THE CHANGING VISTA OF THE NORTHERN

NORTHWEST COAST INDIAN DEER RITUAL

By

Kenneth Frank Austin

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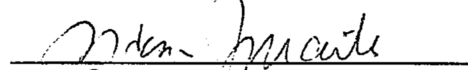

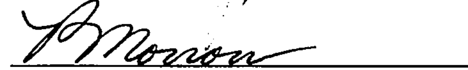

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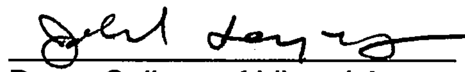

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A

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By

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Abstract

The Changing Vista of the Northern Northwest Coast Indian Deer Ritual

KENNETH F. AUSTIN

From time immemorial until the start of the 20th century, when disputing Tlingits decided to end a conflict, Tlingit clan leaders and elders met in council and negotiated an equitable peace settlement. After reaching a satisfactory negotiation, a peace dance took place to validate the settlement. Besides the Tlingits, the neighboring Indian groups in Southeast Alaska and British Columbia practiced this custom. When the European and Western powers assumed governance, the deer ritual—a judicial function of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians—was modified, and new forms appeared.

Presently, while elders know their regional history, many do not remember the protocol and formalities of the rite that was performed. This thesis undertakes a step into the past when the rite had an active and viable purpose in settling disputes and validating agreements.

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Biographical Data

Kenneth F. Austin wrote his thesis, The Changing Vista of the Northern Northwest Coast Indian Deer Ritual, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree in Cultural Anthropology.

Te Sha Kee (his Tlingit name) was born August 16, 1934 aboard the purse seiner Washington in Icy Straits, Southeast Alaska. He is of the Ch'aak' (Eagle moiety) Chookaneidi clan of its historical territory in Xaatl Tu (Glacier Bay), and is a member of Xaatl Hit (Iceberg House).

After graduating from Mt. Edgecombe High School in May 1952, he served in the U. S. Army for twenty-two years, and later received his bachelor's degree in English from the University of Hawaii at Hilo in August 1994.

Te Sha Kee speaks and writes the orthography of the Tlingit language.

Chapter One

Introduction

When I deliberated on a subject for my master's thesis, I initially leaned toward the Tlingit crest system. But at the urging of members of my committee, I selected the deer ritual of the Tlingit since scholars had not written extensively about it. Those suggesting this choice were Dr. Steve Langdon, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alaska Anchorage, and Dr. Phyllis Morrow, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, who is also my advisor. During the Spring Semester of 1998, I combined researching the subject with academic credits by enrolling in an independent study with Dr. Aldona Jonaitis, Director of the University of Alaska Museum, who is also a member of my committee. I started collecting secondary source information about the "peace ceremony," and on a weekly basis made written and oral presentations to Dr. Jonaitis.

This thesis is about a Tlingit judicial system known in the literature as the "peace ceremony" which functioned as a viable force until the U. S. Government began to replace it in the early 1900s with that government's judicial system. The ceremony was a negotiation of an equitable peace settlement, which was validated by singing and dancing, after the cessation of warfare or other forms of altercation. The ceremony was called by many names: peace ritual, guwakaan

or deer ceremony, peace settlement, equity, equitable settlement, peace dance, and deer ritual.

It was not totally replaced. By actively supporting and marshaling their leverage within the U. S. legislative and judicial system to struggle for Native rights, Native organizations such as the regional and village corporations, the Alaska Federation of Natives, the Tlingit and Haida Central Council, and the Alaska Native Brotherhood/Sisterhood filled the gap left by the passing of the "peace ceremony," thus ensuring that remnants of the ceremony survive today. I became aware of the "peace ceremony" after learning that one was held in Hoonah, Alaska, in 1958. The adversaries were two highly respected clan leaders who were also premiere salmon purse seiner captains who sometimes carried their one-on-one competitiveness to extremes. For example, both captains instructed one of their crewmen to fire a shot over the bow of the other seine boat if it appeared that the other captain was attempting to obstruct an existing salmon set.

When I began gathering material on the ceremony, I viewed a videotape of a Hoonah clan workshop in which the elders stressed the need to inform the younger generation about the "peace ceremony's" historical place in Tlingit society. However, in subsequent annual clan workshops, the ritual was not on the agenda. This may be due to the fact that it often provoked painful memories—for example, on one occasion a spouse's feelings about her

husband's ill-will toward a fellow Tlingit was paraded in public—for those elders whose relatives or spouses were involved in the deer ritual, so the clan workshop managers were compelled not to pursue the subject.

During my research, I did not know if the ritual were still an effective agent in the Tlingit cultural environment or if it had become a ceremonial entity where elders only paid lip service to it during a ku.eex' (potlatch) or at other traditional gatherings. "Ku.eex'" is a Tlingit term for a celebration wherein clans from an opposite moiety are invited for a feast which includes singing, dancing, oratory, validating (witnessing) new names, changing leadership, displaying new crests, memorializing the deceased, celebrating the completion of a community house, and more. "Potlatch"—used extensively in journals and scholarly papers—is a word for a celebration involving feasting, dancing, and singing and was unfamiliar to Southeast Alaska Natives in pre-contact times.

I had little information about what a "peace ceremony" was or what it entailed. Like the early traders and explorers, my initial notion of it revolved around the peace dance. When I learned that a religious peace dance followed a successful secular negotiation, I assumed it to be an event that was held in celebration of an agreed upon equitable settlement. Instead, it was a religious formality that validated the settlement.

Since the ritual ceased to be an integral part of the Tlingit culture at the beginning of the 20th century, knowledgeable Tlingit elders in this age do not

remember the ritual in its entirety. For example, after a modern version of it was held in Hoonah in the late 1950s, a Hoonah house group leader aspired to be selected as a Peace Maker or the "deer," as if it were an office available to qualified candidates. Based on conversations with elders, I, for one, thought a peace maker in the 1990s could be appointed on a permanent basis to quell disputes among Tlingit villagers in specific regions of Southeast Alaska. After some research, however, I realized this was not the case. "Peace makers" (deer) were selected only after clan leaders and elders opted for a deer ritual and only after agreeing to an equitable settlement of a dispute.

In my initial written and oral presentations during my independent study, I assumed that the ritual as well as governance was based primarily on balance and reciprocity. Based on the Tlingit code of law and custom, balance pertains to equalizing battle losses by slaying warriors in order to approach some equity or to make compensation with some other form of valuables. Reciprocity is to make tangible and intangible payments, usually to an opposite moiety, for services rendered. Later I determined that balance and restitution comprised the conceptual framework the Tlingits used to insure justice endured. Negotiations to settle disputes—relying on balance and restitution—and a peace dance called the guwakaan or deer ceremony played a major role in Tlingit law. According to an Angoon Tlingit informant (de Laguna 1960:155) and the Hoonah Chookaneidi elder, Lilly White (videotape 8-13-98), the clan leaders' decision to have a

"peace ceremony" was called guwakaan kuwdzitee (a deer is born). The deer is perceived to be a peaceful animal, a perception that is tailored to the disputants' intent to put an end to quarrels, warfare, and other forms of confrontation.

Early traders, explorers, missionaries, and scholars have used other terms, including peace maker, peace officer, and hostage, to identify the aristocratic person selected by a contending group to insure the "peace ceremony" functioned without too many disturbances. My word preference is guwakaan (deer) because of its portrayal as a peaceful animal. As to the designation "peace ceremony," I prefer the term "deer ritual," for it is based on the Tlingit peace ritual phrase, guwakaan kuwdzitee (a deer is born). This was the Tlingit way of saying, "We will balance our differences and decide on equitable payments through negotiation and validate it by a peace dance." According to Leach (1968:521), a ceremony usually describes a secular activity, such as negotiating, while a ritual is a custom associated with religious performance, such as the peace dance. Hence, instead of the term "peace ceremony," I shall use "deer ritual," except in the chapter on negotiation, as a term that includes negotiating and peace dancing.

"Don't ever question it. Different versions of a story our [Tlingit] elders shared with us are to be considered factual." That is the reply Gilbert Mills, the knowledgeable Wooshkeetan clan elder from Hoonah, related to me in the Tlingit language after I mentioned that I had heard several versions regarding the

confrontation that took place in the vicinity of Point Gustavus near Glacier Bay between the Sitka Kaagwaantaan and Excursion Inlet Wooshkeetan clans. The Foregoing comment by Mr. Mills was based on oral history. My attempt at obtaining information from Tlingit elders about the ritual was spartan. Hence, I am primarily placing the veracity of this thesis about the guwakaan (deer) ritual on published books and papers written by anthropologists who researched Euroamerican traders' and explorers' journals and interviewed Tlingit informants. With the exception of Frederica de Laguna, George T. Emmons, and R. L. Olson, other scholars wrote very little about the deer ritual. Tlingit clan historians as well as other knowledgeable elders with whom I had the chance to talk have either forgotten the specifics of it or felt it should be "swept under the rug" since the U. S. Government's judicial system took its place. The dearth of primary and secondary sources about a ritual that essentially faded at the onset of the 20th century made obtaining information about it difficult.

I would like to have listened to the elders recounting the various forms of confrontations, quarrels, and disputes, and how the leaders cajoled or bargained their position in order to arrive at a just settlement. What happened to those noblemen and women selected as guwakaan (deer) who declined to be one? The symbols of the deer ritual, such as the blowing of eagle or swan's down, the use of feathers by the deer, the prescribed manner in which the clans sat in a clan house, the resumption of battle when one leader intentionally coerces a

deer to ignore a formality (brandishing a weapon or to begin dancing wearing black war paint) are like the wisp of a smoke from a smokehouse—they have disappeared and we in this age cannot retrieve them.

After eliminating some of my mistaken notions about the ritual, a clearer picture came into focus about its design: after cessation of hostilities was agreed upon, clan leaders and elders began the deer ritual to (1) negotiate an equitable settlement and (2) to validate the negotiations by way of a peace dance.

