Siberian Indo-European groups speaking very archaic dialects of Indo-European? The ancestors of the Tocharians later (1000 BC) moved from their Afanasievo homeland into China to the south and west. What if about the same time another group ventured out of one the Siberian Indo-European cultures, moving northeastward into the New World, moving down through Athapascan territories, unable to gain a foot-hold until they came into Tsimshian territory? What if these are antecedents of the North Wind Wolf People? What if they, among others, brought

to the Tsimshian warfare, copper-wrapped slat armour, a new village structure, and a new language? They disrupted Tsimshian southern coastal settlements for a while, but their hegemony was eventually overturned, and the North Wind Wolf People became a part of the Tsimshian community.

References

Beekes, Robert S. P.
1995 Comparative Indo-Eropean Linguistics. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Beynon, William
n.d. Tsimshian texts numbered 93,143, 147, 203, 211, 227, 228. New York: Columbia University Library.

Boas, Franz
1908 Tsimshian texts, new series. *In* Publications of the American Ethnological Society, volume III. Leyden, E. J. Brill. pp. 65-285.

Dunn, John A
1978 A Practical Dictionary of the Coast Tsimshian Language. Canadian Ethnology Service paper number 42. Ottawa, National Museums of Canada. Republished in 1995 by the University of Washington Press and the Sealaska Heritage Foundation.
2002 Proto-Tsimshian: a New World Indo-European language SSILA paper, January 2002. San Francisco.

Martindale, Andrew
2006 Methodological Issues in the Use of Tsimshian Oral Traditions (Adawx) in Archaeology. Canadian Journal of Archaeology 30(2)159-193.

Martindale, Andrew and Susan Marsden
2003 Defining the Middle Period (3500 BP to 1500 BP) in Tsimshian History through a Comparison of Archaeological and Oral Records. BC Studies 138:13-50.

Pokorny, Julius
1959 Indogermanishes etymologisches Wörterbuch. Bern/München.

Watkins, Calvert
2000 The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European roots. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Wilp Wilxooskwhl Nisgaa [House of Learning]
2001 Haniimagoonisgum Algaxhl Nisgaa [Nisgaa Dictionary]. New Aiyansh, British Columbia, Wilp Wilxooskwhl Nisgaa.

Winter, Barbara J.
1984 William Beynon and the Anthropologists. Canadian Journal of Native Studies IV(2):279-292.

Nts’abm a Gyiyaaksi’i

Our Village Out to Sea

A Resource for Language Revitalization

Margaret Anderson

Sm’algyax is a gravely endangered language. There are now fewer than 200 fully fluent speakers, and at the present time the youngest mother-tongue speakers are in their sixties. Despite valiant efforts on the part of Ts’msyen Elders and educators, the slide towards extinction seems almost inevitable. However despite the long odds against the survival of the language, there is some reason to hope that it can be revitalized in the future. One of the most important factors in this is the wealth of audio recordings and transcribed texts that are available for future learners. The text of *Nts’abm a Gyiyaaksi’i* included below is an example of this wealth.

Nts’abm a Gyiyaaksi’i – Our Village Out to Sea, included in its entirety below, is an *adawx* (true telling) recounted by Violet Robinson of Hartley Bay in 1978. Mrs. Robinson recorded a series of stories that she recalled hearing in her youth, which she agreed to do as an oral legacy for future generations. The recording was made by Margaret Seguin [Anderson], who was then documenting Sm’algyax through a contract with the National Museum of Man (now Canadian Museum of History), where copies of the materials she recorded were deposited for permanent conservation. The tape of this story was transcribed into draft written form in 2003, by Violet’s granddaughter, Tammy Blumhagen, who by then was a teacher of the language; the transcription was reviewed by fluent speakers including Clarence Anderson, Doug Brown, Marj Brown, Sampson Collinson, Darlene Leland, Theresa Lowther, Ellen Mason, Velna Nelson, Fred Ridley, and Tina Robinson, working along with Margaret Anderson.

Why are recordings/texts such as *Nts’abm a Gyiyaaksi’i* significant for the future hope of Sm’algyax language revitalization? This can be seen by understanding a lesson from a language that has been revitalized from the brink of extinction. One such notable recent success is the Algonquian language that has been literally brought

back to life by the Mashatucket Pequot community. When this community effort began, there had not been a speaker of their language for six generations; the language was represented only by scattered written records. The effort to revitalize it began with collecting all of the documents (such as deeds, wills, Bible translations, etc.) that could be found with words or phrases in the language, and working with linguists specializing in closely related languages to reconstruct the language. Several community members undertook to learn the reconstructed language, working with a unique graduate program in linguistics offered at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They succeeded, and even fostered a new generation of young speakers by using the language with their young children and teaching it in the community. The future of this language is not secure yet, but the startling achievements to date have been recognized by the award of a MacArthur Genius award to Jessie Littledoe Baird for her achievements in this initiative.[1]

In comparison to the status of Mashantucket Pequot, Ts’msyen Sm’algya̱x has a wealth of resources as a foundation for future revitalization efforts. Linguist Dell Hymes has argued that there are three necessary types of documentation required for language revitalization to succeed: a thorough dictionary that lists the meaningful units and how they are used; a grammar that explicates the patterns of the language; and sufficient texts that show how the morphemes and words of the language are used in a variety of genres. All of these resources exist for Sm’algya̱x. Several dictionaries have been published, the most widely used being Dunn’s 1978 Practical Dictionary. There is now an online dictionary, the Sm’algya̱x Living Legacy Talking Dictionary (Sm’algya̱x Living Legacy Talking Dictionary, http://web.unbc.ca/~smalgyax/, which has almost 7,000 entries, 3,000 sound files and over 2,000 images).

There are also several grammars, including a user-friendly one in use in the community: Visible Grammar, Ts’msyen Sm’algyax Grammar Resources (Anderson and Ignace 2008), which uses colour coding to demonstrate the most common sentence patterns of the language. Finally, there are a fair number of recordings and transcribed texts for Sm’algya̱x. Furthermore, many of the texts that have been transcribed to date are now included in the computer database that links to the lexicon that documents words and morphemes, adding to the richness of the lexical data that underlies the dictionary and simultaneously shining light on nuances of the texts themselves. The type of knowledge that results will be demonstrated following the transcription and translation of *Nts’abm a Gyiaaksi’i* as told by Violet Robinson. Only the text and free translation are included here, though examples drawn from the detailed analysis that was done before the text was added to the database are discussed below. CDs with the audio of this story have been provided to Mrs. Robinson’s family and to the Wa̱p Sigatgyet, which develops learning resources for Sm’algyax for use in schools and the community.

1 For more on the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project see http://web.mit.edu/norvin/www/wopanaak.html and http://www.wlrp.org/

Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i – Our Village out to Sea

Adawg̲a gwa'a nah gyik 'nax'nuuyu, adawxs dip gwasda, ła likleet.

This is a story I also heard, their story, the people of long ago.

Wila waal, aa, nts'abm ya gyiyaaksi'i.

How it happened, ah, to our people from out to sea.[2]

Nah sm'ooygitg̲ada 'yuuta gwa'a.

This man was the chief, it is said.

Dawila silootgitg̲ał dm g̲a'uum hadaniit,

Then they set out to fish blackcod,

dawila silootga g̲axsoo dm uum hadaniit,

then the canoes set out to fish blackcod,

'nii dzaba gyeda gwii ławil aksyaagwa gooym, dm 'maga hadanii.

that's what those people did, at the beginning of spring, catch blackcod.

Wayi gwaayg̲ał lawaalsga sm'ooygitga:

Now this, it is said, is what the chief did:

dawlat wil g̲oot'ił ła aamsg̲abuu 'mik'maga gyet,

when he thought that the people had caught quite a few,

da'ik wila sigyootk uks g̲oot, k'winuu hoon gwii.

then he would set off to go out, to ask for that fish.

Wayi, 'nii 'nawaans dip gwii.

Well, that's what they did.

Nag̲ats'aaẅ gyeda akadi, ła 'ap k'üül nwil 'makt,

---

2 The fluent speakers who helped analyze this text all identified 'the village out to sea' as Gitxaała, but since Mrs. Robinson did not use the name of the village in telling the story, it has not been included in the translation. Indirect allusion is a common device in Sm'algyax – for example it is often heard when fishermen communicate over a CB radio, often referring to 'the place across' or 'where we were yesterday' rather than providing a place name.

Some of the people didn't, it was just the one time when they caught fish,

dawil akat gyik da'axłgit.

and then they couldn't do it again.

Wayi ła luhaxhaaxgitg̱ał g̱ag̱ootł gyet,

So the people were fed up, it is said,

Ła luhaxhaaxga g̱ag̱ooda gyet sgwaay akadi lip da'axłgit gapł na güült.

The people were fed up because they weren't able to eat their catch.

Dawil hawtgitga k'oolda sup'asit,

Then one of their young people said,

"wayi," dayag̱at, "dzida ła'ik dit dog̱a na k'yenu dm di xswooxsgu," dayag̱at,

"well," he said, "if he takes my fish again I'll dive with him," he said,

"dm di xswooxsgu,"

"I will dive with him,"

Dayag̱at wudi k'wił sgatgida da hawt.

He said it, he seemed cocky and he said it.

Wayi waaltg̱at, dzabitg̱ał loop dat sits'alda ḵ'oxł,

So he did this, he made a weight (rock) by making a loop of withes,

xłm dakła looba gwa'a da dit lip lumag̱it da dit dzaba gik k'üül.

he tied it around this stone and put it over himself, and then made another one.

G̱an ła di heelda 'maktga, da uks g̱o'iksas sm'ooygida gwa'a

Therefore when he had caught a lot, then this chief came out,

dat wil k'winuu gwii, hadanii gisga gyet.

and then he asked for that, the blackcod from the people.

Di txal g̱oos Dzoog̱ali g̱ał waa 'yuuta gwa̱'a̱.

He also went alongside Dzoog̱ali - this man's name, it is said.

"Wayi, lip doxł," dayag̱at, "g̱al, txal k'yan, dm lip doxt."

"Well, take them yourself," he said, "come on, alongside, take them yourself."

Wayi 'nii ga̱ł waalt, txal k'yan da awaa xsoo gwa'a,

So, that's what he did, he came alongside this canoe,

dat lip loga̱m 'nak'ada da dmt gaa, da'al lu maxda, lu maxda 'yuuta gwa'a, aa, naht sits'altida

and he reached in himself and he was going to take it, but he [Dzoogali] put it on, the man put on this, ah, he made a loop of it

dit lip lu magi̱t das 'niit, dawilat di xswooxsgit.

and put one around himself, and then he dove with him.

Düüt t'a, wayi al 'ap ligi uks daawła gyeda gwa'a, wilat ha'ligo̱odit, gyigyetga.

They died, well, maybe they fell overboard, that's what they thought, the people.

Wah, 'nii wil silootgit, ła batsgida gwii, 'yuuta gwa'a,

Well, that's when they set out, when that one arrived, this man,

nwilwilaaysgitga, nwilwilaaysgisga dzagit.

his relatives, the relatives of the one who died.

Dawlat, haldm k̲'ołdit gya'wn, 'yaga̱ t'ała abuum goo dogi̱t,

Then, they were getting ready to leave, packing down a few things that they took,

dił na g̱aniinksgitga, na, dawila, waayt,

with their spouses, their, then, they paddled,

k'yeexgida gya'wn, wilaayda dm luk̲'axt.

escaping now, they knew they were all going to die.

Dawila k̲'ala daawł diya gwa'a, Lax G̱alts'abi'i.

Then they went up to this place, to Old Town.

'Nii g̱ooyt, 'nii wil huut da gwii.

That's where they went, that's where they ran away to.

Dawila gwinxsḵ'a̱mg̱o'intgida 'yuuta gwa'a, asga sm'ooygit diya gyigyaani, Lax G̱alts'ap

Then he put himself at the mercy, it is said, of this man, the chief up the inlet, Old Town

meła goo wila waalt.

and told what had happened to him.

Dawila g̱awdi txo'ondida dip gwa'a, dawilat log̱m t'ała dm gabida da xsooyi.

After they had finished feeding them, then they put their provisions into the canoe.

Dawila ḵ'ala mag̱ida da lax t'aam ḵ'a'at,

Then he took them up to the Lake of the Ḵ'a'at (cane),

'niit wil ḵ'ala mag̱at, 'ni'nii wilt dzo'nt.

this is where he put them, that's where he had them live.

Heelda wineeya t'ała di asga ḵ'ala aksa gwa'a.

There was plenty of food up this river.

Ts'm t'aa gwa'a, 'niisga wil dzoxt

At this lake, that's where they lived.

Wayi ła ts'iiga muu gyediya a gyiyaaksi'i,

Well, when the people from out there heard rumours of this,

da, ła ts'iiga muut, a gwa'a habas dip gwii, Lax G̱alts'ap,

then, when they heard, this is where they went, Old Town,

g̱anat ḵ'alat g̱oot dat niist.

therefore they went up there (to Old Town) to see.

Akadi niił ligi goo a gwii dzi ligił k'yenł.

They didn't see anything there, or if there was anything there at all.

Wayi al gwaay g̱ał lawaalsga gyigyeda gwa'a,

Now this is what those people did there,

güüldida maay, ada hoon, siluunat, ada sami,

they gathered berries, and fish, dried them, and meat,

wil liksgyigyeda sami, samim wanm, ol,

different kinds of meat, deer meat, bear,

‘nii siluunat, dat gik gyisi sg̱awta da awaa sm’ooygida gwa’a, naa int habilboolt.

that’s what they dried, and then transported it down to this chief, the one who took care of them.

Wayi ‘nii wila waals dip gwii da gwii,

So, this is what happened to them there,

wah, al gwa’a g̱ał nlawaalt.

this is what, it is said, happened to them.

Sgüüg̱ał wa̱sga sm’ooygitga gwii, misola, wa̱sas sm’ooygida gwa’a, moksgm ol,

That chief had a blanket, kermode bear, the blanket of this chief, white bear

ada txa g̱ałaxsgit, sigwida’ats’gida gwii,

and it had all its claws, made into this coat,

ada ‘ap luk’wil mooksm, ‘ap luk’wil hoysk, ada txag̱aaydit.

and it was very white, really attractive, and it had a hood.

Wayi da yaawkt, dat ‘nii hoyda gwa’a, da luulgit da g̱alts’ipts’ap.

Well, whenever he hosted a feast, then this is what he wore, and feasted the other villages.

Wayi ‘nii ‘na ndzagm g̱ooda sm’ooygit di ya gyiyaaksi’i.

Now, the chief from out to sea was very impressed by it.

Luk’wil ndzagm g̱ooda gwii ada txa’nii goo wila gyoo sm’ooygit.

He was really impressed by this and everything that the chief was doing.

Wayi ḵ’ala daawł gisga awasga wekt a gyigyaani

So he went to his brother up the channel there

at dm wilat k'winuu gwida'ats'a gwa'a.

to ask for this coat.

G̱axba hawt dmt gyiikt diya, aa, txa'nii goo nahawt, dmt gyiikt.

Sometimes he said he would buy it, he did everything in his power to buy it.

Wayi ayn 'wałgit, 'wałga 'yuuta gwa'a, akadi.

No, he didn't allow it, this man didn't allow it, no.

Wayi xbiisg̱at lusgüü gwii, lugup'l xbiisa gwa'a, k'üül nakwduunda, da k'üül nts'aaẅt.

Now it's said that was in a box. This box was double, one outside, one inside.

Wayi 'nii wil lusgüü gwida'ats'a gwa'a.

So this is where he kept this coat.

Wah, 'nii wila waal da gwii.

Well, that's how it was there.

K'üülda taaym łayk 'yag̱a g̱oyt'iks dip gwa'a,

One time when these people again came down,

łayk 'yag̱a g̱o'iks dip gwa'a, at gyisi sg̱aw,

they came down again, to deliver down [the supplies],

Ḵ'am ligi didaba k'yanya gyiyaaksa

Every once in a while those from out to sea came

da'ik ḵ'ala daawłt, a 'nii wineeya g̱an waalt.

then they'd go up again, because of the food supplies, that's why they did so.

At gik k'yanda sm'ooygida gwa'a.

Again, this is what this chief did.

Wayi k'üülda taym, wayi ła'al 'ap 'naga dzoxt diya gwa'a gyigaani,

Now one time, now they had lived for quite a while at this place up the river,

k'üülda taym dayk gyisig̱o'iksga dzog̱itsga lax t'aaga.

one time again the people living at the lake came down.

K'wił huudida gwa'a gyisi sg̲aw wineeya gisga sm'ooygitga.

These people who had run away brought food to the chief.

Da'al lubaa xsoo gwa'a, gyiidza libag̲ayt k'yan,

But then this canoe came in, they were almost in a panic,

ts'a ptoołit, 'niit wil li'yüüdit, sm'ooygida gwa̲'a̲.

in the house platform, that's where he hid them, this chief.

Da'al txo'on, bax luulgit, bax hukhuutk.

Then he fed them (the ones in the canoe), invited them up, called them up.

Wayi liksgye'ensga k'ooltga 'yuuta.

Well, one man got suspicious.

Sm liksgye'enda goo wila waal dip gwa'a,

He noticed that something was going on with these people,

wudi gidza k'wił libaas da lawaal.

they seemed to be almost afraid of what was happening.

Da ławila akadi aamł la yaa g̲ooda 'yuuta gwa'a; sgüü goo wila waals dip gwa'a.

And this guy still wasn't satisfied; there must be something going on with these people.

Da hawg̲atga sm'ooygit "wayi sm ndzusda xbiisda" dayag̲at, "sm ndzusda xbiisda."

Then the chief said "Now, bring out the box," he said, "bring the box."

Dawila t'aam gaadit dip gwa'a xbiis da gwa'a, łiłuungit,

And then they brought it out, this box, his slaves,

dawlat k'ag̲it, dawilit uks gaa wa̲sa gwii.

and he opened it, and took out that blanket.

"Wah" dayag̲ada sm'ooygida gwa'a "dzi małn n yaawsas wegi da

gwa'a," dayaga̲t.

"Well," said the chief, "tell my brother I remember him with this gift," he said.

"Dm xk'eeyłdida naksu," dayaga̲ 'yuuta, daya sm'ooygida gwa'a.

"It will be a gift from my wife," said the man, said this chief.

Sm 'am niidzas dip gwa'a gwii, wil lu, aa,

As soon as they saw what that was, in this, ah,

wilaayda al ła 'nakda hasaga̲ 'yuuta, sm'ooygit di ya gyiyaaksi'i.

they knew the man had wanted it for a long time, this chief from out to sea.

Ła 'nakł da hasaxda wa̲sa gwa'a, wayi sm k̲'am niidzas dip gwii

He had wanted this blanket a long time, so just as soon as they saw it

dawila sigyootkt, dawila silm yeltgit, haydza 'yuuta gwa'a.

then they left right away, they returned home, this man sent it away.

Wayi 'ni'nii wila waal da gwii g̲an ksi a̲x'a̲xgas dip gwa'a.

So that's how that happened, how those people got saved.