There were several ways of arriving at a peace settlement, that is, making restitution for infractions of a Tlingit law. Some examples are: during family disputes, a brother or sister-in-law, naakaani, functioned as an intermediary between heads of the contesting families and continued to do so until an equitable solution was reached. At an intra-clan level, a third party clan leader (usually a brother-in-law) mediated and recommended an equitable solution agreeable to the contestants. At an inter-clan level where the conflagration might result in warfare, clan leaders and esteemed kwaan (district or village) elders would convene to discuss the pros and cons of the dispute until a just solution agreeable to the contestants were concluded. A peace dance would follow.

There were times when the script was not followed. For example, during their ninety-year confrontation, members of the Sitka Kaagwaantaan clan and the Wrangell Nanyaa.aayi clan slew each other while attempting to open

negotiations, or during a ritual peace dance. Among other groups, in an endeavor to put an end to their decades long skirmishes, the Wrangell Stikine Tlingits and the Nishka Indians of British Columbia negotiated a successful peace settlement without the traditional exchange of deer and a peace dance. By the same token, after Wrangell Tlingits defeated the British Columbia Tsimpshians, they balanced their battle losses and the Wrangell Tlingits cremated the Tsimpshian dead. About a year later, the Tsimpshian opted for a deer ritual. The usual format of balance and restitution, negotiation, and a peace dance was not always promptly adhered to, instead leaders entered a form of deer ritual to settle festering disagreements at a later time.

For the benefit of readers who are not knowledgeable about the deer ritual and the Tlingit words associated with it, I have underlined Tlingit words having the same meaning as their English equivalent, e. g., guwakaan (deer). I have added a fuller scope of the scholars' excerpted writings to allow the readers to get a clearer picture of the specifics of a bygone ritual.

Before focusing on the thesis of the deer ritual, in the beginning chapters I featured various components of the Tlingit culture such as Tlingit law, social organization, temperament, village defense, meaning of warfare, etc., to present the elements that might have provided the impetus to foment disputes and confrontations, and conversely stimulated attempts to resolve them.

Chapter Two

Tlingit Law

When disputants decided on a resolution through a peace settlement, the rules of negotiating it were based on Tlingit law. Emmons observed and made a succinct statement concerning how a supposedly primitive group of people could devise a system to maintain a semblance of balance among their clans and neighboring Indian groups:

> ...they had formulated and were following a code of exact laws which regulated in detail their relations with each other and which were generally accepted by the neighboring coastal tribes. Property rights were strictly observed, and compensations were made for injuries or killings according to the rank of the victim. [Emmons 1991:46]

It was probably difficult for Euroamericans to note the Natives resolute response to an infringement of their land and resources without compensation.

A Tlingit's Version

The noted Tlingit historian and leader, Cyrus E. Peck, Sr. (1986), has written about how, among other things, villagers settled disputes. Village elders and house group and clan leaders ruled on wrongdoings. If a person from the nobility were murdered and the aggrieved family demanded a life-for-life penalty

but refused to consider the person who did the killing because he was from a low caste clan, then the kaak (maternal uncle) of the killer was required to pay the penalty. He could not refuse. The naakaani (brother-in-law) of the uncle conveyed to the opposite clan that he would pay the penalty. He began to prepare for it and set the date for his death. On the selected date, clan members got together in the uncle's clan house while his brother-in-law dressed him in the regalia of his clan and caste standing. When he was ready to meet the executioners, his family sang the last song. As he was speared and knifed, his last act would be to utter the sound of his clan's emblem (bear, eagle, wolf, raven, beaver...). In Tlingit, the utterance is called Atshuwli.ax. According to custom and religious ritual, he gave his life for the crime committed by his nephew. Peck used this example to illustrate how Tlingit law was administered at the intra-village level. There were regional variations.

Other Forms of Legal Settlements

Sometimes the settlement of disputes between clans took the form of land exchange, such as at Angoon where the Gaanax.adi clan surrendered their Xootsnuwu territorial claims in the area to the Deishitaan clan (Emmons 1991).

Another avenue was for a clan to split from its parent organization and find a new kwaan (district) and sometimes form a new lineage (de Laguna 1972). This process included inviting a clan from a guneit kanaayi (opposite moiety) to

accompany it to the new district to continue a web of relationships across clans. When clans split from their parent clan and moved to other regions, they usually retained the original clan names, crests, house group, and house names. When a clan that split and moved from its parent clan became wealthy and powerful, they could acquire new names for the clan, crest, house group, and houses. When the U. S. Government assumed the judicial role, it sometimes allowed the Tlingits to use their code of law to insure that justice prevailed (Emmons 1991) and at other times tried to quell confrontations by using its system.

De Laguna describes the historical background of U. S. governance—or lack thereof—after the purchase of Alaska:

> ...it should be remembered that between the purchase of Alaska in 1867 and 1885 there was literally no government of any sort in Alaska, and before that, Russian dominion in southeast Alaska had never extended outside the fortifications of New Archangel at Sitka. The United States military garrisons which had occupied a few towns since the purchase had been withdrawn early in the summer of 1877, leaving as the only representatives of the Federal Government a customs collector at Sitka and deputy collectors at such towns as Wrangell and Tongas (sic). [de Laguna 1960:159]

Commander Beardslee, who represented the U. S. Government at Sitka and commanded the U. S. S. Jamestown from June 1879 to September 1880, "was

one of the few white men in a position of authority who took the trouble to study the customs, laws, and superstitions of the Indians...." (de Laguna 1960:160). He had not only begun to understand the Tlingit legal system—he noted that every Tlingit was honor bound to help obtain compensation for any member of the family against another family that provoked insults or caused injury—but Beardslee also participated in settling disputes within that system when not performing in his official capacity. Beardslee was noted for winning the good will of the Tlingits in Sitka and other towns. For example, in Sitka he recruited the Kaagwaantaan leader Annahootz and Kiksadi leader Katlaan to lead an unofficial police force "by forming a council of chiefs to deal with breaches of the peace committed by the Indians and by himself acting as arbitrator in their disputes" (de Laguna 1960:161). His reputation as a fair man extended to other Tlingit groups such as the "fierce and arrogant Chilkat..." (de Laguna 1960:162).

Family elders (Emmons 1991) would decide on an equitable assessment (slaves, fur or other valuable object) and then call on Beardslee to mediate disputes under Tlingit law rather than applying the U. S. judicial system. Usually he told the Tlingits who had appealed to him for help that they knew their laws and could settle their disputes in the traditional manner. But Glass and Lull, who later followed Beardslee, took an active part in settling disputes to the point of making peace between contending clans and between Tlingits and whites.

On the other hand, Captain Merriman, Beardslee's immediate successor, changed this mutual relationship by ordering the shelling of Angoon in 1882 when the Angoon Tlingits demanded they be compensated for the killing of one of their shamans. Before this incident happened, Beardslee wrote:

> If an Indian dies while in the house of another, or is killed while in the employ of another, the house-owner or employer is responsible. The Indians seldom fail to yield to this, the very foundation of their laws, and a refusal to make equitable settlement is always a cause of war. [ibid., p. 45] [de Laguna 1960:160]

Before the destruction of Angoon in October 1882, Commander Merriman refused to make an "equitable settlement" in blankets to Angoon Tlingit leaders when a tree fell and killed a Tlingit who was employed by the Northwest Trading Company. Merriman did not acknowledge the Tlingit law of balance and restitution as noted in his policy concerning such matters:

> ...that in the future no such payments should either be demanded, or enforced as far as white men were concerned; that if they [Tlingits] persisted in such course, he would punish them severely, and that in this instance the company would and should not pay. They [Tlingits] submitted with bad grace. [de Laguna 1960:163]

The foregoing policy set the stage for confrontations with the Angoon Tlingits.

Shelling of Angoon

A Tlingit who worked for the Northwest Trading Company had died when a tree fell on him. The second Tlingit, a shaman who was working on a whaleboat, died when a bomb "shot from the whaleboat at a whale" (de Laguna 1960:63) accidentally exploded and killed him. In response, the Tlingits took two white men as prisoners, secured the boat and whaling gear, and demanded two hundred blankets in compensation. When Commander Merriman arrived at Angoon, he told two Tlingit leaders that instead of the Northwest Trading Company paying them two hundred blankets, he would fine them four hundred blankets to be paid the following morning or their canoes would be smashed and the village would be shelled and burned. The Tlingits did not make payment, so Captain Merriman made good on his threats.

In contrast to Commander Beardslee's code of allowing the Tlingits to practice their judicial system and insuring compensation was forthcoming when it was called for, Commander Merriman not only ignored the Tlingit law of property and individual rights, he blatantly told the Angoon Tlingit that they would be the ones to pay compensation in the form of four hundred blankets, double the amount the Tlingits were requesting. Wm. Gouverneur Morris, Collector of Customs at Sitka, accompanied Commander Merriman when he took his force to put down the Angoon uprising. Morris echoed Merriman's feelings about Indians when he said:

> Once let it be understood by the Siwashes that the life of a white man is sacred, and that they will be severely handled if they harm him.... [de Laguna 1960:164]

The Tlingits' version differed from the "white man's" written document about the preparation for war after the death of the shaman. An Angoon informant, who was fourteen years old at the time of the shelling, said when interviewed by de Laguna in 1950, "They [the Tlingits] only wanted the boat quiet [cease working] for two days until they buried him [the shaman]" (de Laguna 1960:168). The informant explained:

> We Tlingit lived in that way. If there was an accident, they stopped all work for two days, one day, until after the burial [cremation]....That is the way the people have lived from time immemorial. [de Laguna 1960:168]

Instead, the town was shelled. The informant repeatedly stated during the interview:

> But there is no help from anywhere, from the Government....We never receive help from anything....But just the same, whenever there is going to be war, you [U. S. Government] take our children by the hand without a word. You take them [our children] for death. I do not know why. You take the children, all those boys, to fight for you, for your country. We cannot say anything. There is

> nothing we can say....When you [the United States] are going to make laws, you never consult us Tlingit. You never tell us there is going to be a law made. You make it in secret, and then just tell us that the law is made (and force it upon us). See how you are treating us, you white men. [de Laguna 1960: 169, 170, 171]

Tlingit law notwithstanding, the U. S. Government recently compensated the Angoon Tlingits for the destruction of the canoes and the shelling and burning of the town.

Remnants of Commander Merriman's "manifest destiny" still linger in the Alaska judicial system which runs counter to the prehistoric code of coastal tribes' property and individual rights and compensation for injuries, killings, and other forms of injustice. The "Merriman code" is still practiced by the state government to the detriment of Native rights under the guise of redefining subsistence priorities as codified in the Alaska State Constitution, of restricting access to traditional homelands such as Xaatl Tu (Glacier Bay National Park), of advocates trying to force an English only law, and, in times past, of Protestant missionaries and educators attempting to dismantle the Alaska Native's languages, arts, dances and songs, and of the Territorial government's rule of usurping Native rights in the form of discrimination (whites only restaurants, bars, movies) and withholding voting rights. In the 1980s, a Native by the name of Rudy James entered the picture by stating that two Natives on Prince of Wales

Island who were convicted of a felony by the state judicial system should be tried and punished under the Tlingit code, an unheard of judicial function that was not practiced by the Tlingit.

As the 20th century comes to a close, the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood Camps, Tlingit and Haida Central Council, village councils, and regional and village Native corporations assumed the judicial, legal, and advocacy functions previously carried out by clan leaders and influential elders. They have marshalled their energies to assure balanced and fair treatment of transgression and neglect by U. S. Government leaders.

Chapter Three

Negotiation

> For the Indians, "peace" does not mean cessation of fighting, or the imposition and acceptance of surrender; it means restoration of lawful relationships, settlements of claims for loss and injury, and reestablishment of equity. [de Laguna 1972:593]

Perspective Alters Perception: "Peace Ceremony" vis a vis Negotiations

Since the term "peace ceremony" was used by scholars in their writing, I shall use it in this chapter instead of my preferred term "deer ritual" to minimize terminology confusion. There was a misperception in the notion of early European and Western observers that a "peace ceremony" was the vehicle that resolved differences between Pacific Northwest Coast Indians. Was the "peace ceremony" the primary step to restoring lawful relations and arriving at an acceptable settlement of disputes, or was it the "negotiating table" that brought disputants together to resolve their differences, or was it the sign that the process of balance and restitution was in a final stage? By way of an analogy, Shakespeare's play Julius Caesar is about Brutus and his obsession with honor and not about Julius Caesar's quest for power. Likewise, the titular term "peace ceremony" was a ritual (religious performance) enacted to validate the successful completion of negotiations (secular ceremony) and not a means of

resolving differences. Present day Tlingit elders also sometimes mistakenly convey the notion that the peace dance was the agency used to arrive at an equitable settlement.

In essence, this ceremony was the religious and final phase of the disputants' attempt to restore secular lawful relationships.

Negotiation Based on Tlingit Law

Disputants first had to negotiate an equitable settlement. Before viewing negotiations, it seems appropriate to dispel the Euroamerican notions of negotiation and a peace dance. Traders and explorers who observed the visual performance of the dance probably were not aware of, or were not familiar with, the meaning of ritual symbols and taboos that took place, such as the deer wearing eagle feathers, the lacing of the first three fingers of the deer's right hand, changing the black face paint to red, turning the deer counterclockwise ("sunwise") four times, and so on. Hence, for them, because they did not know the symbolic significance of the ritual representations and they viewed a performance that was artistically vivid, they may have construed it to be based on the singing and dancing. Another element preceded the peace dance, negotiation. This process and Tlingit law were an indispensable duo. Peck (1986) provided an example of how important Tlingit law was to social solidarity.

This chapter touches upon the role Tlingit and Pacific Northwest Coast Indian laws play in negotiating a settlement.

Basic Course of Action to Settle Disputes

Although all offenses were negotiable, Drucker (1965:72, 73) mentions two basic courses of action that were open to an offended group. One was to seek revenge by slaying a member of the offenders, usually not the one who did the killing but rather someone from his group with equal social standing as the slain person. At times a relative came forth to be slain. In Peck's account (1986:63), an uncle must take the place of his nephew if it was the nephew who killed a person of high class standing. According to Drucker, if the offending group did not select a person as a sacrificial alternative, warfare might start again, and if it were of prolonged duration, it could strain manpower and subsistence resources. Thus, a prompt measure of reconciliation was necessary. If a volunteer or a selectee from the offending group agreed to be sacrificed, he dressed according to his clan's prescribed attire and walked towards his executioners to be killed. Among other things, this self-sacrifice was supposed to prevent further bloodshed and to equalize the losses of both sides. Taking the place of the actual killer, in essence, meant a ritual sacrifice. Edmund R. Leach (1968) explains: "Ritual is then usually set apart as a body of custom specifically associated with religious performance..." (1968:521).

The second recourse was to make a settlement through payment of valuables and wealth by means of secular negotiations (Drucker 1965:73). Preliminary negotiations were completed through selected brothers-in-law or neutral clan leaders. Only after all arrangements had been completed did the clan leaders or designated elders meet face to face for the formal exchange of payments. Since there were no fixed standards for evaluating a human life or the seriousness of an injury, negotiations continued until both sides arrived at an equitable agreement. Analogously, in the industrial world, whether negotiations were conducted between labor and management or between a dictatorial government and a democratic one, each side compromised. The Pacific Northwest Coast Indians in pre- and post-contact times compromised. But compromise itself was not readily feasible.

Negotiation Phase Among Pacific Northwest Coast Indians

During negotiations, each side advanced many ploy (Drucker 1965:73). For example, the offended group might demand compensation which may seem too excessive to the other side or they may demand compensation far in excess of the offense in order to place themselves in a more favorable negotiating position. Also, the offended group may demand a large compensation in an attempt to embarrass the offenders who may be lacking the resources. After mulling over the unrealistic demands, both sides would resume negotiating in

earnest to arrive at an agreeable level of compensation. Another reason for pursuing excessive demands was that the offended group placed a very high value on its dead members, not because it was greedy or wanted to unfairly profit from the negotiations. Posturing also entered the negotiating picture (Drucker 1965). Clan leaders and elders of the offending group offered higher payments than what they thought they should pay—and later negotiated to a lesser and a more acceptable level—to project a wealthy and high ranking image. Another maneuver the offending group used was to offer less than the other side demanded to show its power to manipulate negotiations. Then, too, the Tlingit temperament sometimes came into play (Drucker 1965). Haughty attitudes projected by both sides resulted in prolonged negotiations. Because of this attitude, equitable solutions were difficult to reach and sometimes feuding started again.

Oratory

The foregoing elements of negotiation depict some social realities, and an important phase of negotiation needs to be mentioned. Whether it be a negotiating session, ku.eex' (potlatch), or validating observance of a change of leadership (with the opposite moiety leaders and elders in attendance), formal oratory was an essential part of negotiations. Tlingit leader and historian, Cyrus

Peck (1986), furnished a cultural ideal of the protocol of oratory during negotiations for peace:

> The chosen words must be appropriate, given in the right manner with the right approach. The orator must speak to the opposite clan according to a prepared ritual. According to Tlingit law the first actions and expressions of peace must be made with wisdom. The Peace [sic] talk is in parables and it is up to each clan to decide what is said, and what is really meant. This keeps everyone of both clans guessing. The response must be according to what the clan has decided. That is how formal it is. The speaker speaks to the assembly of the opposite side; he is the authorized person who is chosen by the clan. He is told, "You are the one we choose to speak because we agree with your philosophy and thinking, and your way of approach. We choose you." At the final ceremony the deer hostage [sic] of both sides are given an opportunity to dance and be heard. Then everything is over and they exchange hostages. [Peck 1986:43-44]

One ingredient that is missing from traders' and explorers' observations of the deer ritual is the actual negotiation that preceded the peace dance where special oratory was used. Drucker's (1965) writings on the nature of negotiations presented in this chapter were probably gleaned from general council meetings

because the negotiation aspect of the deer ritual was an exclusive occasion, a gathering of clan leaders and influential elders. Peck (1986) has given an historian's knowledge of the protocol involved in formal oratory during negotiations and also special occasions.

Some Recent Native Perceptions About Negotiation and the Peace Dance

In July and August 1998 I interviewed two elders from Hoonah, Alaska, and three Nisga.aa (Nishka) chiefs from Aiyansh, British Columbia, about the "peace ceremony" as they remembered it from oral history. During the interviews they spoke more on the dance than on the negotiating stage of conflict resolution.

Lilly White

Lilly White, speaker and historian of the Chookaneidi clan in Hoonah, (videotape 8-13-98) mentioned that when a killing took place—and according to oral history conveyed by her parents, there were many—leaders and selected elders of the clans met and discussed the pros and cons to ensure agreement on the proper way to enforce Tlingit law concerning a murdered person. According to Mrs. White, the discussion would last for days. From my perspective, the deer ceremony was already back in the minds of leaders and elders when a decision was made to put an end to confrontations by negotiating

an equitable settlement and by pledging a peace dance to end disputes. But as Mrs. White related her family's teachings, the "peace ceremony" was the decisive element that put a stop to or reduced the probability of violating Tlingit laws. It is in this vein that I have included the "deer" in the negotiating role as told by Mrs. White. Further, her version of deer selection conflicts with the accepted notion that it was an "honor" to be selected as a deer, that they were treated royally, having all their needs attended to. Instead, the Hoonah leaders and elders crafted taboos of the deer that were stringent—staying away from wives and family members, not eating certain foods, using the left hand only, not touching their person. While such variations are uncommon, they are not rare. Concerning the peace dance, Mrs. White remarks that the songs and dance differed from the Yakutat and Klukwan versions. Instead of composing new peace songs for each deer ritual that was about to take place, the Hoonah clans used their traditional peace songs. When the Euroamericans observed the singing and dancing, they were not told by the Tlingit participants the meaning of the songs and dance movements. Mrs. White, who was the only person to mention it, states that the dancers vigorously stomped their feet to symbolically bury troubles and hard feelings.