Nah dm al 'ap lu 'waays dip gwa'a

These people would have been discovered

wil k̲'aym ts'm stuup'l lu want

where they were close by in the back of the house

wil lut li'yüüdaga sm'ooygitga.

where the chief had hidden them in.

Wayi 'ni'nii gyik adawg̲a Gitk̲'a'ata gwa'a,

Now this is another story about the Gitk̲'a'ata,

'nii adawxt da gwa'a, wila waal gwa'a.

This is their story, this is how it happened.

'Nii siwaada k̲'amksiwah da "good deed."

That's what the white man calls a "good deed."

'Nii waalsgida Gitk̲'a'ata,

That's what the Gitk̲'a'ata did,

ama wil habilboolsga huudit.

they took good care of those runaways.

Wayi 'ni'nii gyik nax'nuuyu adawxs dip gwasda da gwa'a.

Well, this I also heard told by the olden people from here.

This story is included in the computer database of Sm'algya̱x as an interlinear text analyzed to the level of morphemes, with each word or word part linked to an entry in the lexical component of the database. The database is maintained using FieldWorks software.[3] Figure 1 shows a screen shot of what the interlinear analysis looks like when a text is open for analysis, showing the words, morphemes (smallest meaningful units), and several categories of information about the lexical entries that are linked to each morpheme/word.

There are now over 120 such texts in the database. Over half of them are, like *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i*, transcriptions of recordings that were made over the past five decades by fluent speakers working with linguists. Dorothy Brown and Kathleen Vickers from Gitxaała recorded texts with John Dunn in the late 1960s; Alfred Anderson, Clarence Anderson, Louisa Anderson, Flora Eaton, Cora Robinson, and Violet Robinson from Txałgiw (Hartley Bay) made recordings with Margaret Anderson in the 1970s and 1980s; Alfred Eaton from New Metlakata, Alaska made several tapes with Margaret Anderson when he visited Hartley Bay in 1979;[4] and Mildred Wilson from Txałgiw made a series of recordings with Fumiko Sasama during the 1990s and early 2000s. These texts are doubly precious because the audio recordings from which they were transcribed are now the only records of the voices of these speakers, all of whom have now passed on. There are also a number of audio recordings that have been made in the process of curriculum development projects through the Ts'msyen Sm'algya̱x Authority and/or the Wa̱p Sigatgyet, including recordings by a large number of fluent speakers of several thousand of the example sentences in the online Sm'algya̱x Living Legacy Talking Dictionary, which is pro-

3 FieldWorks is available free on the web at SIL.org. This software facilitates inclusion of audio, video and image data linked to entries, and has been used to maintain the Sm'algyax database for the past five years; prior to that LinguaLinks software was used, and before that Shoebox; these are both also SIL software packages.

4 Several other speakers made tapes with Margaret Anderson, but these have not yet been analyzed or included in the database. There are, of course, a large number of recordings made by speakers that are kept by their family members.

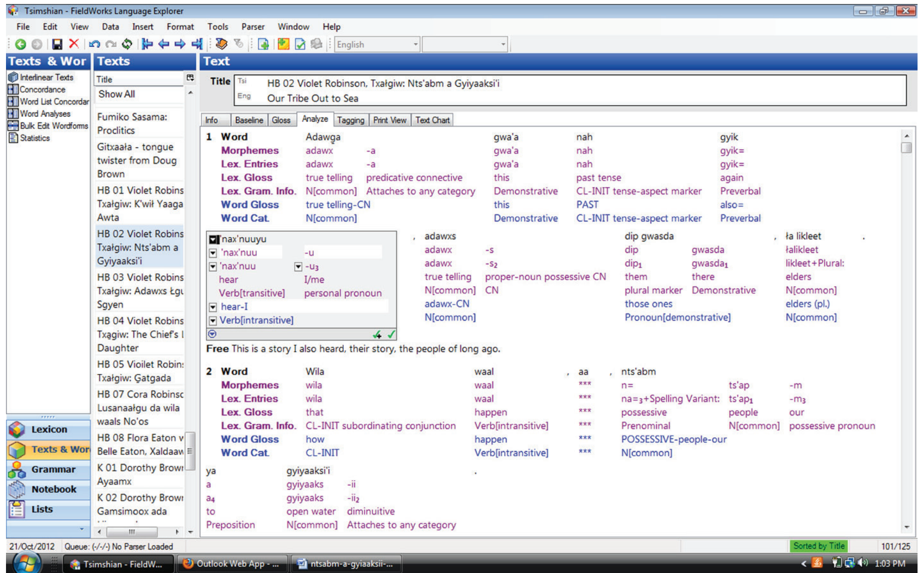


Figure 1. Sample of interlinear analysis using Fieldworks software.

duced by exporting the lexical database described in this chapter. While the example of the Mashantucket Pequot demonstrates that it is feasible to revitalize a language when there are no speakers and no audio records, having such recordings allows for far greater confidence in the process. As more languages verge on extinction, the race to document and archive language data in the form of recordings and analyses for future revitalization efforts becomes more crucial; this will include recordings and texts such as *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i*.

The balance of the texts in the Sm'algyax database are re-writings of stories that were written down by Ts'msyen ethnographer William Beynon during the 1930s and sent to Franz Boas. That collection of over 250 texts was mis-catalogued in the library at Columbia University for over four decades, but was located in the 1980s and made available on microfilm. About a third of them have now been re-written in the orthography currently used by the Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Authority. Some of these have been published, such as those appearing in the collection Suwilaaymsga na Ganiyaatgm, which was published by the school district. Other texts from this collection have been used to teach Sm'algyax in the programs offered by UNBC, and audio recordings of these were made by contemporary fluent speakers such as Doug Brown and Velna Nelson so that there will be an oral version as well as a written text and translation.

Each of the texts in the database is a repository of knowledge of Sm'algyax available for future generations to draw from as they strive to revitalize the language.

The knowledge that is there includes information on all aspects of the language: the sounds and variations in pronunciation; the meaningful units and words of the language and the patterns into which they are combined; the patterns and variations of phrases and sentences and the nuances of style in various contexts; and cultural information. This information will contribute to the language bank that will help the Ts'msyen revitalize Sm'algya̱x in future. In the following section I will illustrate each of these aspects with reference to the text above.

Layers of Knowledge available from *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i*

Knowledge about Sounds

The audio recording of Violet Robinson telling this story is, in itself, a valuable resource for future language revitalization efforts with respect to knowledge of the sounds of the language. Such recordings allow learners who have no access to immersion in a living speech community to develop an 'ear' for the sounds and rhythms of the language as spoken by esteemed experts. Mrs. Robinson was a first language speaker of the language who was born in 1907; she generally preferred to speak Sm'algya̱x, though she was fluent in English as well.

In addition to the value of the audio recordings *per se* in training the ears of future speakers, there are also potential resources for revitalization in the written text. The baseline of *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i* as shown above is written in the practical orthography that is preferred by the Ts'msyen Sm'algya̱x Authority and Wa̱p Sigatgyet. The practical orthography used for Sm'algya̱x was developed over a number of years by Dunn, and was confirmed in a number of workshops with Ts'msyen educators and fluent speakers of Sm'algya̱x. The orthography is roughly phonemic (it represents all the distinctive sounds of the language, and each symbol corresponds to each sound without confusion), and is fairly easily mastered by fluent speakers as well as second language speakers. There are a number of publications in which the spellings used in the practical orthography are shown with their IPA phonetic transcriptions, including the first major publication illustrating this orthography, Dunn's Practical Dictionary of Sm'algya̱x (1978). The writing system is based on the same principles as the orthographies used for the related languages Gitxsanimx and Nisga'a, which were developed by Rigsby, working with fluent speakers of those language. The Sm'algya̱x orthography has been in use since the late 1970s, and there is a substantial body of materials printed with this writing system.

Learners who can read the writing system find that they can discern sounds more clearly by reading the text while listening to audio recordings such as *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i*. This is crucial because Sm'algya̱x has almost twice as many distinctive sounds as English does, and includes a number of types of sounds with which English speakers are unfamiliar, such as uvular stops and glottalized or ejective consonants,

which appear in the line from the story here as underlined characters (uvulars) and letters preceded or followed by an apostrophe (ejective or glottalized sounds), both seen in this phrase: **Dawila k'ala magida da lax t'aam k'a'at**. The skill of discriminating all the sounds of the language will be fundamental for any future project to revitalize Sm'algyax, and underlies the ability to actually produce the sounds accurately. Having carefully transcribed texts matched with audio recordings of fluent voices such as Mrs. Robinson's is a valuable tool for revitalizing the language.

Knowledge of Words and Word Formation

Mastering the vocabulary of a language is, of course, fundamental to its acquisition, and a good inventory of these is essential for future revitalization. Incorporation of texts such as *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i* into the lexical database for Sm'algyax continues to contribute to our knowledge of the words and idioms of the language, because, while we already have an extensive dictionary of the language, it is far from complete, and there is much yet to be discovered and added. The following, for example, are words or idioms that are attested so far only in this text, and which were added to the dictionary after the text was analyzed in the database (shown here in root forms):

dzo'n *have someone live in a place*
gwinxsk'amgo'intk *put oneself at the mercy of someone*
lugup'l *double*
'mik'mak *plural of 'mak, to catch fish*
'na ndzagm goot *be impressed by something*
ts'iiga muu *hear rumours of*

Almost every text included in the database yields such additions to our knowledge of the lexicon of Sm'algyax. Some of these are common usage and were missing from the dictionary simply because no one had yet thought to include them. In other instances fluent speakers who listen to the audio tape of the story recognize the previously undocumented words or idioms, sometimes characterizing them as 'old language' no longer in common usage. In a few cases the undocumented words are ones that none of the speakers has previously heard. Sometimes these words or idioms are transparent – all the parts can be recognized and the meaning is simply the sum total of the word parts, for example **dzo'n** *(have someone live somewhere)*, which is made up of a root **dzox** (*to live in a place)* plus a derivational suffix **–'n** (*to cause someone to do something)*. In other instances the meaning of the idiom is not at all clear from the component parts, such as **'na ndzagm goot** *(be impressed by something)*, which includes the words **dzak** (*dead)* and **goot** (*heart)*.

Phrase and Sentence Patterns

As noted above, there are several published grammars of Sm'algya̲x (Dunn 1978, Mulder 1984, Sasama 2001, Anderson and Ignace 2008), but no one would argue that we yet understand all of its patterns and variations, and of course a language is a living entity that continues to grow and change over time. A discussion of syntax is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is worth noting that texts are the most valuable tool in figuring out how sentences are structured. For example, one feature of sentence structure that is well-illustrated in Mrs. Robinson's various texts is the connective –ł, which is used in *irrealis* contexts – that is, it appears in "non-confirmed" sentences when expressing wishes, questioning or negating statements. Here are several examples from this text:

> **Wayi gwaayg̲ał lawaalsga sm'ooygitga:**
>
> *Now this, it is said, is what the chief did:*
>
> **dawlat wil g̲oot'ił ła aamsg̲abuu 'mik'maga gyet,**
>
> *when he thought that the people had caught quite a few,*
>
> **Wayi ła luhaxhaaxgitg̲ał g̲ag̲ootł gyet,**
>
> *So the people were fed up, it is said,*
>
> **Akadi niił ligi goo a gwii dzi ligił k'yenł.**
>
> *They didn't see anything there, or if there was anything there at all.*
>
> **Sgüüg̲ał wa̲sga sm'ooygitga gwii, misola, wa̲sas sm'ooygida gwa'a, moksgm ol,**
>
> *That chief had a blanket, kermode bear, the blanket of this chief, white bear*

Developing a complete understanding of the usage of forms such as this connective requires a large body of texts that can be examined, identifying when the form occurs. Having over a hundred texts in the database is a start towards ensuring that these patterns can be more fully explained, and understood by future language learners. As we add more texts some of the questions we have now will be answered, and, of course, new questions will emerge.

Usage

The basic information on meaning and grammar that appears in dictionaries and grammar is sometimes too simple to correctly capture the way that speakers actually employ the resources of their language. Sometimes categories are stretched or played with for rhetorical effect. Becoming attuned to these entails experiencing

sufficient examples of the norm for the surprise to stand out in contrast. In this text, for example, note the relatively unusual pattern in which **sm'ooygit** (a chief), which normally functions as a noun, is used as a verb (to be a chief). **Nah sm'ooygitgada 'yuuta gwa'a.** This man was the chief, it is said. In fact many Sm'algya̱x words can function in several ways in sentences with appropriate location in the sentence and word endings, etc. A large corpus of texts in which each word is linked to the dictionary database helps to highlight such creative usages.

Cultural Knowledge

This text includes rich detail on several aspects of Ts'msyen culture: seasonal rounds and the harvesting and processing of food; the role of chiefs and the "social contract" between chiefs and their people; and the value of kindness and gifts and gift-giving. Here are a few key sentences from the text on these topics.

> **'nii dzaba gyeda gwii ławil aksyaagwa gooym, dm 'maga hadanii.**
>
> *that's what those people did, at the beginning of spring, catch blackcod.*
>
> **Ła luhaxhaaxga g̲ag̲ooda gyet sgwaay akadi lip da'axłgit gapł na güült.**
>
> *The people were fed up because they weren't able to eat their catch.*
>
> **"Wah" dayag̲ada sm'ooygida gwa'a "dzi małn n yaawsas wegi da gwa'a," dayag̲at.**
>
> *"Well," said the chief, "tell my brother I remember him with this gift," he said.*
>
> **"Dm xk'eeyłdida naksu," dayag̲a 'yuuta, daya sm'ooygida gwa'a.**
>
> *"It will be a gift from my wife," said the man, said this chief.*
>
> **'Nii siwaada k̲'amksiwah da "good deed."**
>
> *That's what the white man calls a "good deed."*
>
> **'Nii waalsgida Gitk̲'a'ata, ama wil habilboolsga huudit.**
>
> *That's what the Gitk̲'a'ata did, they took good care of those runaways.*

Conclusion

The preceding section has given brief examples of the many ways in which *Nts'abm ya Gyiyaaksi'i* is a storehouse of knowledge saved up for future generations to draw on as they strive to revitalize Sm'algya̱x. The examples of information on the sounds of the language and variations in pronunciation, the meaningful units and words

of the language and the patterns into which they are combined, the patterns and variations of phrases and sentences and the nuances of style in various contexts, and cultural values that are found in this one text can be multiplied a hundred-fold when a large sample of texts is available. The effort to expand the collection of texts and to analyze them carefully is one contribution to Sm'algyax revitalization that can be made at this point, and a number of people continue to work on this and other initiatives to ensure the future of the language. The language may be used by fewer people in the future, and the contexts in which it is used may be reduced, but if sufficient knowledge is stored up now, Ts'msyen people will have choices in the future about how they will use this legacy.

References

Anderson, Margaret
2012 Sm'algyax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary (since 2004). http://web.unbc.ca/~smalgyax

Anderson, Margaret and Marianne Ignace
2008 Visible Grammar: 20 User-Friendly Modules on Sm'algyax Grammar.

Dunn, John Asher
1978 A Practical Dictionary of the Coast Tsimshian Language. Mercury Series, National Museum of Man, Ethnology Service Paper. Ottawa.
1979 Reference Grammar for the Coast Tsimshian Language, Mercury Series, National Museum of Man, Ethnology Service Paper, no. 55. Ottawa.

Hymes, Dell
1965 Some North Pacific Coast Poems: A Problem in Anthropological Philology. American Anthropologist 67(Part I):316-341.

Mulder, Jean Gail
1994 Ergativity in Coast Tsimshian (Sm'algyax), University of California Press, Berkeley.

Sasama, Fumiko
1995 Coast Tsimshian Plural Formation with Phonological Introduction. MA Thesis, Hokkaido University, Sapporo.
2001 A Descriptive Study of the Coast Tsimshian Morphology. Doctoral Dissertation, Kyoto University, Kyoto.

Ts'msyen Language Authority
1992 *Suwilaaymsg na Ganiyaatgm* – series of seven books published by School District 52, Prince Rupert.

“In the Blink of an Eye”: Collecting the Tsimshian Stone Masks

Joanne MacDonald

The chain of events surrounding the collecting of the two nesting Tsimshian stone masks has eluded the net of history; much of the knowledge about them is lost or was never recorded. For years it was not known who the masks represented. Being the only stone Northwest Coast masks places them in a unique category. These masks are often called twins, which is not technically correct, as the masks are of the same face. The outer mask is the unseeing mask and the smaller inner one is the sighted mask. One mask wound up in Ottawa, Canada and the other in Paris, France. Their connection to each other was lost until their brief reunion in 1975.

This chapter addresses the mystery surrounding their origins and attempts to shed light on the history of their century-long separation, drawing upon various archival resources to document their history, use and meaning.

> No one person in an oral culture has all the knowledge of the people, for knowledge is held by many people, in many different places. We will have to accommodate and adapt to [our] evolution as a culture, as we move forward and build into the future with materials given us by our ancestors. In the end, they will make us stronger as a people.
> Nisga'a elder, Lucy Williams, Sigdimnak' Niysgankw'ajikw. [Nyce 2008:257]

Not only does one person not have all the ancestral knowledge, the reality for the ethnohistorian who seeks to meld the historical record with anthropological data faces large gaps in the existing corpus of published and unpublished material. For example, we are lacking the song that went with the masks and a visualization of the theatrical presentation in the Tsimshian Feast house.

Figure 1. Lateral profile of the masks "nested" one behind the other. The nesting stone masks create unity with the smaller Paris mask on the inside. This priority of "unseeing over seeing" disturbs some researchers. Holes in the ears of inner mask and two holes in top edge of outer mask (Duff 19751:166). Photo credit: Hilary Stewart

Among the Tsimshian, it was only chiefs who wore masks, as opposed to the Tlingit where they were worn by shamans. The human mask was common among the Tsimshian who can be studied in terms of their location and language differences. Ethnologist Viola Garfield published the classic study *Tsimshian Clan and Society* in 1939. She noted the Tsimshian emphasis "on the face" in the context of the funeral ceremony:

> While the body lay in the house the successor was brought forward and made "to look on the face of his brother," thus acquiring the predecessor's power and making known his readiness to assume the position. [1939:240]

The Collectors

The paper trail of the stone masks begins in the museum records from the institutions where the masks still reside after 130 years. However, the museum catalogues at the Canadian Museum of History in Ottawa, and the Trocadero Museum of Paris, now Musee du quai Branly, offer no insights as to how the masks became separated on two continents.

The unsighted mask was acquired by the Geological Survey of Canada (the forerunner of the Canadian Museum of History)[1] by Dr. Israel Wood Powell, a medical doctor and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for British Columbia based in Victoria. He was assisted in collecting ethnographic material by, among others, the missionary William Duncan. Duncan had a long term relationship with Powell, who was the federal government source of funding for William Duncan's Christian community of Metlakatla in Northern B.C. The sighted mask in Paris was collected by Alphonse Pinart, a French ethnographer based in Paris who travelled regularly to North America. Pinart's link to the stone masks was likely arranged by the cannery operator William Neil, based in Victoria and San Francisco. Duncan and Neil were the key non-Indigenous figures in removing the masks from the North Coast.