Before I note Frank See's comments, I shall remark on the customary selection of the deer, those designated as attendants to the deer, and the deer names given to them from the secondary source information I gathered. The

contesting clans, after agreeing to an equitable restitution, validated it by going to the peace dance. Before the peace dance, each contesting party selected noble persons as guwakaan (deer) from their opposites. Since those selected as deer observed stringent taboos associated with their office, daakaax'u (attendants) were chosen to take care of their needs. The clan harboring the deer gave each one a deer name derived from the deer's clan affiliation such as crests, rivers, mountains, flora and fauna, and whatever name deemed appropriate to the deer's clan and to their opposites. Traditionally, clan leaders directly involved in disputes, and for whom the deer ritual was enacted, did not actively participate. They took a back seat to the events that took place.

Frank See

The facsimile of a "peace ceremony"—deemed a "show" by Mrs. White because at the time it was performed it had diminished in importance—was held in Hoonah in 1958. Since Hoonah leaders and respected elders opposed resurrecting an archaic ritual that had receded from their memory, the deer ritual was a vague replica of the ones practiced up to the turn of the century. Contrary to the information I gathered from secondary sources about the protocol of this ritual, the adversaries, William Johnson and Jimmy Martin, were active participants, even though it was held to expunge their ill-will toward each other. That is, although they were adversaries, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Martin were also

selected as deer "to be security and insurance that there will be no more deaths" (Peck 1986:43) to a ritual held on their behalf. Conversely, two of the four daakaax'u (attendants) chosen to care for the needs of the deer were also selected as deer. So, the attendants were not only chosen to clothe, feed, bathe, and attend to the deer's personal needs, they were also selected as deer (to attend to their own needs?) to be collateral or insurance that confrontational acts by the adversaries would not resume during the peace dance.

Throughout the peace dance, which used to last from two to eight days, the deer alternately participated in the singing and dancing with the contending clans. In a bygone era, the adversaries, whether they be mortal enemies, murderers, leaders of the winning and losing sides of a battle, clan members who became dissatisfied with an initial restitution, etc., would not have taken an active part as singers and dancers. In Hoonah, the adversaries were active participants, singing and dancing to their own tune, so to speak.

Concerning deer names, customarily the aristocrats selected as deer were given deer names affiliated with their clan and moiety. In the case of William Johnson and Jimmy Martin, who were of the Raven and Eagle moieties, respectively, they were given deer names not of their moiety or clan. Mr. Martin of the Eagle moiety was given a Raven moiety deer name, Tsalxaan Guwakaan (Mt. Fairweather Deer), that rightfully belonged to Mr. Johnson's Raven moiety and clan. Mr. Johnson was given the deer name Keewaax Awteex Guwakaan

which means "Kicking in the Sky Spirit," the name of an Eagle moiety Wooshkeetan clan's site. And two attendants, Joseph Pratt and John James, who customarily would not have been selected as deer, were also given deer names, Xaat Guwakaan (Salmon Deer) and Aan Guwu.

Guwakaan

Frank See (videotape 7-27-98), a highly respected elder and leader of the Shangukeidi clan, Eagle moiety, expressed his remembrance of the protocol and practice of the ritual as it related to the one re-enacted in Hoonah. He began by stating that his recollection of the rites were based on information passed on to him as a youngster by his relatives. According to Mr. See, the selection of the adversaries and attendants as deer, the bestowal of deer names not of their moiety to the adversaries, along with the selection of attendants as deer, the bestowal of deer names upon them, and the adversaries and attendants performing the deer dance, were practices considered as being customary in Hoonah.

Additionally, Mr. See mentioned only two deer were selected by each side, not four or eight (although, scholarly writings indicate that depending on the seriousness of the confrontation, sometimes as many as four or eight deer were selected). From the information recorded by secondary sources, although the "peace ceremony" performed at Hoonah in 1958 was perceived by Mr. See to be

a customary practice, it was contrary to the protocol of the ritual as practiced throughout Southeast Alaska and British Columbia many decades earlier.

Lilly White mentioned the prolonged village meetings (negotiations) that took place to decide on proper restitution, the reason for the stringent taboos imposed on the deer, and the meaning of the dances. Frank See asserted that the selection of deer and the attendant rules of selection were customary practices in Hoonah.

Nishka Chiefs

During an interview of three Nishka chiefs, Gordon McKay, Percy Tate, and Bertram McKay, of Aiyansh, British Columbia, the Christian Supreme Being entered Nishka oral history when they spoke of the "peace ceremony." Chiefs Tate and Bertram McKay earned college degrees in education, and later degrees in Christian religion. Chief Gordon McKay is a lay minister. The foregoing information about their lifetime involvement in Christian Church activities may have had a bearing on attributing the workings of a "peace ceremony" to the blessings of a Supreme Being.

Although Chiefs Tate and Gordon McKay mentioned the ceremony, they focused more on the battles and the significance of the Eulachon Festival as a peace festival among the Indian groups in northern British Columbia and the

southern part of Southeast Alaska. Only Chief Bertram McKay explained in detail the mechanics of the ceremony.

Most of the battles fought by the Nishka that resulted in enacting the ceremony with the Tsimpshian, Gitksan, Tahltan, Haida, and Tlingit were attributed to the five Indian groups' covetousness of the Nishka's abundant eulachon resource.

Chiefs Percy Tate and Gordon McKay

Nishka Indians did not consider themselves to be warriors. The three chiefs stated the Nishkas went into battle against the neighboring Indian groups to defend the domain of their eulachon resource. Their secret weapon when engaging in battle was to marshal their forces in a united front, not as representatives of separate villages or tribes.

As the centuries passed, the Indian groups' struggle to secure the Nishka's eulachon domain gradually began to change from warfare to another form of competitiveness, the Eulachon Festival. Chief Tate mentioned that the festival, where the Tahltan, Gitksan, Haida, Tsimpshian, and Tlingit (along with other neighboring Indian groups) gathered annually to trade, share their regional cuisine and compete in singing and dancing. The festival might have also been clothed in the form of a "peace ceremony." That is, although warfare periodically erupted among the groups, the festival held a pivotal place in transforming

warlike energies to exhibiting intertribal competitiveness. The chiefs mentioned that since they had abundant food resources from the sea and the land, their autumn and winter seasons were devoted to creating new songs and dances, art work such as totem and mask carving, and ritual blanket designs which they would bring out during the festival.

In pre-contact times, warfare still existed. Chief Percy Tate (videotape 8-3-99) told of a battle with the Tahltan Athabascans that required a "peace ceremony." In their protracted battle, the Tahltan began retreating to the ice fields near their territory. The Nishkas relentlessly pursued the fatigued Tahltans for days, clubbing to death the ones that fell because of hunger and exhaustion. After they routed the enemy, the Nishka became repentant after they saw all of the dead bodies whose blood covered the ice fields.

The enormity of human destruction prompted the Nishka to compose a peace song (which is generally referred to in Nishka language as Kaawagan), alluding to the end of fighting. This peace song was sung at all ceremonies and related activities. At the start, feathers and swan's down were offered. While offering the peace symbols of swan's down and feathers, the Nishka warriors were ready to fight. If the opposing group tried to push the feathers and swan's down away, it meant they did not accept a peace offering and fighting resumed. Should the opposing group accept the peace offering, both sides ceased fighting. Chief Tate did not elaborate on how the ceremony was executed, but

rather he accentuated the meaning of the drums used in battle and in peace dances.

As a battle started, two drummers exhorted the Nishkas to fight furiously. One used a large rectangular drum and banged on it at a slow beat while the other had a smaller circular one that was rhythmically banged in consonance with a human heart beat. In every battle, two drummers set the tone of the fighting by simultaneously banging on their drums in slow and fast rhythm. The drums were strapped to the drummers' wrists. Because of its effectiveness, the enemy tried to seize the drums from the Nishka drummers. In order to do this, they would have to cut off the drummers' wrists. According to Chief Tate, this rarely happened. Drumming was also an important part of peace dancing.

When the Kaawagan (peace song) was chanted at a peace dance, the two drummers were men, which was the same as when they went into battle. Chief Tate emphasized it was men, not women, who banged on the drums during battle and during peace dances. Like other practices that changed in the ensuing generations, women became the drummers during traditional dances and they are known to lead in the entrance songs and dances of their tribe.

Chief Bertram McKay

At the time the Christian missionaries began to extend their influence throughout the Pacific Northwest, the Nishka hid their oral history, arts (totem

carvings, songs, dances, rituals, etc.) and customs "underground." It was not until the 1960s that the Nishka began to practice their traditional past. Recently, Chief B. McKay was chosen to research the history of the Nishkas. His research refreshed his memory concerning battles and peace ceremonies.

Edicts and Laws

Chief B. McKay states the Nishka first had edicts and laws in which the former served as a warning to their people and other Indian groups to conform to it. If the Nishka's edicts were infringed upon, so were their laws. The edicts served as a first step in regulating legal concerns.

Peace Ceremony and Kaawagan or Peace Chant

He reiterates the Nishka was not a warrior nation, but went to war primarily in defense of the territory which sustained their eulachon resource. His tribe practiced a "peace ceremony" before the European government came into power. During a ceremony, the Nishka sang a peace chant translatable into, and sung in, five languages of the Tlingit, Tahltan, Gitksan, Tsimpshian, and Haida, in addition to their own. It was a very sacred chant that was used for various occasions such as to give thanks to the Creator after the death of a young prince, a chieftain, or a matriarch, or during the cessation of a battle when it was sung on the battlefield. After acceptance of Christianity in the Nishka territory,

the Kaawagan (peace chant) acquired another form of sacredness. In the chant, Chief B. McKay translates God's message: "You (Nishkas) are telling the Creator, in the covenant that he gave you, that you must at all times respect his creation, and be charitable to your enemies" (videotape 8-98).

Concerning the anatomy of the ritual after a battle, both sides performed a mock encounter (twice parrying each other) before the sun sets to make things right with the Creator. The mock encounters were precarious since the defeated warriors might use knives to resume killing because the victors might have acted contrary to edicts that governed the peace chant. If the initial peace overture proceeded without rancor, the two captains (leaders) embraced after the third mock encounter. They agreed (negotiating part) to cremate the dead, and to resume trade and other traditional exchanges. Seeskw (retribution, restitution) was not a part of this type of encounter. However, when an opposing force killed women and children or destroyed villages unnecessarily, they were required to pay seeskw. Before the sun sets, the Nishka informed the opposing force that they will perform the Kaawagan (peace chant) or, stated another way, "peace ceremony," which lasted three to four days.

On the first day, in the field or pasture, the hosting village puts up two barricades, one for each side. Opposing forces will not cross the line.

On the second day, the two captains (leaders) would meet and decide on procedures. The Nishka chieftain would place his daughter in the hands of his

adversary. The other side might place a prince or some other person of nobility in their adversary's hands. The rationale for the exchange is that the daughter and the prince were not held captive but in seclusion and then returned to their tribe at the end of the fourth day.

If a chieftain does anything contrary to convention or edict while participating in the formalities, the ritual stops until both sides have resolved the faux paus.

On the fourth day, warriors from both sides dress in full battle gear and enact a mock battle to make sure that both sides are sincere. If one side is not (B. McKay did not mention how each side gauged sincerity), the battle starts again. If sincerity is demonstrated after the mock encounter, the captains (leaders) hug and then thrust their spears into the ground sticking out in circular fashion. They then tie an ermine fur (peace symbol) to a spear. The host would then exchange presents with their newly gained comrades. Inland hosts usually distributed furs while the Nishka distributed food from the sea. Chief McKay called this "retribution," seeskw, in Nishka language.

The next step, after returning the daughter and prince to their people, was for the hosting group to serenade the departing guests with songs until they reached their territorial boundaries. The departing guests would reciprocate by singing their choicest departing song for the host. The alternate singing by the two groups was additionally a way of exchanging songs. Chief B. McKay also

called this Kaawagan. The essence of the peace chant was to "honor those who have given their lives." The other message of the peace chant was, "Don't go back there [to war] again."

The three Nishka chiefs directly or indirectly mentioned that the peace ceremony was a covenant from the Supreme Being, a belief I had not come across in scholarly writings. Some time after the interviews with Chiefs Gordon McKay, Percy Tate, and Bertram McKay, I replayed the videotape to find the reason they invoked the Supreme Being, that it was God who gave them the covenant to make peace. My finding was that besides the influence of Christianity taking hold after its arrival in the Pacific Northwest, two of the chiefs were ordained ministers and one was a lay minister. Probably some time after the Christian missionaries became ensconced in the Nishka and other Indian groups areas, the need for peaceful settlements began to be attributed to a Supreme Being as part of their oral history.

Wrangell Tlingits and Nishka Indians

There were times when a "peace ceremony" did not include the exchange of deer or a performance of the peace dance that usually followed negotiations. Emmons (1991:358) mentions a Dr. A. Green, in charge of the Methodist mission in Greenville, who in 1877 witnessed one.

When the Wrangell Tlingits and the Nishka Indians of British Columbia decided to put an end to many years of forays against one another, they assembled and discussed "every question connected with their past troubles ... and the count of the killed was compiled by each side" (Emmons 1991:358). After they enumerated their losses, more Tlingits than Nishkas were found to have been killed. They sat in silence for some time, "their heads bowed, and half buried in their blankets as was the native custom" (Emmons 1991:358). After this period of contemplation and then talking the issue over, the Nishka left the assemblage to collect and bring back Hudson's Bay Company trade blankets. The Nishka "arranged them in separate piles for each life in the count against them" (Emmons 1991:358). The Wrangell Tlingits inspected the piles of blankets, discussed these offerings among themselves, and proclaimed their satisfaction with the just compensation offered by the Nishkas. The two groups negotiated a peace that has not been broken.

Summary

Negotiating a peace settlement in accord with Tlingit and other coastal Indian laws was the primary step in restoring lawful relationships. De Laguna notes that after a war, "Restitution or recompense had to be given for what had been seized or destroyed; for human lives lost an equivalence had to be surrendered" (1972:592). The amount of which was determined in council.

In returning to the general flow of negotiations, the guwakaan (deer) ritual that took place after negotiations were completed was a religious ritual or symbolically "placing a chop"—like a document that receives an official stamp or seal to an agreement between contesting groups or persons. When each side expressed satisfaction over a settlement and put it into effect, whether it be payment by blankets, lives, or whatever means each side valued, then the leaders would agree to place an official stamp on the equitable settlement by going to the deer or guwakaan ritual to validate the peace settlement. It was the religious phase of the peace settlement while negotiation was the secular one.

Evolution notwithstanding, customs, arts, beliefs, myths, legends, and even natural surroundings change through the centuries. Probably if traders, explorers, missionaries, etc. had not journeyed to the coast of Alaska, the "peace ceremony" as practiced by the Tlingits and coastal Indians would have still been practiced, but it would have undergone a gradual change. The foundation of the ceremony, negotiation, restitution, and peace dance would have remained, but new generations probably would have new justifications for its practice. As examples, the body politic that discussed how to arrive at a just payment might add different groups, such as military commanders; the exchange of guwakaan (deer) might become a mere formality, with no impact on the ritual; and the peace dance, derived from clan history (songs, dances, land ownership, moiety

and house group affiliation), might be based on popular songs and dances chosen by the negotiators.

A subsequent chapter will cite some of the changes that started taking place after the arrival of traders, explorers, missionaries, etc.

Chapter Four

Tlingit Territory and Social Organization

Moiety, clan, and house group basically comprise Tlingit social organization. The Tlingits not only identify with a certain clan but also with certain distant territories. Geographically, Lingit Aani (Tlingit Country) occupied coastal Southeast Alaska from Yakutat near the Gulf of Alaska to Dixon entrance; from inland regions along the Taku, Chilkat and Stikine Rivers of Southeast Alaska; and to the Southwest Yukon and Northwest British Columbia. The web of relations not only ties Tlingits to the clans of their moiety but also to their territory. Thornton remarks:

> To be born Tlingit means to be placed in a particular sociogeographic web of relations indexed by geographic names...linkages between the sociological and physical landscapes are expressed through place names. Although not a nation in the political sense of having a single leader or government, Tlingits recognize their distinct language, culture, and geography.
> [Thornton 1997:295-296]

According to Tollefson (1976) the base of the social organization's existence is the regulation of individual behavior, which includes, but is not limited to, matrilineal descent, exogamous cross-cousin marriages, avunculocal residence, and rank. Matrilineal descent focuses on the female line and

specifies the relationship between intermarrying groups. Exogamous marriages (de Laguna 1972, Emmons 1991, Oberg 1973, Tollefson 1976) created alliances with other groups. Cross-cousin marriages limited the choice of selective marriages to close relatives. Avunculocal residence assured a return of the male offspring to his mother's lineage. Rank placed the social position of an individual and his/her right to govern within a local clan. The social organization is the cohesive infrastructure that bonded the Tlingits.

Moiety

The symbolic strand that fastens the web of relationships of the Tlingit social organization is the moiety. Unlike clans, moieties are symbolic, that is they have no political organization or power. They exist for the regulation of marriage, exogamy, and reciprocal services (Tollefson 1976:75). Moiety means "half." Raven and Wolf/Eagle are the two moieties that comprise the Tlingit society. In the past, Crow and Wolf—still commonly used by the Inland Tlingit—have been used, respectively, in place of the coastal Raven and Eagle. Traditionally, a person married into the opposite moiety. Tlingit society is matrilineal—organized through the mother's line. A Tlingit individual is born into his or her mother's moiety, clan most of the time, and house group.

The moiety permeated the whole social fabric of the people. It was through this concept that the clans validated their leadership and crest ownership

because the opposite moiety had to be in attendance to validate their inception at a ku.eex' or potlatch. The web of relationships is illustrated by the societal affiliation of women. It placed a burden on those wives whose husbands went into battle against the women's fathers and brothers, for they were obligated to both sides. Plans of attack were kept secret from a woman because it might be her clan with whom the battle would take place. During a deer ritual she would attend with her husband although her relatives might belong to the clan with which her husband's clan was making peace. She was responsible for raising her sons until her brother (sons' maternal uncle) assumed the responsibility. She was of the opposite moiety of her husband. Yet when he went into battle against a distant group, she would observe certain taboos so he might return alive.

Marriages and ku.eex' or potlatches reinforced intermoiety alliances and through reciprocal exchanges between the moieties, strengthened the probability of social stability.

Clan

The autonomous clan, as the corporate entity of the social organization, had the power to govern itself, establish laws, form alliances, conduct wars, and make peace.

In the settlement of major disputes, the clan was an important part of the social organization because the institution of politics rested with it. Each moiety consisted of many clans. Clans comprised two or more house groups whose members acknowledged a common origin, heraldic crests, personal names and other property. Each clan had a traditional leader who was referred to under several Tlingit titles such as naa shuhani (one who stands at the head of his clan), or kaa shaadei hani or aan kaawu (one who stands at the head of men). There was no single leader for all of the clans that comprise the Raven or Eagle moieties. Instead, a hit s'aati (house master or house leader) of a house group became the clan leader. He wielded considerable influence and normally possessed the greatest amount of wealth and more numerous clan relationships than the other house group leaders.