The key Indigenous person involved in the story was Paul Sebassa (Ts'ibasaa), head chief of the Gitxaała.

Dr. I. W. Powell

The 1879 museum accession records of the Geological Survey of Canada in Ottawa catalogued 55 archaeological pieces and 355 ethnological pieces acquired from Israel Powell. The unsighted stone mask was one of the items. The collection was purchased for $1,232.54 by the Department of the Interior. In 1881, when the collection was exhibited at the Geological Survey of Canada's new museum in Ottawa, it attracted an unprecedented number of visitors during its first month.

The large turnout impressed Alfred Selwyn, Director of the Geological Survey. He had attended World Fairs in both Philadelphia and Chicago, and viewed popular Canadian Indigenous exhibits presented there. Selwyn saw the need for Canada to have a national museum"unless Canada is to be forever dependent upon museums of the U.S. for information relating to the life history of her own Aboriginal races" (Vodden & Dyck 2006:16). The Geological Survey's museum was established in Ottawa that year.

The catalogue record indicates that Powell collected one piece from the village of "Kitkatla" (Gitxaała) or Lach Klan. It was listed as # 10 "stone mask" catalogued at VII-C-329, the VII standing for the British Columbia, and "C" for Tsimshian.

1 The current Canadian Museum of History has gone through several changes of name over its history: Geological Survey of Canada (1881), Victoria Memorial Museum, National Museum of Man, Canadian Museum of Civilization, and Canadian Museum of History.

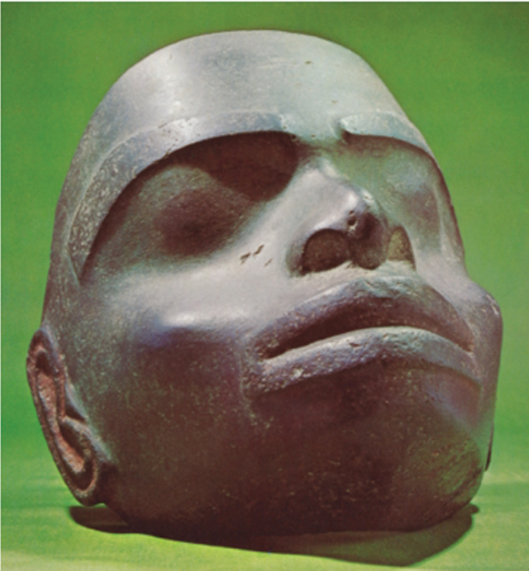


Figure 2: Ottawa mask V11-C-329, unsighted mask. Photo Credit: Hilary Stewart.

No dollar values were associated with the piece. Of the list of 339 pieces collected, most were ethnological items. However, the museum's cataloguer appears to have sorted out the stone objects first, numbers 1-77, catalogued "XII" for archaeology. The other stone objects collected included mauls, hammers, adzes from Metlakatla, Fort Simpson, (Lax Kwa'alaams), the Nass River (no village given), Haida Gwaii and, from the South Coast, Fort Rupert and Cowichan.

We have no comment from Powell about the stone mask he "collected." Powell, a trained Scottish medical doctor, combined his role of Indian Superintendent (from 1874 to 1889) with that of collecting First Nation's cultural materials much in demand by museums in Europe and America. In the museum field, Powell was a collector and vendor as opposed to a donor. Museum researchers have criticized Powell's record keeping, as the large volume of his collecting probably led to documentation errors. (See Halpin 1973:45.)

A review of Powell's Annual Report for the Department of Indian Affairs for 1879 indicates Powell did not visit Gitxaała that year. That suggests he did not acquire the stone mask directly from Gitxaała; it must have been acquired at another time, or through another avenue.

In 1881 Powell did visit Gitxaała, much to the chagrin of Johan Adrian Jacobsen, a collector for the Royal Berlin Ethnological Museum. Powell's collecting was driving up prices. Jacobsen stated:

> Kitkatla was the first real Indian village I visited. It is rather remote from the usual line of travel visited. And therefore not influenced by modern culture. It

> is a handsome town with a totem pole about fifty feet high beside every house. [Jacobsen 1977:13]

While negotiating purchases, Jacobsen found the prices high as the community acted together. In addition, "Dr. Powell, the Indian Agent from Victoria who was eagerly collecting for the governments of Canada and Washington,[2] had paid high prices and had promised to come back" (Jacobsen 1977:14-15).

Dr. Powell was likely collecting for the American Museum of Natural History in New York City at that time. When he wrote from Victoria to Professor Bickmore, Superintendent of the American Museum of Natural History in New York on 5 October 1882 he was arranging the shipping via San Francisco "a most interesting and complete one so far as Brit [sic] Columbia is concerned." Powell confessed to a guilty conscience: "I should not like to undertake another work of this kind, and when looking at them this morning I really felt guilty of a want of patriotism in sending the collection out of the country."[3]

Powell displayed part of his collection, likely what was to be shipped to New York, in an eclectic Art Exhibition held in Victoria's Philharmonic Hall and Pavilion Rink in November 1881. Amongst oil paintings, etchings and moss collections were a number of displays of Northwest Coast art. Mr. Innis of Esquimalt displayed some "admirable specimens of Indian carving from Fort Simpson," and Capt. Warren had "a large case of west coast Indian curiosities." The most outstanding display, however, was Powell's collection. "In Indian curios the large case at the upper end of the room and completely filled, belonging to Dr. Powell, Supt. of Indian Afairs, must certainly be awarded the palm" (British Colonist, November 12 1881:3).

German collector Jacobsen was a visitor at the Exhibition, and noted more detail about Powell's display:

> A small exhibition opened that had, among other things, objects from the Haida and Tsimshian. The exhibitor was Dr. Powell who had bought and collected the pieces. There were many handsome pieces, especially several well-carved and well-painted house posts that support the roof beams, also some carved wooden heads of a man and a woman with a labret and some ethnographic pieces from Alaska. [Jacobsen 1977:43]

2 Major John Wesley Powell was the founder of the Bureau of Ethnology in Washington. The author has found that his initials J.W. Powell are often confused with I.W. Powell.

3 A year later Powell sent a large canoe from Bella Bella and "The Totem poles are particularly fine and show the four great crests in the heraldry of the Tsimpshean [sic] Indians of the NW Coast" (correspondence AMNH).

William Duncan

In his role as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Powell worked closely with the missionary William Duncan who served in the Tsimshian communities of Fort Simpson (Lax Kw'alaams) and Metlakatla. Sponsored by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) of England, Duncan arrived after a long sea voyage to Esquimalt Harbour, on July 17, 1857. Destined for Fort Simpson on the north coast, he quickly found a Tsimshian language teacher, "Wehawn," who was employed as a servant to some of the Hudson's Bay Company employees at Fort Victoria (Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, RG 200).

Arriving in Fort Simpson in October 1857, Duncan continued his language studies with a Tsimshian teacher Clah (later known as Arthur Wellington Clah). The Tsimshian living outside the Fort's palisade welcomed the novice speaker as he conducted a population survey combined with rudimentary preaching in Sm'algyax. He also set up a school outside the Fort. He asked the Tsimshian to contribute to its cost by contributing baskets, carved spoons, and native dishes (Arctander 1909:149). He presumably sold the pieces at either the Fort or kept them to take to Victoria where there was an early interest in curios.

Duncan was not the first person to acquire curios in Fort Simpson. In 1853, four years before Duncan arrived, the crew and officers of the ship *H.M.S. Virago* spent nearly a month (June 20 to July 13) in Fort Simpson while their paddle-wheel gunboat was repaired. The ship's officers William Henry Hills (acting paymaster), and William E. Gordon (masters mate) both kept detailed diaries. Hills explained: "Those of us who had no occupation with the repairs used to cruise all day long among the houses of the Indians" (Hills 1853:270-271). The Hudson's Bay Company's trading suffered according to Chief Factor, William McNeill who wrote "in fact Virago is getting all the martens from the Indians and everything they can lay their hands on in the shape of provisions and curiosities" (HBC Journal, June 22, 1853). Gordon's diary supported McNeill's impression. He commented on the variety of things in wood, stone and ivory ("whales teeth, are well carved"):

> In exchange for soap, thread and company trade goods, you could get skins, hats, masks and many other Indian curiosities. This is the best place on the coast for witnessing feasts, dances and other customs of the Indians. [Gordon:230]

Duncan became a serious purveyor of curios for profit as opposed to a collector. During Duncan's initial sea voyage from England to Esquimalt he observed the naval officer's enthusiasm for collecting curios, and a number of these men later became clients for his curios.

After an initial three-year period residing in the officer's quarters at the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Simpson, Duncan went exploring in 1860 with the newly arrived Rev. Tugwell who conducted the first baptisms at Fort Simpson. Duncan

was aware of many of the Chiefs from their trading trips to the Fort. The Hudson's Bay Company Journals kept detailed trading notes on the arrival and departures of particular chiefs. At Gitxaała he met Chief Ts'ibasaa and was impressed by him. Ts'ibasaa recounted a *naxnox* performance he and his chiefs performed for the crew of James Colnett's ship where they appeared to lift off their heads. Duncan also introduced himself at villages on the lower and upper Nass River.

In 1862 Duncan and his Tsimshian followers established the Christian community at Metlakatla, one of the traditional village sites of the ten tribes of the Coast Tsimshian. Following his role as a mediator with a British naval ship and the First Nations at Fort Simpson, Duncan was rewarded with the appointment of Justice of the Peace for the northern area (Gough 1984). He was authorized to arrest people selling liquor and settle property disputes (between First Nations and/or outsiders). By reviewing requests for business permits he monitored First Nations involvement in any new industry such as a cannery planned in 1875 for the mouth of the Skeena River. Powell explicitly asked Duncan to assist William Neill with arrangements to establish a cannery proposed by the North West Commercial Company of San Francisco at the mouth of the Skeena River.

Duncan was a lay minister, not ordained and therefore could not conduct baptisms or marriages. In the early days of Metlakatla, Duncan relied on visits from the clergy in Victoria. Various Anglican ministers came to Metlakatla to compensate for Duncan's unwillingness to become ordained. Bishop George Hills came north in May 1863 and was followed in October 1863 by his assistant Rev. Robert J. Dundas with Captain Verney. Dundas was an avid collector, and his collection was the first missionary-acquired collection of artifacts on the north coast (Harris 1985).[4] Bishop Hills returned again May 1866 and was "engaged the whole day in examining candidates for baptism." In 1867 Rev. Cridge from Victoria visited the Nass and assisted his friend Duncan with baptisms at Metlakatla. Eventually Duncan was reprimanded by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) for his resistance to ordination.

He drew converts from a wide area of the Northwest Coast and into Alaska. As Metlakatla became established Duncan required further help, particularly in developing a mission field on the Nass River. In 1876, Reverend Robert Tomlinson

4 On October 5, 2006 Sotheby's (New York) held the auction of "The Dundas Collection of Northwest Coast Indian Art." It featured 57 lots of sacred, ceremonial and utilitarian objects collected by Rev. Dundas. They were put up for auction by Rev. Dundas's great grandson Simon Carey. These pieces were likely given to Mr. Duncan by those baptized by Bishop Hills and Rev. Dundas in 1863. The majority of the auction items were acquired by private collectors with museums a distant second due to the high prices at the auction. The descendants of Mr. Duncan's original converts were disappointed at the distribution. The Dundas collection travelled as an exhibition "Tsimshian Treasures" combining the private collection and public pieces. The exhibit was accompanied by Tsimshian elders and toured museums in Canada in 2007. The book *Tsimshian Treasures: The Remarkable Journey of the Dundas Collection*, Donald Ellis, editor, featured scholarly essays and photos of a selection of the pieces. As a footnote, the diaries of Rev. Robert James Dundas were expected to be published but have not appeared .

followed Rev. Doolan at Kincolith, the mission village near the mouth of the Nass River. Rev. Robert Tomlinson made regular trips from his Nass River posting at Kincolith to assist Duncan at Metlakatla by conducting baptisms for Duncan.

The Church Missionary Society removed Duncan from Metlakatla to Victoria, September 30, 1876, to be replaced by Rev. A. J. Hall. However he returned north on November 1, 1877 after reading in the newspaper that Metlakatla was the site of religious visions. Hall was sent to Fort Rupert after losing control of the Metlakatla congregation during Duncan's absence. In 1882 Duncan was dismissed by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which eventually led to his departure with his supporters to Annette Island in Alaska in 1887.

Duncan was respected in Victoria's power circles and before he left maintained an active mail order "curio" business. His curio clients included politicians and the power figure Judge Matthew Begbie. Duncan offered mostly small personal items for sale, silver jewelry, stone bowls, and animal skins. A charge was later leveled against him "that – for a missionary – he is 'too much of a trader' " (Whymper 1869:60).

In order to augment his financial support from the CMS in London, Duncan developed a number of cottage industries, including spinning, soapmaking, and producing oolachen grease; he also established a saw mill and a salmon cannery at Metlakatla. Apparently none of Duncan's efforts achieved financial independence for the community (Hosmer 1999) even though Metlakatla became a clearinghouse for First Nations ceremonial regalia (MacDonald 1985, 1991).

The personal regalia sold was not associated with the crest system which divided the Tsimshian into four social groups with marriage partners chosen from outside ones own crest: Killerwhale, Raven, Eagle and Wolf. Interestingly, Duncan and the Tsimshian congregation installed interior totem poles in the Metlatkatla church representing the four crests. Duncan found that the identification with a particular crest helped amalgamate his roster of converts to Christian community life at Metlakatla.

Chief Ts'ibasaa **moves to Metlakatla**

Another figure in the collecting of the stone masks is Chief Ts'ibasaa of Gitxaała. According to Garfield, Ts'ibasaa or Dzi'basa translates as 'Eyes Closed all Day' *tsip,* 'closed eyes'; *a-*,"to'; *sa*, 'day' (Garfield 1939:337).

Unlike most Metlakatla residents, Tsibassa did not voluntarily move to Metlakatla. In 1872 Judge Matthew Begbie in Victoria rendered judgment as approved by the Governor General of Canada in the case "Sebassa & Thracket."[5] The case involved the murders of some white men a number of years earlier. In recognition of the delayed murder charge, Judge Begbie sentenced the four men involved, including Ts'ibasaa, to live with Duncan at Metlakatla under surveillance

5 Duncan was called to Victoria to assist in the trial. He wrote a complete description of the case for the CMS, and included a copy of the Charge of the Chief Justice. (Duncan 1873)

for five years. Duncan's Annual Letter to the CMS January 1874 cited part of the letter he wrote to the Lord Chief Justice at Victoria on 9th October 1873 regarding his assessment of Chief Ts'ibasaa:

> He is now taking his place among the most industrious of our village and seems determined to earn himself and family an honest livelihood. [Duncan Archives]

Duncan received a signed letter from 'Sebasa' on the south coast at Bella Bella, March 30, 1875 reporting on his progress in selling grease. Even though Ts'ibasaa had not yet been baptized he concluded with reference to "our heavenly father" (Wellcome collection, RG 200, Box 108, 05/01/13 (5) Folder 1-3#284, Native correspondence).

On October 1, 1875 Duncan wrote to Dr. Ash, a member of the legislative Assembly in Victoria, Vancouver Island. Duncan sold him

> a carved stone mortar and pestle which I bought on your account. ... The carved bowl belonged to the head chief of the Kithratla [Gitxaała] tribe. It was used for preparing the quid taken by the chiefs before retiring to bed. ... These stone bowls are now very scarce and hence dear. The twenty-three dollars you commissioned me to spend are given as follows: stone bowl $10, 3 spoons $3, one bracelet $5, carved stick $5. [Duncan Letterbook 1:515]

Chief Ts'ibasaa was baptized as Paul Sebassa on February 6, 1876. He was married to Emelia and had six children. All were baptized at Metlakatla, B.C. by Rev. Robert Tomlinson who travelled south from Kincolith at the mouth of the Nass River (Dioceses of Caledonia Records, Prince Rupert, B.C.).

Ts'ibasaa and his family continued to live at Metlakatla according to Powell's Annual Report of November 22, 1881. Powell described him as a devout Christian and "one of the most peaceful and respected citizens of Metlakatla." It appears that Paul Sebassa did not move to Alaska with Duncan and his followers in 1887. There was a grave recorded for "P. Zibasha" in the Metlakatla cemetery at Auriole Point on Digby Island. The headstone reads: P. Zibasha, 1893. The cemetery was recorded in the B.C. Archaeological Site Inventory (GbTo-21, grave 14) in 1996. It describes "a small stone plaque, pointed goblet top fallen from the adjacent square block."

Nass River Ts'ibasaa

There was a House of Ts'ibasaa on the Nass River at Gitwinksihlkw, also known as Canyon City. Taxaye was a chief of the House. The House originated in the Gitxsan village of Gisgaga'as up the Skeena River at its junction with the Babine River (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1995:70).

There is a narrative describing when Chief Ts'ibasaa of Gitxaała came to visit

his "brother" Chief Saik[6] and presented his *Dareu naxnox* [7] to the Nisga'a. The *Dareu* ("to-speak-to)" was a large headdress resembling a big sea urchin. Night after night Ts'ibasaa danced this new dance to his Nisga'a relatives and soon all were dancing it together to the accompaniment of the songs and new steps. The people forgot to fish salmon. Ts'ibasaa returned to his Gitxaała village and the Nisga'a suffered from starvation. There is no date for this narrative, although the impact of Ts'ibasaa's *Dareu naxnox* was never forgotten. Ts'ibasaa paid frequent visits to the village of Gitwinksihlkw[8] where the Gispuwadweda was one of the head groups. It was associated at times with Ts'ibasaa of Gitxaala. (This narrative was recorded by William Beynon in 1949 from informant, Robert Stewart. CMC file B-F-441, vol QQ 1948-49, Box 235 f.16 (temporary) 347).

In 1881 Nisga'a Sim'oogit Tsi'basaa spoke out against the over fishing of salmon: "Nisga'a Chiefs have no wish to interfere with the legitimate employment of their white friends, but they naturally ask that the white men should not be allowed to take all the salmon."

The fishing issue is discussed later in this paper in the context of canneries with Ts'ibasaa's Gitxaala namesake. We will also further explore Ts'ibasaa's role in the collecting of these masks.

Alphonse Pinart

The sighted mask was accessioned at the Musee d'Ethnologie du Trocadero in Paris in 1881. It was the only piece in the museum collection recorded as being from the village of Metlakatla. The records of the Musee d'Ethnologie du Trocadero, on May 23, 1881 identified M. Pinart[9] as the collector and donor of a "masque en pierre, sculpte & [unclear] Tsimshian de Meqtlakquatla. Riv. Naas." In 1929 cataloguer Paul Rivet changed the original Paris catalogue number 81.22.1 to #8654.

Similar to Israel Powell, Pinart did not keep notes. Both collectors ignored the name of the person from whom they collected their mask although Pinart did identify the provenance as "a protestant pastor" at "Meqtlakquatla." (Cole 1985:52.) The sighted stone mask was exhibited in Paris (Musee de l'Homme 1947:15). The Paris mask was described in 1965 in *Chefs-d-Oeuvre du Musee de l'Homme*, page 60,

6 The Church baptism records for the Nass River are incomplete. Marjorie Halpin(1973:309-310) listed Ts'ibasaa both at Kincolith and Gitwinksilhkw based on information from Charles Barton 1916 and Mercer 1916.

7 *Naxnox* names are owned by Houses, however, "there are a number of *naxnoxs* that are claimed by several different, even unrelated Houses" (Anderson and Halpin 2000:27).

8 Gitwinksihlkw, an upriver Nisga'a village, did not have a missionary although Duncan was well received when he visited in 1860. Canyon City became a Salvation Army community in 1927, so no early records of baptisms exist. In the published literature no chiefly names from there were linked to Kincolith baptisms.

9 The Alphonse Pinart mask collection in the Musee du Trocadero Paris is predominantly Mesoamerican procured during from 1880-1887 when Pinart was married to Zelia Nuttall, a Mayan specialist.

Image 3:The Sighted Stone Mask (Paris). This mask has a hole under the chin which held a mouthpiece for the wearer. See comment by Museum Director Hamy who was told of the mouthpiece by his friend A. Pinart. Photo Credit: Hilary Stewart

Plate 54. Wilson Duff included a translation of the 1965 text in his book *Images Stone B.C* (1975).[10]

> Mask in hard greenish stone, representing a human face. The outside and the periphery are very carefully polished; the eyes, not drawn, are simple holes, and two large flat bands have been left intentionally rough to represent eyebrows. The lips, the ears, and the eyebrows carry traces of red paint. A series of very regular perforations made by a drill, allow the attachment of the mask to the face. In spite of its considerable weight (4.17 kg), it was made to be worn, attached by straps or thongs, the wearer gripping between his teeth a loop of willow attached by two holes to the base. Hamy, who studied this piece in 1897, is said to have seen this loop still in place: "This handle, or loop of willow ... has been used often enough to carry the exact imprints of the wearer's teeth."[11] The use of these

10 The first line of the French original was not included in Duff's translation. It states: "Colombie britannique, riviere Nass, Meqtlakqatla."

11 If the willow mouth piece still existed it could have been tested for a DNA sample. However the owner of the mask would hire someone to wear it, so we could not identify the owner.

> masks is general in North America.[12] The Indians of the Northwest Coast believed in the existence of spirits that often had evil power.[13] Through his mask, the initiate obtained help from these supernatural beings or became one himself. The style of this piece is similar to the wooden masks of the Tlingit Indians of Sitka. Donated by Alphonse Pinart, No. 81.22.1[Duff 1975:188]

While Pinart did not write about the Paris mask he evidently shared information with his good friend, E.T. Hamy the Trocadero Museum director. Sixteen years after acquiring the Trocadero's stone mask, Hamy published an article (translated into English by the author) in 1897 reporting additional information from Pinart. "Note Sur Un Masque En Pierre Des Indiens de la Riviere Nass, Columbie Britannique" was presented to the Societe des Americanists de Paris, the Society founded by Hamy.

The mouthpiece with teeth marks was described by Hamy from observation noting the arrangement of three holes under the chin for cordage to hold the willow mouthpiece. Hamy declared that the mouthpiece was lost.

The article presented small prints of two masks, meant to show the similarity between what Hamy called the Nass stone mask and a wooden, painted mask from Sitka.[14] Bill Holm, scholar and art historian in Northwest Coast art, declared that the Sitka mask is not stylistically related to the stone mask (personal communication). Hamy noted the masks of St. Petersbourg were seen and sketched by Pinart while travelling in Europe 1873-1875.

Hamy suggests for the first time that Pinart acquired the stone mask during a trip to Metlakatla.

> The mask was acquired from the Protestant minister at Meqtlakqatla [sic] who indicated that it was from the Indians who live to the north east of the town along the shore of the Nass River and are known as Nass Indians or "Nasses." [Hamy 1897; translation by Joanne MacDonald]

William Duncan comes to mind as he fits the description as the Protestant missionary who founded Metlakatla. Duncan visited the Nass twice, 1860 and 1864, although he never noted that he did any collecting. Hamy could also have been referring to the Church Missionary Society missionary, Rev. Robert Tomlinson stationed from 1867-1879 at the Christian village of Kincolith at the mouth of the

12 The stone masks are part of the Tsimshian *naxnox* system where the masks are owned by particular people in a special group called a 'House.' The tradition is considered to be older than the Secret Societies that spread north on the northwest coast in the 18th century.

13 The *naxnox* was not generally considered as an evil presence. It may be responsible for a 'murder' which would lead to a "restore to life " ritual. (See Halpin 1981)

14 The Sitka mask (#620/34) was collected by the prolific Russian collector Ilya Voznesenski in 1841-1842. It s in the Museum of Anthropology, Lomonosov State University of Moscow.

Nass River. Tomlinson regularly assisted Duncan by travelling south to conduct baptisms or assist in other ways at Metlakatla. As noted earlier, Tomlinson was known to Chief Ts'ibasaa of Gitxaała and his family when he baptized them at Metlakatla in February 1876.

The author has found no documentary evidence to support Pinart's presence at either Metlakatla or the Nass River. The possible Nass River connection of the Paris stone mask was noted by scholar Stephen McNeary (1976) while discussing Nisga'a material culture. McNeary cited Hamy's link to the Nass River:

> Mastery of the pecking and grinding technique is also shown in a rare stone mask, "laboriously polished," which is said to come from the Nass River (Hamy 1897:167-170), though there is no proof that it was locally produced.[15] [McNeary 1976:67]

Lacking more evidence it seems there is likely an unidentified intermediary involved in the collection of the sighted stone mask from the Nass River.

Pinart was an independently wealthy amateur with the qualities of a "savant." He focused his time and money on his various roles as "Explorer, Linguist and Ethnologist" as characterised by his biographer Ross Parmenter (1966). Pinart is best known for his first trip to Alaska as a young man in April 1871. He caught a salmon schooner from San Francisco to Alaska (Parmenter 1966:6). Pinart's extensive travels in Alaska may have been facilitated by catching a ride with one of the trading boats of the Alaska Commercial Company (ACC)[16] (Sally McLendon email, February 15, 2010). The ACC was based in San Francisco on Sansome Street with a museum of specimens and curios on its second floor. The ACC traded for furs but in scarce times their representatives were encouraged to collect curios as well. A catalogue of the Alaska Commercial Company Collection has been published (Graburn et al. 1996).

After his kayak tour of Kodiak Island and mask collecting there, Pinart returned to San Francisco and made a second trip north as far as Sitka. The records contain no mention of Metlakatla.[17] There is no reference to travel to British Columbia when Pinart described his trip in *Notes sur Les Koloches* (Tlingit) which was published

15 Identification of the type of stone in the two masks would provide useful evidence to the masks origins. The Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa identified the material in the Ottawa mask as a type of soapstone.

16 The Alaska Commercial Company was founded by a consortium of San Francisco merchants. In 1868 it acquired the holdings of the Russian-American Company which ruled Alaska for three-quarters of a century. Now owned and controlled by native Alaskans. (Graburn et al. 1996.)

17 There are two books dedicated to Alphonse Pinart's mask collection from Kodiak Island, "Two Journeys: A Companion to the Giiinaquq to the "Like a Face Exhibition" (2008). There are three publications by Alphonse Pinart; 1872 Catalog des Collections Rapportees de L'Amerique Russe, Aujourd'hui Territoire d'Alaska. J. Claye,Paris. Also publication by Pinart in 1873 "Eskimaux et Koloches: Idees Religieuses des Kaniagmioutes. Revue d"Anthropologie 2:673-680. In 1875 La Chasse aux Animals, Marins et les Pecheries Chez les Indigenes de la Cote Nord-Ouest d'Amerique. Boulogne-Sue-Mer.

in 1873.[18] Pinart then set out for Russia, to study Tartar languages. He created a sketchbook of Alaskan masks in the museums of Russia and Eastern Europe.[19]

In the fall of 1875 Pinart returned to North America. He immediately headed to the northeast and undertook linguistic work in Indigenous communities in Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island.[20]

By May 1876 Pinart was on his way up the California coast from San Francisco on his first and only documented trip to British Columbia. It does not appear that Pinart met with I.W. Powell while in Victoria, although the local newspaper announced his arrival:

> Professor Penard [sic] of Paris who has come over with the view of studying the Indian languages of this neighborhood, was brought to the Council Chamber by the Mayor yesterday evening and accommodated with a chair by the side of his worship. Whether he found the situations favorable to linguistic study is unknown; but doubtless he will find plenty of our citizens who will be ready and willing to assist him. [*Daily British Colonist*, May 26,1876:3]

While the newspaper emphasized his linguistic interests Pinart devoted the bulk of his time to archaeology with local assistance from James Deans. They excavated burials in the Cadboro Bay area and further north on Vancouver Island. Pinart published an article on his archaeological work under the title "A French Scientist Explores the Indian Mounds of the Pacific Coast-Indian Remains on Vancouver's Island." It appeared first in the San Francisco *Daily Evening Bulletin* August 19, 1876, and several weeks later in the *Daily British Colonist*, Victoria September 1, 1876. Before leaving Vancouver Island Pinart undertook linguistic work with the Cowichan. He also executed a sketch of a Salish house front, possibly a grave house on Discovery Island at Cadboro Bay. It has not been published before; it portrays a figure dressed as a white man with eagles on either side.

Pinart's Vancouver Island diary in French covered a variety of dates between 25 May 1876 to July 8, 1876. He described two visits to Dr. William Fraser Tolmie, former trader with the Hudson's Bay Company, and his wife at their home "Cloverdale" in Victoria. Pinart admired particularly a stone raven mortar used to crush the leaves of native tobacco used by the rulers of the coast. This became part of the Tolmie Anthropological Collection which Tolmie's daughter donated to the British Columbia Museum in 1927. It is item #30 "mortar-hard stone-bird carving of a raven; In possession of collector 50 years. It was said to have been in a former family

---

18 Erna Gunther (1956:footnote 281) was critical of Pinart for not crediting the work of the Russian Veniaminoff for his translation of the Raven tales.

19 The Pinart papers are stored at the Bancroft Library, University of California, San Francisco. Pinart was a friend of Bancroft and Pinart gave him all of his papers.

20 Pinart's linguistic notes are in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

5 generations. Northern B.C." Today this very fine stone raven mortar is one of the highlights of the Royal British Columbia Museum's Northwest Coast collection.[21]

There is no evidence that Pinart returned to western Canada after July 1876.

Pinart's Time in San Francisco

Next we can explore Pinart's movements prior to donating the stone mask to the Paris Museum in 1881. We will also look for other links to San Francisco which was Pinart's principal destination when on the west coast of California.

Pinart returned to Paris by October 1876 and a few months later was en route to Oceania and Easter Island aboard the French ship *Seignely*. Returning from Oceania, Pinart stopped briefly in California. Continuing his Alaska interests, he made a side trip to the site of Fort Ross, California, one of the forts established and abandoned by the Russians. While there he sketched the fort; the drawing is dated 27 November 1877. By February 1878 he was in France to sort out financial matters. Pinart gave his Alaskan collection to the Trocadero Museum in exchange for a five-year appointment from the French Ministry of Public Education to work in the Southwest USA, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador (Marie Mauzé 2001). In July 1878 Pinart was in Santa Barbara with his partner Leon De Cessac. They had worked together in the southwest, doing both archaeology and linguistic work.

Pinart as noted above kept a sporadic diary while on Vancouver Island in 1876. He published a lengthy account of his archaeological work in Victoria in the San Francisco newspaper. In these, or any other of his publications, however, there was no mention of a stone mask.

The Salmon Fishing Connection

The purchase of both the sighted and unsighted masks is closely linked with the young commercial salmon fishing industry that was occurring around the Skeena River in the late 1870s. Most of the players in the story of the two stone masks were involved, including Paul Sebassa, I. W. Powell, William Duncan, and William Neill.

On May 30, 1876, Powell wrote to Duncan in Metlakatla asking him to welcome and provide information to William M. Neill, the President of the Northwestern Commercial Company (NWCC). The NWCC was incorporated on February 18, 1876 in San Francisco and established an office on Bastion Square in Victoria in October 1876.

In the fall of 1875 Duncan's assistant Rev. William H. Collison met with Neill's partner and co-director Col. C. C. Lane at Woodcocks Landing on the Skeena River. Woodcocks Landing was an early landing for coastal steamers at the mouth of the Skeena River, and at this time was a stopping place used by gold miners and others before heading up the river.

21 Wilson Duff (1975) described the tobacco mortar, Raven (#131) as Haida and as representing a diver (loon)."

Rev. Collison described the salmon canning potential of the area to Col Lane. The result was an immediate deal. It led to the establishment of Inverness Cannery in 1876 at Woodcocks Landing, the first cannery north of the Fraser River (Collison 1915:55).

A second canning company was established shortly after, farther up river at Aberdeen Creek. C. S. Windsor was the operator, and it was known as both Aberdeen and Windsor cannery. It opened in 1878, but Windsor had been making preparations the previous year. Presumably in order to ensure access to salmon, he entered into an agreement with Paul Sebassa "Chief of Kathlahta [sic]" in June 1877.

> Whereas the said Paul Sebassah agrees to give to the said C.S. Windsor, the exclusive privilege to fish for salmon in the Kitsumalarn River from year to year for from one to four years, and not longer unless another agreement should be made between both parties, reserving the right only to himself and brother, and to allow the said C.S. Windsor to erect a cannery and any other buildings that he may think well to erect.
>
> In consideration of which the said C. S. Windsor agrees to pay to the said Paul Sebassah, one hundred dollars per year, one half to be paid in cash and the other half in goods. [quoted in Harris 1985:69]

"Kitsumalarn River" refers to Ktsm Laagn (Kitsemenlagen), Curtis Inlet on the west coast of Pitt Island. This is a key territory in the House of Ts'ibasaa. Windsor may have been considering putting up a cannery in one of the channels in Gitxaała territories, as suggested by Harris (1985:70) but it is most likely that Sebassa's fishery was intended to supply the Aberdeen cannery.

The following year Paul Sebassa signed a similar contract with Neill of the Inverness cannery, also for a fishery in a specific watershed at "Kitsah." This location is not known. He also reserved the right for his family to continue their food fisheries. This contract was signed at Metlakatla on June 14 1878 by Paul Sebassah and W. M. Neill. (Harris 1985:71]

Despite the accord suggested by these contracts, there was considerable tension between traditional fisheries and this new commercial fishery. As a Justice of the Peace for the district, William Duncan was directly involved with settling disputes. As Superintendent of Indian Affairs, I. W. Powell had authority to intervene at the provincial level.

As owner of Inverness cannery, W. M. Neill corresponded with Duncan to organize salmon fishing arrangements with Metlakatla residents including restriction that there would be "no working on the sabbath." Some disputes occurred over fishing nets and Duncan was frustrated by the lack of Provincial Government fishing regulations. Duncan notified Powell of the difficulties over the use of native salmon streams.

By 1879 matters were reaching a dangerous point, and Powell, accompanied by Inspector of Fisheries Alexander Caulfield Anderson made a special trip of enquiry to the North Coast in July of that year. Their first stop in the region was at Lowe Inlet, a traditional fishing site of Ts'ibasaa. Powell "deemed it advisable" to visit Lowe Inlet, "the place claimed by 'Sabassa' or Thit-kath-la Indians, and where the canneries of the Skeena wished to fish." After touring the area, he wrote, "It does seem hard to me, however, that so small a place should be interfered with by canneries…and should be left for the exclusive use of the tribe claiming it" (Powell 1879a:114).[22]

Next they stopped at the Skeena canneries, Aberdeen and Inverness, where the managers complained about Duncan's interference with their operations. These were mostly due to differences in moral viewpoints, particularly the issue of fishing on Sunday. Next the tour went on to Metlakatla, and two days later, to Fort Simpson. The tour continued to the Nass River and on to Haida Gwaii. However, Powell did not visit Gitxaała on this trip.

While the principal purpose of the tour was to address the issues of commercial fishers trespassing on traditional First Nations fishing sites, Powell also took the opportunity to collect the art and artifacts of the people he was interacting with. In many cases, the people presented him with ancient items, and in others, he purchased prospective additions to the collection.

> Many of the chiefs present me with old stone implements, and articles of Indian workmanship, which are now becoming very scarce among them, owing to their adoption of christian customs. These, together with many more I was asked to purchase from those who could not afford to give them, will form the nucleus of a most interesting collection of great ethnological value. I trust my object, and the desire I had not to lose the opportunity present by my visit to these distant tribes, of making a collection, which, in time, will yield a highly prized and instructive return for comparatively a small outlay, may have your [i.e. the Government's] concurrence and approval. [Powell 1879a:122]

Powell kept a small diary of the trip, in which he noted many of the art pieces that he was gifted or purchased (Powell 1879b). These items likely appeared in the collection he sent to Ottawa. However, the notebook does not contain any items acquired at Metlakatla, nor does it include the stone mask.

Duncan's Account Books

To delve deeper into the acquisition of the stone masks, we need to investigate the records that William Duncan kept as part of his administration of the Metlakatla community. These include account books and correspondence.

---

22 A cannery was built at Lowe Inlet in 1890, running until 1934.

Sebassah, Paul Metlakahtla Cr 1878		
Feb. 18	By cash	20
	Curiosities for Lieut. Crowe	
	Stone Face 15	20
	3 carved spoons 5	
Apr.	Herring spawn to Mr. Tomlinson	6
	Paper from [unclear]	10
	Cash	6
Oct 15	Sea Otter	60
	Order on Windsor Canry	29.50
	12 Bags Flour	

Figure 4. The credit side of Paul Sebassa's Metlakatla store account, 1878, includes the sale of a "stone face." Source: Duncan Ledgers:20553.

The store ledger gives us the first solid evidence on the trail of the stone masks. A review of the account books shows that Paul Sebassa sold a "stone face" to Duncan and was credited for $15.00 in February 1878. Duncan noted it was part of a collection of "curiosities for Lieut. Crowe." (See figure 4.) Crowe was a Royal Naval officer stationed at Esquimalt who had contacted Duncan with an interest in acquiring some pieces.