According to Tollefson (1976) Tlingits identified themselves as members of a particular clan and not as residents of a particular geographic region. A Tlingit might consider Klukwan his home, but when asked where he came from, he identified himself not as a Klukwan Tlingit but by his clan name, whether it be Shangukeidi, Chilkoot, or other clans of that district. A different light is shed on Tollefson's (1976) remarks by Thornton (1997), who views the geographical aspect from an organizational, that is clan level, perspective. He considers origin and distribution of clan geography to be significant. "Origin refers to the location where the clan was founded as a distinct social group and is typically from where

it derives its name" (Thornton 1997: 297). My personal example of origin and distribution is the Chookaneidi clan. The historical home of the clan is in Chookan Heeni (Beach Grass Creek), Glacier Bay. Besides Hoonah, members of the clan reside in Sitka, Juneau, Kake, and other towns, although the term, Ch'a Tleix' Chookaneidi (We are one Chookaneidi) used in oratory refers to the clan's origin in Glacier Bay.

As to the names of clans, a significant element is the suffix (Emmons 1991). For example, the names ending in eidi or adi denote common stock or original clans: Chookaneidi, Yanyeidi, Shangukeidi, L'uknaxadi, Gaanaxadi. Names ending in taan usually mean clans that might have split from original ones: Teeyhittaan, Kayashkeiditaan, Deishitaan.

The clan was the central unit of social organization. Clans and house groups owned land and water use rights. That is, a clan claimed not only its particular residential site but also crest symbols, fishing sites, and berry picking grounds. The clans jealously protected their land and water rights. From Spanish ship journals, Langdon notes, "As they attempted to acquire supplies, the Spaniards had a brief encounter with the Tlingit, who brandished lances tipped with stone blades in an apparent assertion of property right to the nearby river" (Haycox et al. 1997:88). Explorers' and traders' major complaint of the coastal Indians is their thievery and little respect of property. Conversely, the

coastal Indians' major complaint of the explorers and traders was their disrespect of property rights and not making restitution for lands they usurped.

Political organization

Whereas the house groups were the primary units of production, many of the economic, political, and religious prerogatives were in the hands of the clan. Within house groups, clans, or multiclans, one hit s'aati (house group leader) was recognized by group consensus as the aan kaawu (clan leader). Other hit s'aati served on a council of elders to advise him. There were no overarching or unifying political, economic, or military organizations (Drucker 1965), probably because of the paradoxical, intricate web of relationships that cohered them on the one hand and divided them on the other. "The interweaving of family associations within the clan precluded the establishment of wider political entities" (Hinckley 1996:5). Only when the Tlingits realized they had to present a solid front—for example, confrontation with the Russians—did the clans put together an alliance with Tlingit clans from another moiety and with other Indian groups, such as the Haidas, Tsimpshians, and northern British Columbia Indians. Stated another way, "Villages could briefly unite to battle other Tlingit, however, when the campaign ended, the recent allies might start fighting each other" (Hinckley 1996:5).

Consensus

In looking at the aan kaawu as the commander-in-chief of a clan or multi-clan village, it is important to mention that he carried out his leadership responsibilities more by the persuasive power associated with his position than by the power of force or a threat of force. Before planning raids or potlatches, he normally gained the consent of, and material contributions from, other affiliated hit s'aati. Because most of the political functions were handled by the clan leader in consultation with his elders and house group leaders, essentially his house group functioned as the sociopolitical axis of the clan. The clan was comprised of house groups, or hit, whose leaders could and sometimes did acquire clan leadership by amassing considerable wealth and holding more potlatches than the other hit s'aati or house group leaders of the clan. But as a general rule, clan leadership was determined by heredity and bestowed upon the eldest nephew of the eldest sister of the house or clan leader.

Guwakaan (Deer)

Since the political arm was ensconced at the clan level of the Tlingit hierarchy, only clan leaders could initiate a peace settlement in their kwaans (districts) or between disputing clans.

House Group

A house group, hit, was the basic production unit in the Tlingit social organization (Tollefson 1976). The gathering of food (hunting, fishing, berry picking), acquiring domestic and warfare implements and tools, training boys in clan heritage and preparing them for warfare, and providing men for hunting and for warfare were some of the functions of the house group. Hinckley (1996) mentioned that Tlingits identified with their clan instead of a geographic area. At another level, Tollefson expressly stated, "Individual identity in Tlingit society was intimately connected with a community house [house group]" (1976:75). What Tollefson meant was that if a person knows which house group another belongs to, he/she knows a bit about that person. Suppose a Klukwan Tlingit asked a Hoonah Tlingit which house group he/she belonged to, and the Hoonian replied, "Gooch Hit" (Wolf House). The Klukwan Tlingit would surmise that the Hoonian is from the Kaagwaantaan naa (clan) and the Eagle Ch'aak' moiety from Hoonah. From pre-contact times to the turn of the 20th century, this information was important to understanding the web of relationships.

A representative picture of a house group's composition and roles was explained by Jonaitis:

> The house-group consisted of approximately twenty-five people who included men who were usually brothers, maternal uncles, and nephews of each other, their wives from clans in the opposite

> moiety, their young children, unmarried daughters, and sometimes, for short periods of time, their married daughters with their husbands. In this matrilineal society, a child was born into the clan of his or her mother; since it was preferable for an adolescent boy to be educated by a member of his own clan, it was common for males past the age of puberty to go and live in the house of their mother's brother. These nephews of the adult men form another part of the house-group. [Jonaitis 1986:35]

The house groups contributed material and symbolic wealth, manpower, and leadership to their clan, with the most wealthy and hence, influential, providing clan leadership.

Family

Tlingits were born into a family that had an unbroken bond with a house group and a moiety. I have left out the clan level because of a variety of complicating factors. At certain times, due to such matters as resource scarcity, quarrels, and jealousy, some clans split from their original clans and moved to another area to start their own. Families could not renounce their moiety or house group and decide to join other house groups or moiety. Their obligation to a house group and moiety was predestined and inviolable due to the intermoiety and family web of relationships that was the foundation of Tlingit social

organization. This intricate web of family relationships that wove through the Pacific Northwest Coast Indian social organizations contributed to the paradoxically stable and unstable make-up of the social organizations.

Chapter Five

Tlingit Temperament

Another facet of the Tlingit way of life that contributed to, or detracted from, stable relationships among the clans and neighboring Indians was the warrior mentality. This mentality was attributed not only to the Tlingits but also to the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians (Drucker 1965, Jones 1970). I shall call this the Tlingit/Pacific Northwest Coast Indian temperament.

A Holistic View of the Tlingit Character

Inasmuch as militant personality characteristics usually result in confrontations and disputes which must be settled through negotiations as expressed in this paper, the actors are not constantly at war or preparing for battles. Tlingits have clearly defined distinctions between such institutions as barter, gift exchange, food gift, feast, and ceremonial exchange of labor (Oberg 1973) such as house-building ceremonies—which for Tlingits was the most important event of their life (Emmons 1991). Seasonal gathering of food sources was a time consuming affair and utilized manpower resources. Time was devoted to arts, crafts, oral history, composing new songs and creating dances. The practice of yaa.a wu ne (respect) not only accentuated human relations, but respect also focused on the environment such as mountains, rivers, salmon, bear, flora and fauna, moon and stars, etc. An example of this is the first salmon

rite once practiced in Hoonah. The first salmon caught in early spring was placed in a basket of water. The clans of the district gathered to sing and dance to the salmon. The song entreated the salmon to help the Tlingits through the winter. After this rite, the salmon was released back into the sea. I have touched upon a small portion of unwarlike activities the Tlingit people performed.

From the Eyes of the Beholder

Such matters as jealousy over women, revenge for an insult, and acquisition of slaves placed the Tlingits in a constantly warlike posture. Additionally, a characteristic of the personality of the Tlingits paradoxically contributed to the Euroamerican perception that they were arrogant, ready to fight at the drop of a spear, and yet a people who obeyed the code of Tlingit laws and unyieldingly espoused family loyalty. Some of the observations made by anthropologists, explorers, traders, and others who observed what to them were peculiarities that made up the Tlingit temperament are cited below.

Through his observation and collection of information from other observers, Emmons wrote about the Tlingit's "eccentric" personality as seen from non-Native eyes. Most explorers, traders, anthropologists, etc., viewed the Tlingit as being brave, shrewd, cunning, and so on. However, Emmons mentioned a Mr. Boursin who said of the Tlingits, among other things, that "they are born liars and grossly immoral.... Theft is natural..." (1991:16). A

kaleidoscopic picture emerges. Probably the constant war environment of the Tlingit region contributed to the warrior mentality perceived by the Euroamerican mind. However, Langdon mentions acts of self-sacrifice not usually considered a part of the Tlingit mentality:

> One of the most significant and lasting effects of the Spanish expedition on the Tlingit may have been the appearance of an unidentified disease that rapidly gripped many of the Spanish crew... The journals indicated that the Tlingits brought fresh fish, water, mats, and robes to the sick and otherwise ministered to them and expressed concern for their welfare...the sailor's "recovery, like all our work on shore, was much assisted by the gentle behavior of the Indians since our occupation." [Haycox et al. 1997:92-93]

While traders and explorers were observing the "unorthodox" behavior of the Tlingit and other North Pacific Coast Indians, they were in turn being observed by Tlingits and member Indian groups:

> On the social side, the Natives probably also found Spaniards to be relatively underdeveloped in their protocol and gift-giving mechanisms. By Tlingit standards, they were uncouth and rude, in addition to being stingy. The Natives discovered that the Spaniards did not respect local property rights and were highly acquisitive,

> taking from the land without providing any recompense to the property owners. [Haycox et al. 1997:94]

Other Tlingit traits kept reappearing in early observers' journals: little fear of death, the readiness of Tlingits to offer their life in payment of a clan debt, calmly walking to their execution. Emmons (1991) gave the following example of the Tlingits' "little fear of death." Since the Tlingit Chilkoot clan (see Emmons 1991) owned the right to the Chilkoot Pass, other groups, Tlingit or otherwise, could not use the trail without obtaining permission. It happened that in 1888 a confrontation took place between Lanaat', leader of the Chilkoots and the rightful keeper of the trail, and Sitka Jim, leader of a Sitka clan, whose members used the trail without permission. When Lanaat' and his clan attacked Sitka Jim and his group for trespassing, Lanaat' was killed and Sitka Jim was badly wounded. Both were of the nobility and of equal rank. Sitka Jim recognized his error in using the trail without gaining permission from Lanaat' and causing the death of the Chilkoot leader. According to Tlingit code, Sitka Jim must balance Lanaat's death with his own. Sitka Jim went to his tent and had his relatives dress him in his traditional clan attire: "bear's ears" headdress, face blackened with coal, and war knife. Sitka Jim went alone to an open trail where he saw some armed Chilkoots approaching. He went toward them dancing and singing his death chant and waving his war knife. The Chilkoots fired and killed him, and he died

that evening without a complaint. He knew that he had to give his life for a chief's life in order to avoid reprisals to his clan.