However, the "stone face" also appears on another page of the store ledger, "Indian Curiosities for Dr. Powell." The account was begun on April 3, 1878, with eight items entered, including Sebassas stone face and three carved spoons. They have an "X" marked beside them, likely indicating they were also being considered on Lt. Crowe's list. Other pieces were listed through 1878. The second page of the account is titled "Bought on a/c of Dr. Powell [June or July][23] 11 1879." Duncan must have stepped up his collecting once he learned Powell was going to visit Metlakatla. A number of other items from Paul Sebassah were purchased, including a "hat" valued at $30 and a mortar and pestle worth $10.00. (Duncan Ledgers:20621, 20622)

Duncan's store ledger isn't the only source of information about his business transactions. His letterbooks contain correspondence and invoices with J. Englehardt, his business agent in Victoria, and also the cannery managers at Inverness and Aberdeen. In July 1878 Duncan sent his list of items for sale to Crowe to Englehardt in Victoria with instructions to give the list to Crowe. The list included the stone

23 Duncan's writing is unclear, but it was likely July 11, as Powell was in Metlakatla July 10 to 12.

Indian Curiosities bought for Lieut. Crowe (August 1878) H.M.S. Shah

Item	Price
1 Carved stone face used in feasting and dancing by the Indian who personifies "The Thief"	*$15*
2 large, 4 small black horn carved spoons	$8
1 Large carved Indian Chief's dish	$7
1 Indian Chief's dancing rattle	$1
1 pair Indian leggings used when dancing	$1
1 stone weapon-good preservation	$1
9 " " (very ancient) evidently dug out of the ground	$4.50
Carved bone charm	.50
1 Indian "Hah-yets" made of native copper, carved, shaped something like a shield & representing rank, greatness & wealth of the possessor. Some of them in old times would fetch two or three hundred blankets.	$20.00

Mr. Neill bought last year the fellow to the carved stone face (first item) & he was wanting to buy the one I have got but was too late.

Figure 5. List of items Duncan offered for sale to Lt. Crowe, sent to F. Englehardt July ? 1878. Source: Duncan Letterbook 2:189.

face for $15.00. Remarkably, this list notes two critical pieces of information about the stone mask. (See Figure 5.)

First, Duncan states that the stone mask is used in "feasting and dancing" and gives it a name, "The Thief." Second, we learn that Neill had purchased the "fellow" to Duncan's mask in 1877.

It appears that Paul Sebassa had the two stone masks. If Duncan is correct, he sold one in 1877, perhaps at the time of the agreement he signed with the cannery regarding exclusive fishing areas.

Duncan notes that Neill was wanting to buy the stone mask that Duncan had bought but was too late. Because the two stone masks fit together, it is possible that Ts'ibasaa had told both Duncan and Neill that there were two masks that fit together. Duncan would not know what Neill paid for his mask, which would be the sighted mask.

There is no evidence that Lieut. Crowe ever purchased anything on Duncan's list of items for sale, and he definitely did not purchase the unsighted mask. We know that in 1879 Powell arrived to visit with Duncan who then included the unsighted mask in the sale to the Powell and subsequently to the Ottawa museum.

The path of the sighted mask from Neill to Pinart is not quite as clear. We know

Pinart was not in British Columbia after July 1876, but he was in San Francisco, where the head office of Neill's company North West Commercial Company was located. Neill could well have been there at the same time as Pinart when he sketched Fort Ross near San Francisco on November 27,1877.

The Northwest Commercial Company went out of business and sold Inverness Cannery. The closure of the business required Neill's presence in both San Francisco and Victoria to sign legal documents. On October 15, 1878, Neill appointed John Herbert Turner of Victoria to oversee the closing down of the NWCC. A series of legal documents were signed October 18, 1878 in San Francisco.

The link then has to be made to Pinart who was not in Victoria at the time. The North West Commercial Company's head office was on California Street, San Francisco. It was just blocks from the Alaska Commercial Company on Sansome St. Another possible link between Pinart and Neill (with the sighted mask) may be the Russian consulate that was based in San Francisco. Both men maintained a high interest in the northern B.C. coast adjoining Alaska. Neill's North West Commercial Company did open an Alaskan business with a slight name alteration.

However, none of these documents reconcile the data in the cataloguing information, which mentions a Protestant pastor at Metlakatla, and also the Nass River.

Did Neill get the mask directly from Ts'ibasaa at the time of signing the fishing agreement? The store records indicate that Duncan bought his mask directly from Ts'ibasaa. The question is, would Ts'ibasaa give one mask to Robert Tomlinson in recognition that Tomlinson actually conducted his family's baptism?. If Tomlinson is involved the link to the shores of the Nass and Kincolith fall in to place.

Whatever the route, Neill's fellow stone mask of 1877 was eventually sold to Pinart, most likely in San Francisco. Pinart had executed the drawing of Fort Ross 21 November 1877. As we know, Pinart did not travel north in Canada after 1876. We know it is the sighted mask that is acquired by the Musee du Trocadero in 1881 with catalogue reference to a Protestant missionary and the shores of the Nass River.

W. Neill may have accompanied J.J.Robertson a Victoria businessman from Victoria to Kincolith. In 1877 Robertson was planning on opening an oolachen processing plant at the mouth of the Nass. It is conceivable that Robertson would know and invite Neill, a fellow cannery operator to accompany him north. They may have met at Woodcock's Landing. If Tomlinson sold the mask to Neill, would then take the mask to the San Francisco and his headquarters of the NWCC? It is quite likely that the NWCC had a museum like its San Francisco neighbour the Alaska Commercial Company. Pinart then bought the stone face from Neill or from a commercial venue in San Francisco, and took the mask back to France prior to 1881. Bancroft's notes on Pinart indicate Pinart was well connected in San Francisco and kept in touch with the Russian Consul there, likely a community of collectors.

Did Neill buy his mask from Ts'ibasaa at the time of the sorting out of the

fishing issues prior to Powell's arrival? Neill did sign a fishing contract with Ts'ibasaa in 1878. However there is no obvious link to the Protestant missionary at Metlakatla or the shores of the Nass River.

It seems unlikely that the House of Ts'ibasaa of the Nass was the link to the masks. Since the baptisms took place in Metlakatla, or Kincolith there would be a reference to two Ts'ibasaa being baptized.

The Thief

Professor Wilson Duff[24] of the University of British Columbia described the unseeing, Kitkatla (Ottawa) mask as #53 in the 1969-1970 catalogue for the exhibit, "Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada" organized by the Musee de l'Homme in Paris:

> Only two stone masks, this one probably of basalt, have been located. Its function is unknown. The stone shows traces of blue, black and red paint (pale red is discernible on mouth, chin and ears). The features are clearly carved but not in detail.

Five years later Duff organized the exhibition and catalogue of "Images Stone B.C." in 1975. That was when he discovered that the masks fit one behind the other. There was speculation that the masks symbolized Raven myth stories, which was adopted by researchers on the stone mask. It is highly unlikely that is correct. As the mask is a *naxnox*, a physical representation of a super natural being, it would not represent such a mythic character as the Raven. I found another mask known as "The Thief" from the CC Perry collection in the Canadian Museum of History, collected from the Nass area in 1911. This mask also represented The Thief.

I have not found any record of these masks being presented in the Tsimshian feast house. We can date the masks on the basis of the ear forms, which can be interpreted as the signature of the artist (suggestion of Tlingit artist, Nathan Jackson). Scans are available that include four masks with the distinctive 'B' shaped ears, two Tsimshian and two Tlingit. Those with collection dates both Tlingit and Tsimshian indicate a creation date circa 1780.

Kisgagas Link to Ts'ibasaa

The village of Kisgagas is on the upper Skeena River near its junction with the Babine River. The John Cove Inventory of the Barbeau Northwest Coast files provides some information on the connection between Chief Ts'ibasaa and Kisgagas.

At Gitxaała, Ts'ibasaa had the very exclusive privilege of announcing the first initiation of winter and no other Chief could give a Power dance until Ts'ibasaa had

24 The exhibition opened in the Musee de l'Homme, Paris and then moved to the National Gallery of Canada November, 1969-1970. Duff did not travel to Paris at this time or he may have recognized the stone mask collected by Pinart in the Musee de l"Homme collections.

blown his whistles. According to Garfield, no Chief among the Tsimshian had a similar privilege (Garfield 1939:316).

Ts'ibasaa, however did not possess the right to the cannibal spirit dance which belonged exclusively to the Gunax-nu'tk, a member of the chiefly house of He.l in the Gitxaała tribe. Henry Tait (Boas 1916:536) reported that Ts'ibasaa cites a story from Mark Luther whose father was a Gitxaała tribesman concerning Ts'ibasaa's failed attempt to secure the right to the Cannibal dance for his nephew.

Ts'ibasaa together with Chief Alle'm-laxha and Wiseks of the Ginax'angiik tribe, migrated from Prairie Town (Temlaxam) to the coast. He arrived at Gitxaała after the privilege had become established in the other house, and though he became the leading Chief, he was never able to acquire the right to the Cannibal Powers. Likewise it has never been in possession of the Ginaxangik Chiefly House, which is related to that of Chief Ts'ibasaa.

A stone mask was the privilege of a Kisgagas House named, Tsemqaq , "In Raven." It had special privileges and powers. According to Barbeau (in the Wilson Duff Fonds, UBC, Series 13:135) "In the old days, when this house was giving a feast, they removed a board from the house front , over the door, and a man sat there all day in a stone mask, saying qaq, qaq." People who heard him knew there was to be feast in the house. There were reported to be two houses one directly behind the other. The inner house was called *sqala'ant*, meaning " behind." The second house could only be reached by going through the first house.

The double house can be seen as a metaphor that includes the two stone masks. The sighted, or outer mask can only be accessed inside the blind second mask.

Conclusion

While this essay focuses on the documented life path of the stone masks, first separately and then together, it is only the after-image of the whole. There were many people involved and several missing links remain in the collecting and of the ceremonial use of these stone masks. There is always the nagging possibility that the researcher has not found all the relevant sources. The sighted mask was not featured in the recent 2006 catalogue of "Chefs-d-Oeuvre dans les Collections du Musee du quai Branly." Despite this I believe these masks deserve to be recognized as priceless treasures of Canadian art.

This essay has reviewed the history of the twin masks from the written record. Their ownership by Chief Ts'ibasaa and their subsequent sale by William Duncan and Neill to agents working for the museums in Ottawa and Paris is resolved. The ownership by Chief Ts'ibasaa narrows the range of relevant traditional narratives considerably. The *adawk* make it clear that Ts'ibasaa comes to the coast from the upper Skeena. Hence the link to the double house at Kisgagas provides a narrative that matches closely the essential features of the twin masks.

While we may never know the specific details of the masks' journeys from Gitxaała to Ottawa and Paris, we can say that they were the patrimony of the House of Ts'ibasaa.

References

Anderson, Margaret and Marjorie Halpin, eds.

2002 Potlatch at Gitsegukla: William Beynon's 1945 Field Notebooks. Vancouver, Toronto: UBC Press.

Arctander, John W.

1909 The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakatla. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company.

Beynon, William

Manuscript, Columbia University Microfilm, Volume 4, #85 "Nagunaks regarding the Large Gander Islands" pp. 34- xx Informants, Nathan Shaw, Gitxata, Heber Clifton Gitga'ata.

Cole, Douglas

1985 Captured Heritage. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre.

Collison, W. H.

1915 In the Wake of the War Canoe. Toronto: The Musson Book Company.

Cove, John J., and George F. MacDonald, eds.

1987 Tsimshian Narratives. Vol. 1 Collected by Marius Barbeau and William Beynon. "The Narrative of Sarapgyaw" pp. 326-331. Canadian Museum of Civilization, Mercury Series, Directorate, 3. Ottawa: National Museums of Canada.

Dean, Jonathan Ritchie

1993 'Rich Men,' 'Big Powers' and Wastelands: The Tlingit-TsimshianBorder of the Northern Pacific Littoral. 1799 to 1867. PhD thesis, University of Chicago.

Dioceses of Caledonia

N.d. Records, Prince Rupert, B.C.

Duff, Wilson

1975 Images Stone, BC: Thirty Centuries of Northwest Coast Indian Sculpture. Saanichton, BC: Hancock House.

Duncan, William

1873 William Duncan to the Committee of the Church Missionary Society, 3 February 1873. Church Missionary Society Papers. Library and Archives Canada reel A106; BC Archives AddMss 2250, reel A1459.

var. Ledgers. Duncan Papers. Library and Archives Canada MG29 H15 reel M2333; BC Archives Add MSS 2758 reel A1722.

var. Letter books. Duncan Papers. Library and Archives Canada MG29 H-15, reel M2321; BC Archives AddMSS 2758 reel A1710.

Ellis, Donald, ed.
2007 Tsimshian Treasures: The Remarkable Journey of the Dundas Collection. Donald Ellis Gallery, Douglas & McIntyre, University of Washington Press.

Garfield, Viola E.
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle, Publications in Anthropology 7, Seattle, University of Washington.

Gordon, William E.
1853 Journal, Mitchell Library, Sydney.ML MSS 3091:230.

Gough, Barry M.
1984 Gunboat Frontier: British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-1890. University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

Graburn, Nelson H. H., Molly Lee and Jean-Loup Rousselot
1996 Catalogue Raisonné of the Alaska Commercial Company Collection. Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology. University of California Press.

Gunther, Erna
1962 Northwest Coast Indian Art. Catalogue to Seattle World's Fair.

Halpin, Marjorie
1973 The Tsimshian Crest System: A Study Based on Museum Specimens and the Marius Barbveau and William Beynon Field Notes. PhD Thesis, The University of British Columbia.
1981 Seeing in Stone: Tsimshian Masking and the Twin Stone Masks. *In* The World Is As Sharp As A Knife An Anthology in Honour of Wilson Duff. Pp. 269-288. Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum.

Hamy, E.-T.
1897 Note sur un Masque en Pierre Des Indiens de la Riviere Nass, Colombie Britannique. Journal de la Societe des Americanists de Paris. Vol. 1. Paris. Pp. 167-170

Harris, Douglas C.
2008 Landing Native Fisheries: Indian Reserves & Fishing Rights in British Columbia 1849-1925.Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press.

Hills, Wiliam Henry
1853 Mitchell Library, Sydney: ML MSS 1436/1 & 2. UBC Library-Special Collections unpublished Manuscript

Hosmer, Brian C.
1999 American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistance and Innovation among the Menominees and Metlakatlans 1870-1920. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas.

Hudson's Bay Company
1853 Fort Simpson Post Journal, 1832-1853. B.20 1/1/1-7. Hudson's Bay Archives, Winnipeg.

Jacobsen, Johan Adrian
1977 Alaskan Voyage 1881-1883. An expedition to the Northwest Coast of America. Translated by Erna Gunther. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

MacDonald, Joanne
1979 "Changing Faces of Stone." Contract Report on the Pair of Tsimshian Stone Masks, The Unsighted Twin in the National Museum of Man, Ottawa, and the Sighted Stone Mask in the Musee de L'Homme, Paris. Cantley, Quebec, November 16, 1979. 138 pages.
1984 Gitwangak Village Life. A Museum Collection. Environment Canada, Parks Canada.
1985 From Ceremonial Objects to Curios: Power Exchange at Port Simpson and Metlakatla. M.A. thesis. Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario.
1990 From Ceremonial Object to Curio: Object Transformation at Port Simpson and Metlakatla, British Columbia in the Nineteenth Century. The Canadian Journal of Native Studies X 2:193-217.

Mauzé, Marie
2001 Nisga'a Sculpture: Mask. 18th-early 19th century, British Columbia, Canada. Curator:Jacques Kerchache. Essay in "Sculptures: Africa, Asia, Oceania, Americas." Exhibition organized by Musee du Quai Branly.

Mc Neary, Stephen A.
1976 Where Fire Came Down: Social and Economic Life of the Niska. Phd dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvannia.

Musee de l'Homme
1947 Chefs-d'œuvre de l'Amerique Precolumbienne. Musee de l 'Homme. Chefs d'Ouevre des Indiens et Esquimaux du Canada.
1969 Masterpieces of Indian and Eskimo Art from Canada. Musee de l'Homme Paris. National Gallery of Canada, 1969-1970. Societe des Amis du Musee de l'Homme Paris.

National Research Council of Canada.
1984 Project for Heritage Recording of Museum Collections. Ottawa, ON.

Nisga'a Tribal Council
1992 Nisga'a: People of the Mighty River. Nisga'a Tribal Council.
1995 Ayuuk̲hl Nisga'a Study: Nisga'a Clan Histories, Vol. II. New Aiyansh: Wilp Wilx̲o'oskwhl Nisga'a Publications.

Nyce, Allison

2008 Transforming Knowledge: The Nisga'a and the Marius Barbeau Collection. *In* Around and About Marius Barbeau. Modelling Twentieth Century Culture. Lynda Jessup, Andrew Nurse, and Gordon E. Smith, eds. Mercury Series, Cultural Studies Paper 83, Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Parmenter, Ross

1966 Explorer, Linguist and Ethnologist: A Descriptive Bibliography of the Published Works of Alphonse Louis Pinart, With Notes on his Life. Los Angeles, California, Southwest Museum.

Pinart, Alphonse

1876 A French Scientist Explores the Indian Mounds of the Pacific Coast-Indian Remains on Vancouver's Island. Daily Evening Bulletin, (Saturday Evening) San Francisco. Note: A version in French received from Dr. Marie Mauze, Paris. August 19. Also in Daily British Colonist. British Columbia Archives, Victoria.

1876 25 May to July 8, 1876 Journal (in French). Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Pinart A.L. Z-Z 17, v.15 mf.

Powell, Israel Woods

1879a Report to the Department of Indian Affairs, 26 Aug 1879.

[1879b] Diary. I. W. Powell Papers. British Columbia Archives A/E/P87/P87-2. [dated by context]

Vodden, Christy and Ian Dyck

2006 A World Inside: A 150-year History of the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Wainwright, Ian N.M.

1983 Technical Analysis of the Tsimshian Stone Mask VII-C-329. Preliminary Report, ARS No. 2083. Analytical Research Services, Canadian Conservation Institute, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

Whymper, Frederick

1869 Travel and Adventure in the Territory of Alaska. New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers.

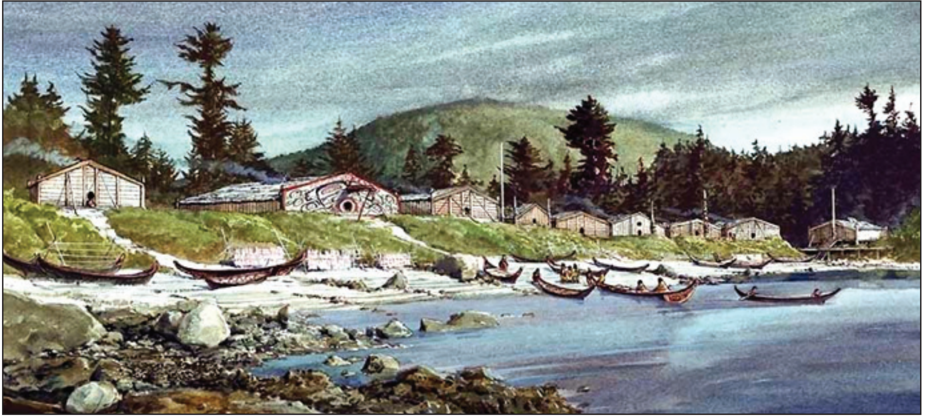


Figure 1. Gitxaała ca. 1850. Reconstruction painting by Gordon Miller and George MacDonald.

A Visual History of Nineteenth Century Lach Klan (Gitxaała)

George F. MacDonald

The fascinating story of Gitxaała is told throughout this book primarily from the perspective of oral history and written documents. I would like to present a parallel visual history drawn from photographs and maps that deal with space and time in a more concrete fashion.

For the past four decades I have been convinced that the totem villages of the Northwest Coast provide unique records in the history of mankind of monumental works of art in wood. The totems also record family histories and territorial rights stretching back many thousands of years. Only a small percentage of this art has survived in museums or in the villages, although literally thousands of monumental sculptures can be examined in great detail in the photographs taken by travellers, traders, surveyors and missionaries in the last half of the nineteenth and early into the twentieth century. During that time tens of thousands of images of the totems were recorded and are now housed in archives in Europe and America.

This large number of historic photos allows each of the totem villages to be reconstructed to some extent in virtual time and space. The painting above, by Vancouver artist Gordon Miller, was commissioned for the *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Vol. 2 (Gentilcore 1993). It was based mainly on the glass plate of Gitxaała village

taken by Edward Dossetter for the visit of Provincial Government officials to the village in 1881. At the same time, items of European introduction such as glazed windows, milled doors, trim and siding were removed to show how the original house fronts would have appeared. The scene is also in colour, based on colour slides taken of the village during my visit to Kitkatla in 1979.

The period between 1880 and 1900 marked dramatic changes in the physical nature of the village of Lach Klan (Kitkatla on today's maps) that were captured in maps, drawings and photos that have been brought together from many archival and private sources to create this reconstruction of how the village changed from an Indigenous to a Christian mission model during that critical period. Almost 1,000 photos of the village of Gitxaała have been assembled which provide a new data-base for the examination of many issues of anthropological interest.

The photos also document the disappearance of the totems that once graced the village. Their destruction was rapid in the last decades of the nineteenth century but some survived until the 1980s. It is evident that the Gitxaałans, for the most part, continued to cherish the totems for as long as they could stand against the elements. The last of the old poles was knocked over by a high tide in the early nineteen eighties.

The photos that are currently available provide sufficient evidence for a creditable composite map of the village, as well as images of the houses that stood there from early in the 1880s on. It is inevitable that more photos and drawings will be found that will clarify many details of the dynamic nature of this community during a period of four decades between the late 1870s and World War One.

The most extensive written documentation of the houses and monuments of the village were the five volumes of field notes recorded by William Beynon, a young Tsimshian from the village of Lax Kwa'alaams which lies further north in Tsimshian territory close to the Alaska border. Beynon had been trained by Marius Barbeau during the work they did together at Lax Kwa'alaams in 1915. In 1916 Barbeau contracted Beynon to record the houses and *adawx* of the people of Gitxaała over a period of several months for the National Museum of Canada.

Beynon recorded the names and titles of the chiefs and ordered them by social rank rather than by linking them to their house sites on a map. Although he did include excellent drawings of details of house structure, particularly of Chief He'l's House (Number 7 in the row) and some totem pole details, he did not undertake to map the village as he did in the 1920's when he undertook similar recording at his home village of Lax Kw'alaams.

There is also a detailed record of the lineages at Lach Klan made by Beynon in 1916 including the names of families who occupied each house, including their inventory of economic territories, personal names, crests, *adawx* and other prerogatives. There are more than fifty closely written pages of such household possessions

in the government issued field notebooks Barbeau provided to him. They are now in the archives of the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec.

To judge from excavations at the Boardwalk Site (GbTo-31) in the Prince Rupert Harbour, evidence of individual house sites can be traced through successive rebuilding phases on the same lots over millennia (Ames 2008).

I had been aware, since visiting Gitxaała some 40 years ago as part of the North Coast Prehistory Project of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, that the depth of more than ten feet of shell midden deposit underlying the village indicated occupation at the Lach Klan site of more than 5,000 years.

Approaching the village of Gitxaała by boat the visitor is confronted by the north shoreline of an enormous shell midden that turns mid-way through the village to the west until it veers south. After 230 metres it crosses a creek and again turns west for another 230 metres. Some twenty five large communal houses stood along this shoreline in the mid-eighteen seventies.

Figure 2. The author examines the deep profile on the south face of the Gitxaała midden in 1979.

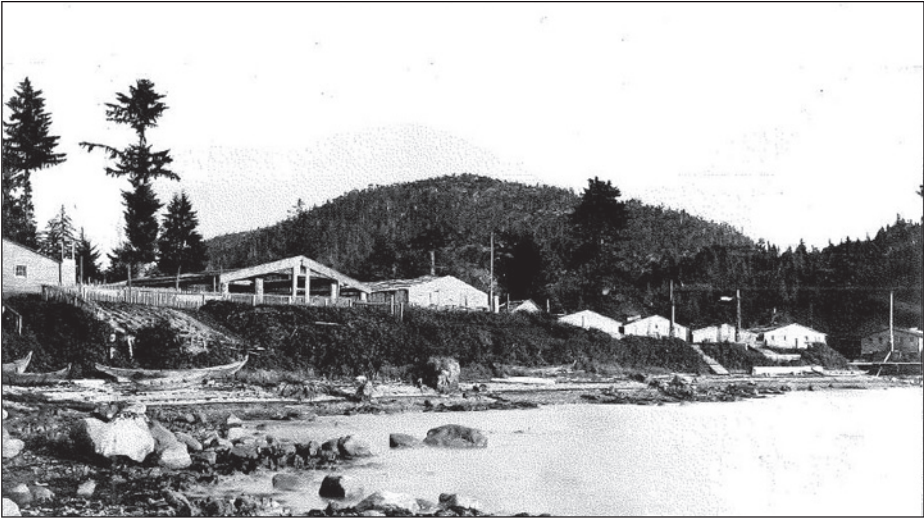


Figure 3. Gitxaała in 1881 showing the row of traditional plank lineage houses on the north face of the midden. Edward Dossetter photo. AMNH.

Mapping Gitxaała in the 1880s

Edward Dossetter of Victoria was the official photographer on an Indian Commission inspection tour in 1881. He took the earliest photographs of the village in that year. Although he only took two glass plates of Gitxaała that survive, his views show the massive plank houses that stood atop the high shell midden. (See Figures 3 and 30.)

A second line of physical evidence of the size and location of structures in the village was provided when the Dominion Government surveyor Peter O'Reilly was sent to Lach Klan in 1882 as a follow up to the visit the year before of Israel W. Powell, the First Indian Commissioner of B.C. (See figure 4.)

O'Reilly measured only the width of the houses along his survey line that ran along what is today called Beach Street. He seems to have ignored the length of the houses as irrelevant to his purpose. Since the proportions of Tsimshian houses were normally one and a half times longer than their width, Figure 5 is my suggestion of the footprint of the houses in the traditional village before the missionary pressure to abandon the massive communal plank houses in favour of nuclear family houses built with sawn lumber on a stud frame.

O'Reilly's survey line can be seen on his map running in front of the houses the length of the village. Tight control is provided by the twenty-two instrument stations he has marked along the survey line. His field logs indicate where additional lines were shot at right angles from each station to the buildings along the way. They provide much more information about the actual size of

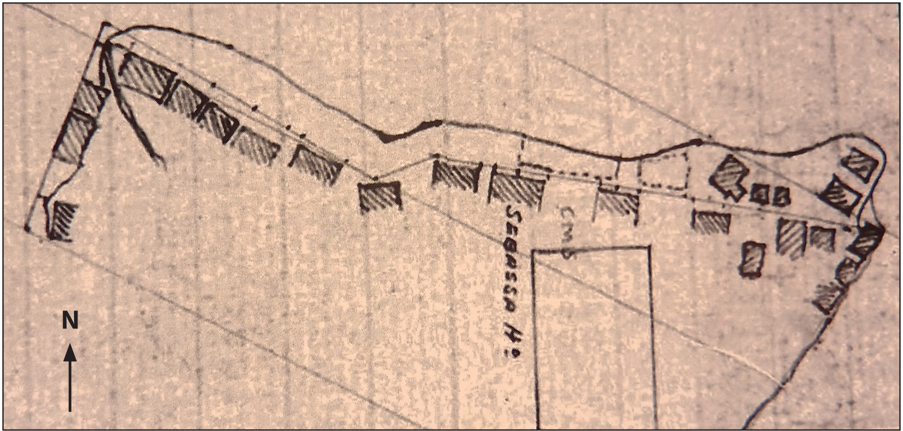


Figure 4. A map of Gitxaała village in 1882 by the government surveyor Peter O'Reilly. It identifies the large house of Chief Sebassa (Ts'ibasaa) or H'el in the middle of the settlement with the allotment of the land behind to the Church Missionary Society (marked CMS on the map). Library and Archives Canada.

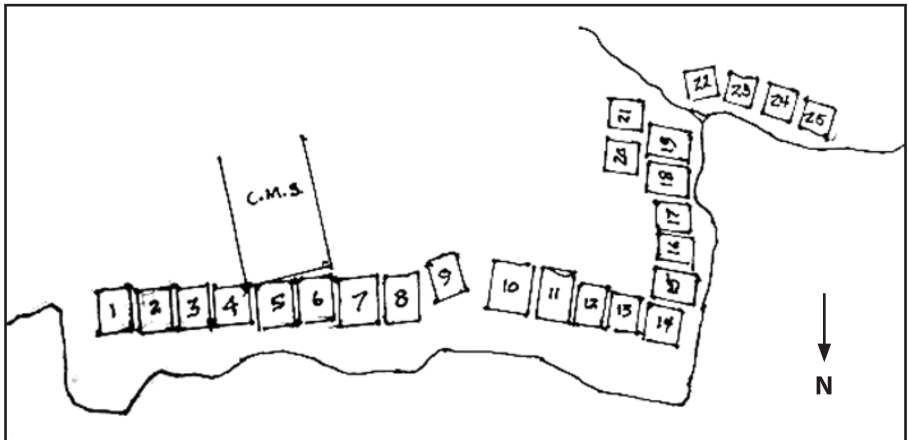


Figure 5: This sketch map shows the position of 25 large communal houses in Kitkatla about 1880 based on early photographic evidence. The first 14 are along the north shore. Around the corner from them, houses 15 to 25 on either side of the creek rely on evidence from the 1898 photo by McTavish and several drawings as well as the second Dossetter photo of 1881.

each structure than does the map he produced several years earlier of the houses at Lax Kwa'alaams.

O'Reilly does not locate any totem poles on the Gitxaała map as he did on the one of Lax Kwa'alaams, although there is photographic evidence that half a dozen poles stood along the north shore of Gitxaała at that time.

A third source is Bishop William Ridley's *Snapshots from the North Pacific*, which includes line drawings of the village from the 1890s. They illustrate a portion of the village not visible in the photographs. (See Figures 6 and 32.)

Houses and Monuments on the North Shore (1-14)

Unfortunately, there are no photos of the east end of the village where the influence of the Church Missionary Society, which had a large block reserved, appears to be greatest. Although somewhat conjectural, I have marked the bounds of what I feel were original house sites at the east end that had previously been cleared of old house remains and had new, much smaller buildings erected on them. This may indicate pressure from the missionary to replace the communal houses with a number of smaller, nuclear family structures.

Figure 6. A drawing of houses 11 to 14 on left and others not seen on the Dossetter photo to the north and west comprising houses 22 to 25. Houses 15 to 21 are near the entrance to the creek and do not appear in this image. (Ridley 1903:140)

There are two small houses on the point of land at the east end of the village, and three more behind them along the far shore whose orientation is very different than those of the traditional communal houses in the row along what is now Beach Drive. The first three buildings from the east end of the survey line appear to occupy two old house sites, which I have numbered as 1 and 2.

Houses 1 and 2

Major change to the traditional structures appear to have begun at this end of the village where the mission had its initial impact. Old communal houses at the beginning of the row were taken down and smaller structures of more specific function were erected. O'Reilly mapped those structures accurately, but unfortunately, did not note their function. Eleven buildings are indicated in the space I have allotted to three traditional structures simply on the basis of the average foot print of 1500 to 2,000 square feet per house.

These replacement buildings were mostly single-family dwellings of framed, milled lumber. One has an extension to the side. Four of the structures are on the west side of the survey base line along with several garden plots along the bank that are indicated by dashed lines. One of these gardens, divided from the pathway along the house row, reveals a crop of potatoes and other vegetables growing in the organic rich soil of the underlying shell midden.

The original house 2 has disappeared from this lot and the footprint of a later, much smaller structure, is set well back from the survey line which would have been atypical in a traditional village arrangement.

It is highly likely that there were a number of totem poles standing in front of the original plank houses numbers 1 and 2, since Beynon notes in his 1916 record that villagers told him of older poles that had fallen, or were cut down before they were captured in a photograph. Their memory was detailed and specific in recording the crests on these poles and their ownership. It may be possible with future research on the Beynon files to match his pole descriptions with house ownership at this end of the village.

House 3

There is no photo of this house or associated monuments, although on the O'Reilly map of 1882 the front of a large communal house has been drawn that appears to be about 30 ft. wide by 45 ft. long.

House 4

This appears as an empty lot on the map but its size is right to have accommodated a typical community house. The original plank house does not show in any known photo and was replaced on its lot by the Missionary's house (Fig. 7).

According to information collected by Beynon (Barbeau 1947:350) a pole once stood outside the mission house which was on the CMS allotment, although he had not seen the pole for himself. However, the shadow of an otherwise unknown pole of the correct dimensions can be seen in a photo by G. McTavish taken from the hill east of the creek in 1898. It is marked on Figure 24 by the top white arrow on the photo and is located between the bell tower of the church and a large tree. It appears to be standing in front of house lot 4.

Barbeau calls this pole "standing Raven" and based on the Beynon field notes, claimed it belonged to Chief La'ooy of the Ganhada. Barbeau claims to have heard of three similar poles at Gitxaała during his visit in 1939 so it is difficult to know which of the three is in the McTavish photo enlargement.

The upper part of the Standing Raven pole that Barbeau illustrates (1947:pl. 213) has a long shaft, but since no photos show the top of the pole, it is assumed that it was either without a crest figure or if it had one, it had fallen off before the photos were taken. The first figure below the shaft is a Raven with wings folded diving down. It is a well-carved figure with traces of the original paint in the recessed areas.

Church Missionary Society Reserve

There is a picket fence in front of houses 5 and 6 that coincides with the north boundary of the CMS reserve and which extends behind it. The missionary was accepted into the community in 1878 and a church, school and mission residence were soon built on this property. Early in 1884 the church was torn down and the

Mission-house at Kitkatla.

Figure 7. Beynon records that a pole probably from house number 4 stood in front of the Mission house. The silhouettes of two poles can be seen in front of the house beside a line of shrubs. (Ridley 1903:73)

remains burned by the people of Gitxaała over a dispute with the missionary. This was in a period when British gunboats regularly shelled First Nation villages for resisting the encroaching colonial authorities. For a period after 1884 there was fear among the villagers that a gunboat might be sent to shell their dwellings as had happened at Fort Rupert in 1864. There were no such repercussions at Lach Klan and a new church was built on the allotment which stood until it was consumed by fire near the turn of the century. A third church built early in the 1900s still stands on this property.

Figure 8 a & b. Diving Raven pole with a diving whale at the base. This pole probably stood near house 4 and was destroyed some time after Barbeau photographed it. There is not enough detail in the photo to determine exactly which house it was associated with at the east end of the village. At the base of the pole is the figure of a diving bullhead with elaborately carved faces and other designs in the spines behind its head and pectoral fins. Beside the pole, and in front of the Bullhead House of Chief La'ooy is a black marble headstone, the inscription of which is illegible at this angle but is probably a tribute to a deceased chief who had the name La'ooy.

Figure 9. House lots 5 to 8. House 5, the first house to show in a photograph, is seen in part on the left in this detail of the Dosseter photo. It has a new façade of sawn lumber and a glazed window mounted high on the wall to prevent shooting inhabitants through the window during raids. Fenced gardens flank the foreshore of the midden. A square tower is under construction beside this house which is probably a bell tower for the school that was built about this time in this location.

House 5

This house is outlined in part on the O'Reilly map of 1882 and also shows clearly on the photo as a large communal house with a new façade of horizontal milled lumber. A sawmill had been constructed near the village a few years before the 1881 photo was taken and at least four houses in this part of town had been modernized with new milled lumber facades in the Euro-American style. It is clear at this village as well as Lax Kwa'alaams that the highest ranking chiefs preferred to modernize their communal houses, the base of their power it could be argued, with a new façade of milled horizontal siding, glazed windows and rectangular doors, rather than abandon them for smaller dwellings.

There is no evidence of a totem pole associated with this house although one might have stood on the left side that is not captured in this photo.

A large slab-like structure with two sawn joists emerging from each corner stands to the west of this house. It is sheeted in milled siding and unlike anything seen elsewhere. It may be the unfinished bell tower of the school that was being built on the CMS property at about this time.

House 6

The structure of this house had been removed by 1881 but the width of the lot between the two adjacent house structures indicate that a large communal house once stood here. It may have been the site for the house of an earlier chief, Ts'ibasaa

in alternate generations from the one who owned House 7 immediately next door. A description of the carvings of that earlier house were provided by William Beynon.

Barbeau (1990:469) relying on William Beynon's notes of 1916 claims that a chief by the name of He'l, possibly a predecessor to the one that built House of Light, had an earlier house either on house lot 6 or lot 7 which had elaborate carvings inside and outside of the house. Beynon did not record these on his plan for House of Light, which reinforces the idea that they belonged to an earlier structure. In this version, there was a carving of a Grizzly Bear standing on the ground as well as a large carved Grizzly Bear standing on the roof of the house looking inside through the smoke hole. Together they gave it the name "Standing-House." Inside Standing House, according to Barbeau, were elaborately carved corner posts and rafters (Barbeau 1947).

"The Hanging Grizzly" was the name of the reclining figures of bears on the four interior house posts along with Killer Whales, or Blackfish. The house beams were decorated with "The Braided Intestines" motive. The frontal pole of Hel's house had disappeared before the 1881 photo, although the name and crests on the pole were remembered and recorded by Beynon.

House 7

The name of this house according to William Beynon (1916) was "House of Light" which belonged to Chief He'l. It is identified on the O'Reily map as the house of Chief Sebassa (Ts'ibasaa) a name that alternated with that of He'l. In the 1881 photo it has been stripped of its roof and wall cladding exposing the massive timber supports and rafters of a major communal house. The framing of the house is identical to numerous Coast Tsimshian houses which appear in the Charles Horetzky photos of Lax Kwa'alaams taken in 1873. According to the missionary at

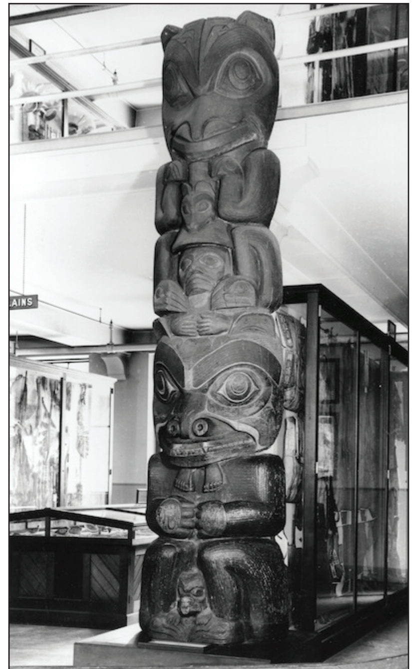


Figure 10. Interior post from Chief Ts'ibasaa's house now at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University. The lower figure appears to be a male grizzly with a human woman in a tall cedar bark hat above. It probably bears reference to the "Bear Mother" story that is widespread on the coast but the perogative of certain families.