A similar incident (Emmons 1991) took place at Hoonah when, during a drunken brawl, one Tlingit was killed by another. The killer could have turned himself over to the United States authorities, who were then lenient in punishing the Tlingits. Instead, as custom demanded, attendants dressed the killer in the attire of his class standing and his house group "colors." He walked to where the friends of the man he slew were waiting, and they killed him. He died without a murmur.

Thievery

Another alleged characteristic of Tlingit personality—thievery among themselves—was debated by Tollefson and Emmons. Tollefson (1976) points out that since the house group shared food, clothing, and equipment, there was no need for thievery, although Emmons notes: "While the early explorers speak of a tendency to pilfer, yet with their neighbors and among themselves the Tlingit were strictly honest, and the property of a guest was inviolable" (1991:16). However, in most of the journals of explorers and traders, they wrote that the Tlingits stole everything in sight from them. There is a plausible interpretation of this behavior, if it is indeed accurate. Among the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians, ceremony and honor ranked very high. If Euroamerican visitors made

no effort to show gratefulness for hospitality, Natives may have considered the omission a slight that needed to be righted. Hence, by taking the possessions of guests, presumed to be rude, the Natives may have been not only teaching a silent lesson but also redeeming their honor, which had been slighted.

Averting Violence

Although on the surface it does not seem to be in the Tlingit temperament and character to resort to unconventional—to the Euroamerican mind—face-saving means to avert violence (Emmons 1991), they did so if it was advantageous for them. An example of averting violence was for a Tlingit to destroy his own property to shame his opponent's intransigence or covetousness. Initially, such an act seems nonsensical until one understands the nature of the destruction. Not only did the person who destroyed his property gain prestige for this particular action—in the Tlingit way of thinking—but this act also freed him from the disgrace or insult of having property taken from him. Further, his opponent must destroy a greater amount of his property to save face or else he must offer a feast and compensation for his unwillingness to compromise.

Cruelty

Another trait attributed to the Tlingit was cruelty. Khlebnikov described the Tlingit's cruelty toward the Russians after attacking a Russian fort in June 1802 (Emmons 1991). The Tlingits, shouting and screaming, ran after the Russians who tried to escape into the woods. The Russians were caught, stabbed, and dragged around to make them suffer more. Then the Tlingits slowly cut off the heads of the dying Russians. The other severely wounded ones were subjected to the torture of having their noses, ears, and other parts cut from their bodies. Viewed in another way, the Tlingits' rage for the taking of Tlingit land without compensation was a probable reason for resorting to such cruel acts.

Perhaps anthropologists of the culture and personality school have an answer for the Tlingit temperament as observed by explorers, traders, etc. However, I believe there is a relatively simple answer for the rigid code of the Tlingits. Traditionally, Tlingit youths were trained from boyhood to withstand pain, hunger, fatigue, and the like, and were instilled with a very strict code of behavior toward others by their maternal uncles in order to prepare them for manhood. This training for a hardy lifestyle is one likely reason for the Tlingit temperament. However, this does not fully explain the Tlingit temperament because women, who were not trained for combat, went into battle with their brothers.

Chapter Six

Village Defense

Because of the ongoing warlike posture of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians, the kwaans (districts) and permanent villages had to be built near or on top of cliffs and other strategic places where the villagers could observe oncoming war parties and prepare to repel them. These have been cited to approximately 500 BP (before present).

Villages, Houses, Forts

Coastal villages were dispersed from Prince of Wales Island in the southern part of Southeast Alaska to Yakutat Bay in the Gulf of Alaska (Hinckley 1996). Against this setting, Tlingits and other Indian groups preyed on one another for the usual reasons: revenge, acquisition of territory and slaves, individual and clan prestige, community honor, or continuation of a confrontation that had been going on for decades because proper settlement had not been made. Under these conditions, all of the villages had to be fortified. Hinckley provides a slant on village fortification: "its purpose was essentially the same: a structural symbol of territorial ownership and a fighting theater to entertain aggressive males" (1996:4).

Noowu (Fort)

If one looks at the Tlingit names of many of the villages in Southeast Alaska, they often have the suffix noowu (fort) to them. This suffix is synonymous with most village names because, as demonstrated by the Tlingit's warrior mentality, fortifying and defending a village against attack was an around the clock affair. Village names such as Kax'noowu (Grouse Fort) on Icy Strait, and Xootsnoowu (Brown Bear Fort) at Admiralty Island, attest to the defense posture image of the villages. Because the Tlingits and neighboring Indian groups applied surprise hit and run tactics (Emmons 1991), villages were not designed to withstand intensive attacks of long duration. However, as noted by Vancouver (Emmons 1991), strategic selection of village sites near or on top of cliffs made them almost inaccessible to attacking forces. The placement of logs for a strong defense probably meant that because the villages had been subjected to numerous attacks and had withstood recurring sieges, the villagers used the location as a permanent settlement. An example of this is:

> ...at Gaaw da kaan [Hoonah] on Chichagof Island.... as late as 1880, the houses of the T'akdeintaan, Raven 16 [Emmons's listing of clans], in the center of the village, were protected in front by a stockade of heavy tree trunks, twelve feet high, pointed at the top, standing perpendicularly and strung together with heavy cross pieces on the inside near the top. [Emmons 1991:77-78]

The conventional tactic was for a Tlingit war party to optimize the element of surprise by attacking at night or early morning. However, if a flotilla of Tlingits (or Natives) advanced toward another village during daylight hours, it usually meant they were on a peaceful mission. Sometimes village leaders were not sure about the intent of an oncoming flotilla even when it advanced to the village by singing a customary song in a slow beat and paddling to that beat. However, it is possible that they knew the intent, but they wanted to put on a show to be impressive.

Bang the Drums Slowly and Travel in Broad Daylight

An example of the foregoing statement is rendered by de Laguna in her editorship of Emmons's book. She wrote an account in Emmons's book about an event that took place in 1785 when the leader or aan kaawu of a Yakutat village and his deputy approached Malaspina to alert him of two canoes that were approaching the aan kaawu's village. The village leader said he did not know whether the oncoming canoes were friendly or hostile, so he asked the Spaniards to fire a volley so that the oncoming Indians would show their intent. While the Spaniards were preparing to do so, the villagers armed themselves and the women went into hiding. After the Spaniards fired a rifle shot and let the oncoming group see them, the forty odd men in the canoes began to sing slowly and continued their advance.

The aan kaawu (Emmons 1991) looked fearful [de Laguna notes] and shouted to the oncoming group that the Spaniards were his allies. Instead of the customary speeches or harangues between leaders, some of the village men waded out to the canoes and carried the leaders to the beach and presented them to the aan kaawu, and the two groups joyfully embraced and went into the houses. According to de Laguna:

> This was not a narrowly averted fight, but the warlike, ceremonial reception of visitor, as at a potlatch, when one group of guests at the hosts' village apparently opposes with arms the landing of the other guests, invited from another tribe. [Emmons 1991:298]

Malaspina may have believed the two canoes of men could have been hostile. Since they were advancing during the day, the village leader probably knew they were on a peaceful mission.

The foregoing episode notwithstanding, the constant need for village defense among the Tlingits and other Indian groups required that their domicile not only be a place where they carried on their day to day social, economic, and political activities, but also a site that was strategically located and the houses solidly built to withstand inevitable attacks. Alternately, lookout sites could be manned that could watch over extensive territory and easily transmit information to others.

Chapter Seven

The Anatomy of Warfare

To this point I have covered the crux of settling various kinds of disputes, social organization, Tlingit temperament, Tlingit law, and other phases of Tlingit culture that played their part in the give and take of war and peace. Jones remarked, "at one time it [war] was their [the Tlingit's] chief occupation, carried on for spoils, for the love of excitement and for revenge.... In times of peace he [sic] was largely engaged in making implements for war" (1970:112).

This chapter is about some elements that molded the concepts of warfare.

Causes of War

> ...were the desire for slaves, for captives to hold for ransom, for booty, rivalry over the rights to sib [clan] crests, jealousy over women, and desire for revenge for previous killings or abuse of a helpless person. [de Laguna 1972:581]

Preparation for War

Even though I have commented on forts under the heading of Village Defense, the topic also fits into the preparation for war category, because it involved vigilant sentry duty and, upon confronting the enemy, repelling sieges from a strategic position. In this regard, village defense was the responsibility of

all villagers. For example, not only did women help load guns during an attack, they also reconnoitered (usually their own) villages to gain information, as when they lived with the Russians and they stood sentry duty on high cliffs to watch for enemy war parties.

Religious Observation

War preparation took on forms other than combat drill and tactical maneuver exercises (de Laguna 1972). Custom also required religious observations before and during the battle. These not only fell to the shaman to carry out but also to the war leader, the scout, the warriors, and even the women who remained at the village. The role of the shaman in war preparation was crucial. His clan believed that he could foresee the enemy's intentions and predict the chance for a military victory. The shaman advised and took part in the purification exercises and abstinences (hei xwaa) before the war party left, and he accompanied the warriors into battle.

General Preparation

Preparation and training for actual combat was intensive and time-consuming (de Laguna 1972), sometimes lasting for a year. The warriors had already been trained by their uncles to be ever ready for battle. Still, intensive training included daily bathing, beatings, and exercises.

It was not only the Tlingit warriors and their leaders that were concerned with warfare. For example, village defense required everyone to be alert for night or early morning attacks, women reconnoitered their area and helped load the guns, taboos were observed, and the shaman was in a crucial position.