Gitxaała at the time, Bishop Ridley, the foot print of Ts'ibasaa 's house was roughly 3600 square feet in area. This figure is confirmed in the drawing made on site by William Beynon in 1916 (Figure 12).

A sketch map by Beynon (Figure 13) details the size and structural details of the same house that he identifies as the house of He'l. "Light House" was the dwelling of the late chief He'l (Hale) of the Gispuwudwade or Killer Whales who died in the 1870s. His uncle and predecessor was one of the first to meet European traders with whom he exchanged, or at least received, the name of He'l.

He'l's "House of Light" according to Beynon's instructors measured 40 feet wide by 65 feet long and had three descending steps below grade each of which were five feet wide running around all sides at each level. The fire pit was on the lowest level and was 30 by 45 feet. There were thus four levels inside the house, counting the ground level, that were normally used for household activities, structured by rank, but could be quickly converted to ceremonial use as required.

Beynon was able to examine the *da'ax*, or house pit of this house in 1916 and draw the location of the three flights of steps between the ground level and the bottom of the house pit, which appear only at the front end, (door end) of the house. He notes that a totem pole stood a few feet in front of the outside façade of the house. It stood before the door, but it did not form part of the doorway itself as was common in Haida houses.

The cross section drawing that Beynon provided of Chief He'l's house (Figure 13a and b) is rough but provides important details about its structure. He notes that it has three steps, or levels. Each step appears to be about 3 feet in depth for a total depth of close to ten feet. It also has two sets of four massive cedar slabs, about three feet wide and 1.5 feet thick. They carry the two enormous beams three feet in thickness and 65 ft long. The inner posts were about twenty feet high and would have been set at least another 8 feet into the ground. The outer beam support posts were about half that size.

Figure 11. House 7, "House of Light" Dosseter 1881 (detail).

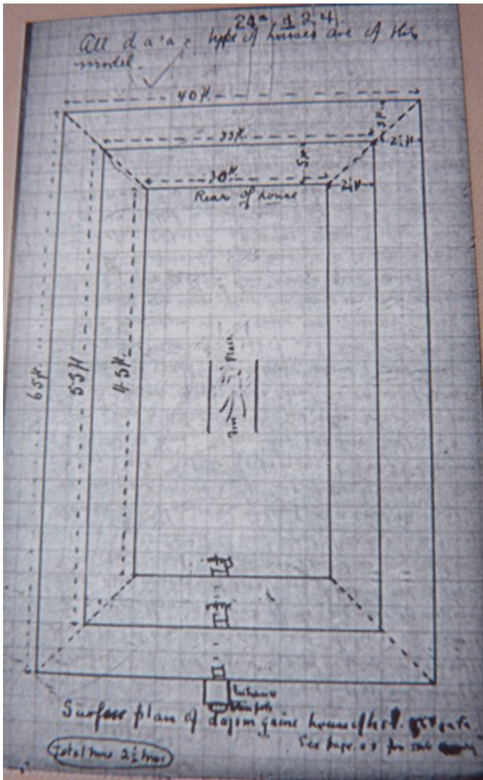
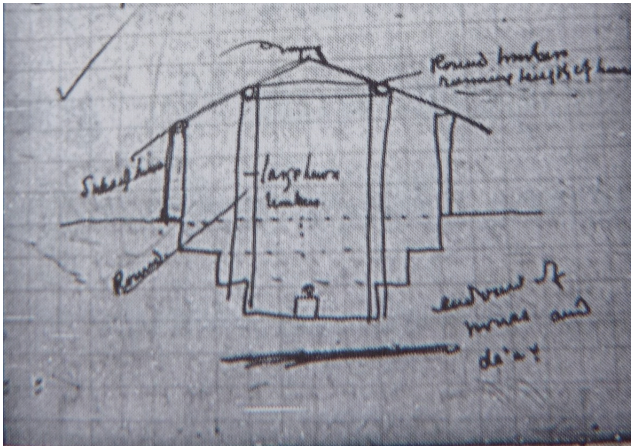


Figure 12. Floor Plan of "House of Light"

Two other sets of support slabs which held up the central pair of rafters were set on ground level on the outer wall and in the bottom of the house pit for those supporting the central beams and the cross beams that gave the structure the bracing to withstand strong winter winds. The top of the inner set of posts were almost forty feet above ground and they would have extended another 8 to 10 feet into the ground, for an overall length of close to 50 feet. All of the beams holding the roof ran the full 65 feet of the length of the house.

A clear view of the heavy structural members of house 7 is provided by an enlargement of the glass plate taken by Dossetter in 1881 (Figure 11). At that time, Ts'ibasaa was consigned from 1864 on to Mr. Duncan's supervision at Metlakatla village.

The fact that all of the cladding of the house had been carefully removed, leaving the internal structure intact, is a clear indication that the house was not being demolished, but was being put into a holding state awaiting Ts'ibasaa's return or the installation of his successor. This reduction of the house to a skeleton gives us a clear view of the rest of the timberwork within the house and the level of carpentry and joinery that went into its construction.



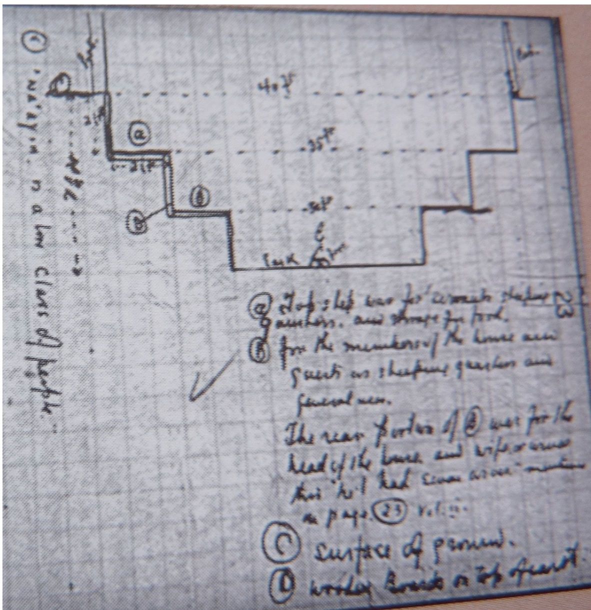


Figure 13a. Cross Section of house by Beynon
Figure 13b. Cross section of house pit, Beynon

Traditionally we know that throughout the North Coast, houses were denuded of their cladding, including the walls and roof when a house chief dies or the family is absent for a lengthy period. In former times, well-finished planks were scarce and were reused by their owners at other sites. The house frame itself endured for many years if not purposefully taken down, and could be restored for use quickly by re-cladding the frame.

On a symbolic level, the stripping of the outer cladding was like removing the flesh from the bones of a person, while the bones themselves, represented by the house posts and beams, endured for many years. It is also reminiscent of the cutting of a copper shield where the T-shaped ridge, or "backbone," is never cut while the "flesh" or flat parts of the copper can be removed and distributed to others, and even restored by riveting on new plates. The message in both the house structures and the coppers is that the bones of the lineage ancestor are considered as immortal.

According to Oswald Tolmie, an elder at Gitxaała who interpreted for William Beynon in 1916, He'l's pole was over sixty feet high with very life-like figures carved by a member of the Ganhada Phratry (Barbeau 1947:470). There is no known image of the pole but the crests were well remembered by Tolmie and others. At the top was a Liguidihl, a human like crest of He'l, which held a copper shield. Below that was a Whale whose head pointed down. At the base was a large standing Grizzly Bear. Barbeau claims (1947:470) that the totem pole that stood in front of this house was called "The Totem of Light" after the house.

The 1881 Dossetter photo (Figure 11), shows a fence closing off the house from the path through the village and in front of the path sloping down the face of the midden was a garden that is in a clear state of neglect since the owner's death. Gardens on the face of a midden were common at the Tsimshian villages as they utilized the organic rich soil of the midden in which the shell content neutralized the acidic nature of organic rich soil.

The multi-stage pit of Chief He'l's house was still visible when William Beynon conducted fieldwork there for Marius Barbeau and the National Museum in 1916. Beynon, who was of the Laxhibu clan of Lax Kwa'alaams and a grandson of the Tsimshian chronicler, Arthur Wellington Clah, was also related to Chief Ts'ibasaa and He'l at Gitxaała through his wife.

Joshua Tsebassa (died 1936), one of the last owners of the house, told Beynon that during potlatches the excited voices of the children resembled "the seagulls crying as they gathered together in the Nass River during the annual spring return of the oolichan fish." Beynon reports. "This was the Da'ax of He'l and Tsiybesa." It was called "the Da'ax of Roads. This Da'ax was so large that they had a big pathway through it that led out into [the] rear of the house from the front entrance." (Beynon 1916, v1:2)

In Beynon's sketch of the floor plan of this house, (Figure 12), three sets of stairs descend the three levels of house pits from the front door at ground level to the deep-

Figure 14. House Pit of House of Light, Newcombe, ca. 1905. RBCM.

est level with the fireplace in the center of the structure. If the Road analogy applied to this structure, rather than a previous one on this spot, there would have had to be a second series of stairs leading out the back of the house but Beynon did not record them on the floor plan. Nor did he indicate the location of the interior pole which would have, by tradition, stood at the center of the back of the house.

The succession of pits Beynon drew inside of He'l's house were still visible when Charles Newcombe visited the village at the turn of the century, despite the heavy vegetation that has invaded the house pit in the photo. (Figure 14).

The massive planks of the four successive retaining walls can be clearly seen. The steps between each level are seen at the front end of the house. Although there were likely other houses at Lach Klan that had single or double stepped house pits, they are not seen in the photos or maps of the village. It is puzzling that Beynon's sketch indicates only three steps from ground surface to the bottom of the house pit; the photo indicates four steps.

Consistent with the structural details of this house there would have been carved interior house posts and other carved architectural features.

One outstanding interior house pole from Gitxaała is now in the collection of the Peabody Museum at Harvard (Figure 10). It was a gift from the New England Fish Company of Boston that operated on the North Pacific Coast from shortly after the time of the purchase of Alaska by the United States in 1867. Correspondence between the Peabody museum and the company indicate that the pole was originally much longer and was cut up for shipment.

This raises the possibility that their pole was part of the taller pole that would have stood in front of the house. Close examination of the original in the Peabody Museum may clarify this question. Unfortunately there are no photos of the poles in situ that would resolve it.

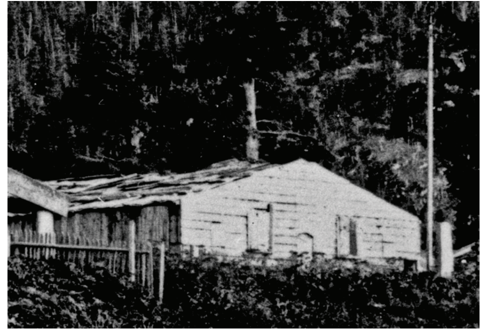


Figure 15. House 8 is traditional in the style of the side walls and roof, to which a modern façade of milled siding has been added. The main entrance has a domed lintel and the windows on either side have been boarded up indicating an extended absence of the owner from the property. (Dossetter, 1881, detail).

It is also possible that the Harvard Peabody pole is the top section of the Ts'ibasaa or He'l pole since one letter does suggest it was cut from a pole that would have been too high to fit inside of a house.

The pole is similar in carving style to those at Lax Kwa'alaams in displaying figures of bears, whale and eagles that are very full bodied with small figures peeking from between the arms and legs of the larger figures. Interior poles, such as the one James Swan brought to the Philadelphia World Fair in 1876, now in the Natural History Museum, Smithsonian Institution, display two large figures 8 ft. high or so, with small figures held by the former, but in separate sections, not like the interlocking typical of Haida poles. The pole from Gitxaaxła at the Peabody Museum, Harvard, has fine parallel adzing on the bodies, reminiscent of Kwakwa̲ka̲'wakw carving style.

House 8

This is a large house that has been modernized with a façade of milled lumber that has simply been applied over the old house front of split planks. Modern sash windows have been installed. (See Figure 15.)

House 9

This is a much smaller house with two figures of a watchman carved on each corner post. (See Figure 16.) They have tall hats with four potlatch rings, reminiscent of the watchmen so common on Haida house frontal and corner poles. It is likely that they reflect the preferred trading relationship between Ts'ibasaa and Chief Skedans of Haida village of Q̲ona, directly across Hecate Strait on Haida Gwaii. This involved exchange of crests as well a substantial amounts of specialty food and luxury items. Food items included eulachon grease in large quantities from Gitxaałan's traditional fishing sites at the mouth of the Nass as well as types of dried berries and sea weed only available on the mainland. Luxury items included mountain goat wool, horns of mountain goats and sheep used in feast spoons, as well as varieties of woods not available on Haida Gwaii.

Figure 16. Houses 9, 10 and 11 (left to right). Dossetter 1881, detail.

The poles are also very similar to the two front corner posts on Chief Gaum's house at the fortified village of Gitladzok in the Kitselas Canyon, suggesting there may have been a family or trading relationship between the owner of this house and Chief Gaum who controlled all of the trade between the Upper and Lower Skeena River villages. In both instances, the watchmen suggest an exchange of privileges between the Coast Tsimshian and the Haida.

It is recorded that Chief Skedans was given the Mountain Goat crest from Chief Ts'ibasaa. He used it prominently on his mortuary post and on his coffin that is now in the Smithsonian Institute. The Haida watchmen crest may have come to Gitxaała in return.

House 10

This is another large house which starts a new alignment of houses almost parallel with the first one along what is today Beach Road, but which follows the contour of the north beach through to house 14. House 10 has not been modified from the traditional form. The rafters are massive and the siding consists of vertical planks that were split from standing trees rather than sawn. There are no windows in the façade or other traces of western influence. The interior space of this house would be in the area of about 3,000 square feet. There are no totem poles associated with this house.

House 11

This is a large structure with a façade of milled lumber. It has four very large sash windows arranged symmetrically around the central doorway over which is a small circular window.

House 11 Pole

Standing in front of house 11 was a pole about 25 feet high with a seated human figure on top of a square wood shaft about 30 inches on each side and about 15 feet high. An extra flagpole has been added at the back of the figure.

The seated position of the figure strongly suggests that it represents a Euro-American authority figure such as a sea captain. We know that Chief He'l claimed the image of a sea captain, namely Captain Hale, as his crest since He'l was the first Gitxaała chief to encounter a European. At the base of the pole is another figure, which appears to be Indigenous or more likely a supernatural figure holding a killer whale with a prominent dorsal fin. This marks it as a Gispuwudwade pole as is the house behind the pole.

Figure 17. Pole in front of House 11 has a large ancestral figure holding a killerwhale at the base and a seated figure, possibly the sea captain Hale at the top. Dossetter 1881 detail.

This pole was likely cut down under missionary pressure in the 1890s. None of it is known to have survived, nor does it appear in any other photo of the village.

Houses 12 and 13

There is some disagreement be-tween the O'Reilly survey map of 1882 and the Dossetter photo of 1881. In the map there are two smaller houses which may indicate fission within the extended family. In the Dossetter photograph, there is a single house with a large totem pole with a flag in front. The later sketch of this area (Figure 6), assumed to be a few years later, also shows two small houses in this space.

Figure 18. Detail of house 13 and pole.

House 13 Pole

A pole about 35 feet high standing about 10 feet in front of the house and flying a large flag in the 1881 photo by Dossetter. The main figure is that of a standing whale with

Figure 19. Detail of House 14, which stood on the northwest corner of the village site. It had been modernized with milled lumber siding and glazed windows by 1881.

long pectoral fins and a series of human figures arranged in an interlocking pattern the length of its back. A plain pole rises about 8 feet above the tail of the whale. At the base is a large standing human figure with his arms raised.

House 14

This is a large house with a modern façade of milled lumber and four small windows placed high on the wall to let light into the interior but also so that people could not look directly into the house. This was a security measure since during raids on villages attackers often shot through the windows at the inhabitants of the house. House 14 does not possess a totem pole but as seen in a previous view there is a large log on the beach next to this house, which could have been intended for a totem pole but more likely a canoe like the one that lies beside it.

Bear Mother Pole

In Figure 20 the pole that Barbeau names the Bear Mother pole is very difficult to distinguish from the new house behind it since the top of the pole is level with the roofline. While it might have been an interior pole of the original house 14, it is now seen just to the left of the light and dark paneled door. It has two human figures at the top and bottom. The top one wears a conical hat and holds a single small figure between its arms. The lower large figure holds two small ones, one in each arm. Each of the small figures wears a tall conical hat.

In 1929 Barbeau had copies made of old photos from the turn of the century. The pole was standing in the village during Beynon's visit in 1916 and he and Barbeau labeled it "the Bear Mother Pole" and identified the bear mother story as a crest of chief He'l.

Figure 20. The house at the south end of the north face of the midden stands on the site of House 14. The new house has an interior post from the former house that is just to the right of the paneled door. It can be seen in detail in Figure 21. The Sea Lion pole is also indicated here.

Figure 21. Bear Mother Pole. This pole probably stood in the interior of House #14 and was left in place when the new house was built. Barbeau photo, ca. 1926.

Sea Lion Pole

One of the finest of the later poles stood at the junction of Beach Road and Ocean Drive, behind the old House 12. It was a tall pole, about 30 feet high, erected in the late 1890s. A large figure of a sea lion was perched on the top. A ring was screwed into the jaw of the sea lion to hold the rope for a flag that would be raised on special occasions.

The round shaft of this pole is sectioned off into a series of 13 potlatch rings emerging from the head of a standing beaver at the base. The unusual thing is that the figure of a shark has been inserted between the head of the beaver and the stack of potlatch rings. Barbeau's description of this pole includes the figure of a halibut.

Figure 22. Sea Lion pole.

Figure 23a and b. Sea Lion Pole details. The three-dimensional nature of the shark is enhanced by the careful addition of cedar pieces to the sculpture itself.

Figure 24. Panorama of the western shore of the midden with houses erected during the 1890s. The old communal house marked by the arrow on the left is the last one left standing in the row toward the creek. The small house in the center, no. 17 Ocean Drive, belonged to Chief Shakes family. His marble monument stands in front of the house. A larger two story structure standing behind also probably belonged to Chief Shakes. G. McTavish photograph ca. 1898.

The Western Shore Houses (15-21)

At this point the Gitxaała shoreline cuts back toward the south, and the houses in that section disappear from view in the 1881 photo (Figure 3). At the far right of that image we can see another house (House 25) with a tall pole that I will discuss as part of the houses on the far side. Dossetter took another view in 1881 next to the unnamed creek that flowed into the bay at this point (Figure 30). It captured a satellite part of the village, which Beynon states was called Creek Village by his advisors.

To fill in the missing houses and poles between the two Dossetter photos of the north shore and creek portions of the village, we have to refer to another panoramic photo taken a couple of decades later by G. McTavish from a high hill southeast of the village (Figure 24).

This photo of the west shore of Gitxaała was taken by McTavish about 1898. The relevant point of orientation in this photo is the church indicated by the white arrow at the top right, the arrow to the left that shows the last remaining plank house (House 17) and the lowest arrow that points to a marble monument in front of a modest modern house. Just over the roof the bell tower of the school can be seen the roofs of a row of houses (1 to 14) along Beach Road, that face seaward from the church. The old plank houses along the north shore that stood in the 1880's have been replaced by those of small single-family houses whose gabled roofs parallel the

beach. Running diagonally through the picture is a road with houses on either side that is known today as Ocean Road.

The O'Reilly map shows the contour of the midden cutting behind houses 12 and 13 with smaller structures below the bank on the edge of the intertidal zone, which suggests they were built on pilings above the high tide zone. It is perplexing why the O'Reilly map does not indicate a row of houses that appear from a number of lines of evidence to continue along the bank of the midden south to the creek.

The view taken from the hillside in Figure 26 shows two rows of houses along the stretch of midden between house 14 and the creek that drains the small lake behind the village.

Ocean Drive was laid out when the nuclear family houses replaced the former communal houses and cut diagonally across the old house lots which followed the contour of the shoreline.

Houses 15 and 16

Judging by O'Reilly's map, the first two houses along the western edge may have been built on pilings over the intertidal zone.

House 17

A single communal plank house survives in the center of the McTavish photo (Figure 25). The old house faces the beach and backs onto what becomes Ocean Drive (west). The old dwelling has a traditional low-pitched gable roof with a central smoke hole covered with planks. The road in the center of the photo on the right is Ocean Drive.

This is the last surviving example of a community house at Gitxaała village. Its dimensions and form are entirely traditional, although its cladding has been modernized on all sides with horizontal milled siding. An extension has been added to the back of the building, probably as a compartment for the chief's family. The roof is still of split planks with a traditional smoke hole over the central fireplace.

Figure 25. House 17, the last community house in Gitxaała. G. McTavish ca 1897 (detail.)

Figure 26. This photo was taken from the same location as Figure 24, probably shortly after 1900. There is no indication of who the photographer was on the print. It could have been MacTavish himself. A school house now stands on the point, and the last communal house has been replaced by the Church Army Hall. In the detail below, the marble monument to Shakes can be clearly seen.

Figure 27. Detail of figure 26.

Houses 18 to 21

Clearly, there is a second row of houses paralleling houses 14 to 19. But it is most likely they resulted from the break up of extended families in the community houses into single, nuclear family houses favoured by the Christian missionaries.

However, there is little evidence available to describe the houses that may have stood on lots 18 to 21.

Referring again to the G. McTavish photo (ca. 1895), houses 14 to 21 form a tightly aligned row from behind the previously described north facing house-row and ends in a single old traditional communal dwelling that survived until after William Beynon's sojourn at Lach Klan in 1916. The house appears to be about 40

feet in width and sixty feet long. It has a plain, narrow pole in front of it of which little detail can be seen. The importance of this house is that it strongly suggests that the row of traditional community houses was once continuous along both the north and west faces of the ancient midden underlying the village and extended via a bridge and boardwalk on pilings to a section of town north of the small creek.

Chief Shakes Monument

There is a prominent marble monument in front of a small cottage in memory of Chief Shakes (Seks) who died in 1889 according to the inscription on the base. The monument was raised in front of the new house located at #17 Ocean Drive. The address is conveniently painted on the door.

The base of Chief Shakes monument records his death as 1889. The inscription on the base of the monument reads: "Mr. Shakes, Great Chief of Kitcatla, [sic] 1889." Another view shows his successor at the monument after a subsequent Chief Shakes died in the 1930s.

Directly behind the small house is a newly completed two story dwelling fit for a chief. It was the only full two-story house in the village other than that of the Mission House. I conclude that this is the residence of the Chief Shakes who inherited his title. He also inherited the house name of Rainbow House (Beynon, 1916 Ms. Vol. IV :16), which he may have deferred to use at this time of heavy Christian influence.

Beynon collected lists of many crests owned by Chief Shakes including the "Double-Headed Blackfish of the Deep" which appear on three poles in museum collections, one in the Canadian Museum of Civilization, another in the Museum of Anthropology at U.B.C. and the last in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford (Beynon, Kitkatla Ms. Vol. 4: 13-14). It was described as a huge double-headed

Figure 28. Chief Shakes marble bear crest monument. The monument depicts a small bear at the top of a round shaft of marble, which rises from a seated figure of a bear. During the late 1800s marble tombstones could be ordered from Lax Kwa'alaams or Victoria based on a model carved in wood. Only the highest ranking chiefs had such monuments.

Figure 29. One of the best known photos of the Gitxaała people of high ranking chiefs, Ts'ibasaa and Shakes, taken on the appointwment of a new Chief Shakes in April 1917. Group portrait of Chief Joseph Tsebassa, 2. unknown woman, 3. Chief Shakes (Christian name was Gladstone). (bottom row) 1. Amelia Spencer, 2. Henry Collinson's mother, 3. Susan Tsebassa, 4. Unknown woman, 5. Matilda Pemberton.

blackfish of the deep that carried La'ooy a relative of Chief Shakes across a river after an unsuccessful raid on the Kitimat people. He rewarded the monster with mountain goat fat and adopted it as one of his family crests that could be used also as a house front painting.

All three examples of the double killer whale interior house posts noted above are of classic Coast Tsimshian style, and although each varies in some details, they appear to have been from the hand of a single carver, and may all have stood in the same house. Each was acquired from earlier collections that lack original site data in the catalogue record. The only recorded memory of such house posts are those collected by Beynon from Gitxaała and are presented here for that reason.

Beynon records (1916,) vol. IV:18 one of the houses of the family of Chief Shakes: "The house stood on the edge of a small creek in a portion of the Gitxatla village which was known by this name. The old remains are there yet. Beynon describes the pole for this house as "by far the best carving I have seen."

Although it cannot be seen in the photos, he reports a large frog at the base of the pole which supported a huge bullhead swallowing the frog. Four human figures

are on the head of the bullhead (presumably the two on the pectoral fins and two on the spines standing up from the head described by Barbeau). Beynon provides a sketch that helps to understand the next figure in the center of the back of the Bullhead. It is a supernatural starfish with 14 arms. This does not show in the photos taken by Barbeau in 1939 but the sketch of the neighbouring pole from Bishop Ridley's book, known as the Raven and Sea Monster Pole, shows a separate starfish affixed to the pole.

House Front Paintings

Although William Beynon lists many house front paintings among the prerogatives of the chiefs of Gitxaała they were only displayed on ceremonial occasions and rarely captured in photographs. At non-ceremonial times they were stored as sets of painted planks in the rafters of the communal houses. Fredee Alexcee's historical paintings, done from memory of Lax Kwa'alaams village, puts a half dozen monumental house-front paintings into his scenes although they would never have been displayed simultaneously.

Another house front painting from Gitxaała, described by Beynon as a Thunderbird described the entrance as through the lower part of bird's body. His description inspired the painting of this and neighbouring houses at Gitxaała during a ceremonial occasion by museum artist Gordon Miller. All of the houses in this view have been stripped of their milled siding and windows and taken back to how they may have looked at the time of first contact with Euro-American maritime fur traders.

Over Water, or Small Creek Village

There is a prominent boardwalk supported over the creek on pilings that appears in the 1881 and all subsequent drawings and photos. On the far side of the creek, the village path turns northwest again to the end of the house row and totem poles towards where the modern town dock is now located.

Edward Dossetter took his second glass plate negative of Gitxaała in 1881 of the area on the north side of the creek draining the small lake behind the village. It shows four communal houses each with a different orientation. The one on the right in the photo is a very ancient looking house built on pilings onto the tidal flats. It is likely that this is the house that appears in the sketch used by Bishop Ridley in his book *Snapshots of the North Pacific*.

Behind the house on pilings in the 1881 photo, on the other side of what is now Ocean Drive, is a plain house that has been modernized with horizontal milled siding but which has only a small window over the central door. In front of that house is another one perched on posts that rise several feet above the tidal zone. Yet another house is hidden behind the first one described. It has a carved pole in front

Figure 30. The "Beyond Creek" section of the village where some of the houses were built on log piers over the intertidal zone. Dossetter, AMNH 1881

of which only the eyes of the large human figure peer above the house gable in front of it. (Figure 31a) The head is crowned with a ring of six small men squatting and looking in all directions. Perhaps this is a variant of the Watchmen on the corner posts of the neighboring house. The hats on these watchmen are not the same as the one described earlier on house 9. Those watchmen have three rings on their hats and the one near the mouth of the creek has four rings and a small bear on top.

There are four poles standing behind the house in Figure 30, which do not appear in any other photo. The one next to the smoke hole of this house is the figure of a hawk with wings folded and a small hawk in front of it. Although they appears to be sitting on the roof of the house they undoubtedly stood on top of a pole behind the house which I would estimate from the surrounding buildings was around 20 ft in height. (Figure 31b.)

Just to the left of the doorway of the house is the top of a stout, plain pole that I would estimate at 30 feet high. It may once have had a separate figure such as a bird on top that has fallen off. To the left of that is a tall plain pole, about 45 feet high which still has the figure of a bird on top.

Figure 31 a, b, c and d. Details of Figure 30, showing evidence of otherwise undocumented poles. Dossetter, AMNH 1881.

Finally at far left in this photo is a most curious pole with at least four bands about 10 inches wide at intervals of about six feet along the round shaft of the pole. Somewhat compressed frogs peer out of each band. They manifest a trait found on several poles at Lax Kwa'alaams village in which there are figures of either humans or frogs that appear to be compressed by the weight of the sections of the pole above them. So-called "potlatch rings" are common on many Haida poles, but they never reveal live creatures struggling to get out of the joints between the rings. I am inclined to view the stacks of rings, like the spinal column of the lineage ancestor, in which each joint between the vertebrae are the locii of souls struggling to come back into the world of the living.

The crest figure on top of the pole is a bird-like figure with the head and legs of a bear but the wings and tail of a bird. A very similar creature sits on top of a pole drawn in 1854 in the Gitsees section of Lax Kw'alaams village (Barbeau 1947:pl.202).

House 22

There is another traditional community house on the far side of the boardwalk over the creek, which I would judge to be house lot no. 22. The Ridley sketch shows a high, carved pole standing in front of it but no details can be discerned.

Picking up the house count from there, the drawing shows a shed roofed, non-indigenous structure on the right side of the creek with a wide boardwalk area over the creek and along the shore in front of the next three houses.

Houses 23 and 24

These are European style shed roofed structures with sawn vertical siding. Both have poles in front of them whose bases are buried deep in the inter tidal zone. There is not sufficient detail in the drawing to distinguish the crests on the poles.

One of the poles in front of houses 22, 23, or 24 is probably the Thunderbird and Whale pole that is the last of the old poles still standing in the village. (Figure 33)

House 25

House 25 is the last of the old communal houses in the row in the drawing published by Bishop Ridley as well as the last in the Dossetter 1881 photograph. It has a very long set of stairs leading to the beach. The house façade has been sheeted over with milled horizontal siding and a large and a small window have been added to either side of the central door.

In the sketch, two poles stand on either side of a stairway down to the beach. The one on the right was actually raised on the mud flat in the 1880s (after the Dossetter photo).

The photograph (Figure 34) shows a tall pole centered on the house front, on a

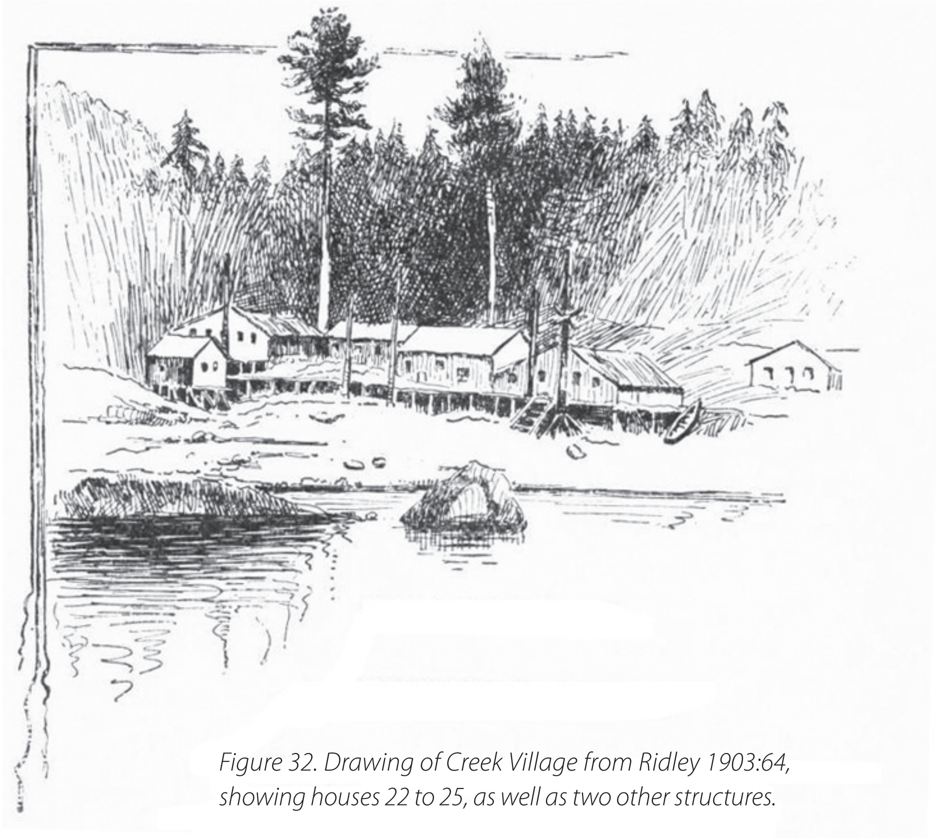


Figure 32. Drawing of Creek Village from Ridley 1903:64, showing houses 22 to 25, as well as two other structures.

small porch. It is a long, plain pole about 30 ft. in height, with a bear and a human figure at the base. The figures on the pole were remarkably well carved. It was cut down early in the twentieth century and the carving of the human head is preserved in the collection of the Royal British Columbia Museum.

Barbeau does not describe this pole although he does refer to another pole of which certain carvings were saved when the pole was cut down which suggests that the owners preferred to save key features of favorite poles that the missionaries insisted be cut down. (1990: 351).

The second pole, from the beginning, was propped up with half a dozen timbers that were dug into the beach. It is the only one of the two poles that survived into the late 20th century. It fell during a storm surge about 1980 but was later dragged up onto the vegetation on shore where it is rapidly deteriorating.

Barbeau identifies this pole as the sea-monster Paxlekpeel with a series of human figures carved in a row standing on each others shoulders. According to him they were the crests of a Ganhada chief.

Figure 33a and b. Thunderbird and whale pole (left, Barbeau photo 1926, on right, de Menil, 1968).

At the base of the Raven and Sea Monster Pole is a creature that looks like a sculpin beneath a raven that in this photo has lost its beak. Above the Raven are the interlocked human figures noted above.

Further up the pole is a six-armed sun or starfish the arms of which have been carved separately and nailed to the pole, except the arms in the center which are carved into the pole and can still be seen there. All of the pieces that had been added to the pole, including the bird on top, the starfish arms (or suns rays) and the beak of the Raven had fallen off by 1950.

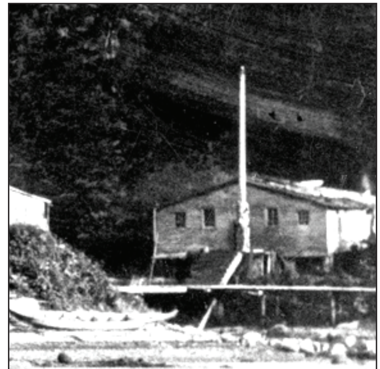


Figure 34. House 25. Dosseter 1881 (detail).

Conclusion

The reconstructed map of Gitxaatla village in Figure 6 is an attempt to match the precise images on photographs of the period with the physical space that exists there today. If will be refined as new evidence in the way of photos and maps are discovered in archives and private collections.

I fervently hope that the map, particularly the location of house locations will be refined by discussions within the community. Clearly, much knowledge of past phases of the community are still within the memory of current elders and this expanded version of the village map can serve as an armature on which new information can be positioned and integrated into the whole.

Since there is strong archaeological evidence that Gitxaała has remained occupied without major interruption for more than 5000 years in the same location it is one of the most enduring and rooted communities in the New World. Clearly it is worthy of much more scholarly attention.

Figure 35. Bear and a human figure from the base of the older pole from House 25.

Figure 36. House 25 pole. Photo Adelaide de Menil, 1968.

References

Ames, Ken M.
2005 The North Coast Prehistory Project Excavations in Prince Rupert Harbour, British Columbia: The Artifacts. British Archaeological Reports, International Series 1342. Oxford.
Barbeau, Marius C.
1947 Totem Poles, vols. 1 & 2. National Museum of Canada
1990 Totem Poles, vols. 1 & 2, foreword by G.F. MacDonald. Canadian Museum of History.
Beynon, William
1916 Ms. 80C (a-d) Gitxatla Notebooks, vols. –VI, Canadian Museum of History Archives, Gatineau, Quebec.
1916 Ms. B.F. 419 Gitxatla Field Notebooks, vols. –VI, Canadian Museum of History Archives, Gatineau, Quebec.
1916 Beynon letter to Barbeau re boat sinking to Kitkatla, B-Mc-2190 (2)
Gentilcore, R. Louis, ed.
1993 Historical Atlas of Canada. Volume II: The Land Transofrmed, 1800-1900. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
MacDonald. George F.
1990 Forward to "Totem Poles," vols. 1 & 2. Canadian Museum of Civilization.
2011 - in preparation - see p 35
Nowry, Malcombe
1995 Man of Mana: Marius Barbeau, a biography. Toronto: NC Press.
Ridley, Bishop William
1904 Snapshots from the North Pacific: Letters written by the Right Rev. Bishop Ridley (Late of Caledonia). Edited by AliceJ. Janvin. London, Church Missionary Society, Longmans, Green

Figure 37. House 25 pole. Photo Adelaide de Menil, 1968.
Figure 37a. Detail of figure on pole.

OF ONE HEART
Gitxaała and our Neighbours

Syt güülm goot, "Of One Heart" in Sm'algyax, highlights the spirit of interconnectedness held by the Tsimshian, reflecting the values of belonging and an ethic of care for all beings.

This collection brings together works by senior and emerging scholars writing about the Gitxaała and their Indigenous and non-Indigenous neighbours. It includes linguistic and ethnohistorical inquiries, and also studies focussing on contemporary concerns which grew out of a research collaboration between Gitxaała and UBC.

New Proposals Publishing
6303 NW Marine Drive
Vancouver BC
V6T 1Z1