Women's role

Although women did help in the defense of the village, planning for war had to be kept secret from them because they might—and usually did—have relatives in the enemy (husband's) camp (de Laguna 1972). The women endured divided loyalties, especially when their husbands went into battle against their brothers or fathers. In some battles at Sitka, women—because of their moiety web of relationships—went to war alongside their brothers instead of their husbands. However, this was not always the case. Emmons remarks on the wives' obligations to their husbands. The wives of the warriors who were engaged in battle met in the leaders' houses each day.

> They placed stones around to represent the canoe and sat within these boundaries in the same order as their husbands sat in the canoe, the wife of the bowman with her legs crossed, looking ahead. Suspended from their necks they wore <u>ta saate</u> <u>[te set]</u>, "neck stone," with which they scratched themselves [to relieve an itch], for if one used her fingers, the arrow or spear of the enemy

> would penetrate the same spot on the body of her husband. They blackened their faces and carefully restrained from any levity. At the supposed time that the war party would camp and eat, they ate and then returned to their houses for the night. They continued this procedure until the war party returned...[Emmons 1991:335]

Most of the time they did not actively participate in war planning. But when male leaders were initially deciding whether to go to war or select another alternative, women were often noted for inciting their men to go to war, probably as long as it was not against their clan or relatives. Women were as conscious of preserving honor and safety as the men.

The Tlingit web of intermoiety relationships created difficulties for the women. For example, in clan battles involving a woman's brother's clan against her husband's clan, she went into battle on her brother's side since they belonged to the same clan and moiety. She was also loyal to her husband and her family as shown in the preceding paragraph.

Types of Wars That Called for Ceremonial Negotiations and the Deer Ritual

The most serious wars and feuds were regional engagements, such as the Tlingit attack on the Russians at Sitka and Yakutat, Wrangell Tlingits against the Tsimpshians, Wrangell Tlingits against the Nishka of British Columbia, and other regional battles. Upon completion of negotiations after a battle, the peace

ceremony, called guwakaan by Southeast Alaska Indians, was put into play to put an official end to a war.

Meaning of War

There were different regional perceptions of war. The Yakutat Tlingits might have viewed any dispute as requiring a war, whereas in the Tlingit region from Haines to Ketchikan they might have viewed war "as hostile [battle] operations for gain .... to secure booty, to capture slaves, and very often to gain possession of basic resources..." (Drucker 1965:75). In a variation to the term, "war," Frank See of Hoonah, Alaska (videotape 7-29-98) stated the Tlingits labeled war (combat) as wooch shawduwaxicht, literally meaning clubbing each other, although they had other weapons such as knives and spears. De Laguna's (1972) informants gave their meaning of war as it applied to the Yakutat region. For example, Tlingit lawsuits over such matters as manslaughter (voluntary or involuntary) and provoking suicide, was called a "war," which meant the disputants had to arrive at an equitable settlement made official by the guwakaan or deer ritual. Now this scenario is a variation to what I stated when I wrote that disputes involving extended families were usually attended to by a naakaani (brother/sister-in-law) who, through their negotiating efforts, recommended a settlement agreeable to both sides instead of going to the deer ritual. The brother/sister-in-law also acted as messengers. Because of the

domestic aspect of a family dispute, a naakaani memorized the dialogue carried on between the distant disputants' elders. In this sense, he or she was the trusted messenger. Outside of the Yakutat region, since the scope of disputes (such as involving nobles, intrafamily, or intraclan) were not of a magnitude that required the attention of a house group or clan leaders, there was no need to initiate a guwakaan (peace) ceremony.

The War Party and Taboos

Although de Laguna (1972:583) restricted her data to Yakutat war parties, their basic configuration probably applied to other regions. War parties usually were comprised of eight to ten canoes under the command of a shaakaadi (naval officer) who sat in front of his canoe and navigated the flotilla. The x'aan kunayee was the leader of the war party. An ixt' (shaman) accompanied the party. Taboos took the form of religious ritual. Whether it be an initiate shaman journeying to the mountains to learn about his craft, house group men preparing for a hunting expedition, warriors preparing to go into battle, or a naakaani (brother/sister-in-law) supervising the guwakaan peace ritual, taboos—in Tlingit called ligaas—were observed. The shaman in a war party was the focal point in the observance of taboos (de Laguna 1972:583). During the war party's preparation for battle, the shaman fasted in order to determine when and where they would clash with the enemy. As for the warriors enroute to battle, they

observed special food taboos and wore shaman hats. De Laguna cites Swanton as noting that "The bow man fasted differently from the others....The war leader, during war time, no matter where he was, always drank from a small basket-work cup hung around his neck" (de Laguna 1972:584).

A Yakutat informant painted a graphic picture of warriors going into battle:

> When they attacked, they cried "Hu! Hu! Hu! Hu! or "U! U! U! U!" Men expecting to die uttered the cry of their totemic sib [clan] animal. It should be remembered that their totemic sib [clan] identification was further emphasized by the name and decoration of their canoes, and by the symbolic ornamentation of arms, armor, and face paint. [de Laguna 1972:584]

In the event that a surprise attack was lost, the combatants would maneuver for position and exchange insults (de Laguna 1972). The combatants were already mentally psyched for war hence, the insults were probably used to anger their opponents into making mental mistakes.

It might be that after centuries of warfare, the Tlingits learned to motivate combatants just prior or during a battle, such as devising an unencumbered chain of command that could issue prompt orders corresponding to the changing battle scene, observing taboos associated with combat, displaying their clan and house group crests, and creating the war cry "Hu! Hu! Hu! Hu!" to rouse the combatants to defeat their enemies.

Victory and Defeat

In a way, the saying that to the victor belongs the spoils was interpreted differently by the Tlingits (de Laguna 1972). Contrary to the usual written observations where the victors and the losers took a count of their losses and then either killed warriors or made payments to balance the battle losses, sometimes the defeated were treated otherwise. That is, the victors took the defeated warriors' bodies and instead of cremating them on the battlefield as was the custom, they tossed them into the water (loss of body and soul). The purpose of this act was to humiliate the survivors and not to castigate the dead, who were destined to travel to Kiwa' aa or Kiwa kaawu aani, a Tlingit afterworld up in the sky where those who died in battle or who were murdered became the gits'uk (northern lights) and there eternally played games of sport. Even at the present time, when the Tlingits look at the winter evening sky and see northern lights, they remark that it's their uncle, brother, father, and so on (those who died in battle or died brutally) playing eternal sporting games.

Customarily the victors did take the spoils (de Laguna 1972:584). They placed a value on crest objects and weapons bearing totem names, and other elements such as the rights to facial painting designs, personal names, and other valued objects acquired by killing the warriors who owned them. The victors would also take women and children as slaves. Jones adds, "The female children were killed in a manner too revolting to mention" (1970:113). Women of

the nobility were sometimes held for ransom. During a village slaughter, a house group or clan leader would prefer death to capture when he realized all of his people had been slaughtered. The victors retrieved whole heads or scalps and, when the occasion arose, the ashes of the enemy and their own dead warriors. Most of the time, the du shada doogu (scalp) was saved because it might have been easier to carry and preserve than a whole head.

The taking of scalps after a battle was practiced in many parts of the world (de Laguna 1972). As previously stated, the victors usually killed all of the men and occasionally everyone else in the kwaan district. The heads of dead men of rank and valor were cut off and taken as mementos:

> Swanton reports that these were usually scalped when the war party neared home, and that the scalps were hung up around the canoe, to be later suspended outdoors from the house beams. His informant suggested that the dead enemy would feel happy because his scalp had been taken. Swanton also reports the belief that if the scalp swung at right angles to the canoe, it was happy; if parallel unhappy. [de Laguna 1972:585]

The defeated usually attempted to retrieve the scalps of their relatives. For example, du shaadadugu that were taken during the battle between the Kaagwaantaan and the Shx'at kwaan could have been redeemed (de Laguna 1972) if relatives of the slain made a concerted effort to retrieve them, such as

making payments to the victors. A Yakutat informant explained the selection of scalp taking:

> If your enemy kill you, they cut your head off. Your spirit will be up there without a head. That's how they recognize you up there [in Kiwa.a, the sky afterworld of the slain], that you're killed because you don't have any head. That's the reason why. I'm not very high, not a chief or a chief's nephew, so they don't cut my head off. [de Laguna 1972:584-585]

Ironically, although the victors savored subduing their enemy, they knew that in due time the enemy would retaliate. The current victors may fall in the next encounter. The possibility was expected, however; it was part of the balance of life in the Southeast region. To maintain this balance, a regular part of Tlingit village defense, taboos, women's roles, balancing losses, and (sometimes) the impudent treatment of the defeated warriors' dead bodies, among other things, were part of the anatomy of warfare.

Chapter Eight

Early Account of Peace Overtures in the 18th and Early 19th Centuries

As Tlingit ceremonies were performed inside tribal houses, early explorers and traders were not privy to what went on during these ceremonies.

Peace Signals In Trade and War

The signals that Tlingits used to communicate their desire to trade with the Europeans and Americans were similar to the ones used to stop warfare and to communicate to their adversary that they were ready to negotiate a peace settlement. The Tlingit and Pacific Northwest Coast Indians sought trade with the Europeans and Americans by using:

> signals .... that peaceful trading was desired. Thus, La Perouse (1799, 1:365) at Lituya Bay in 1786, noted that signs of friendship were the "displaying and waving [of] white mantles, and different skins." [Emmons 1991:294]

This was one means of symbolic communication, and there were others, depending on varying conditions. In 1799, La Perouse observed the following:

> On occasions of high ceremony, they wear their hair long, braided, and powdered with the down of sea-fowl. [de Laguna explained that: "White bird down symbolized peace and absence of evil."] [A]nd when the chief came to visit me, he commonly paraded round

> the ship singing, with his arms stretched out in the form of a cross as a token of friendship. [Emmons 1991:295, emphasis added]

Traders noted in other regions of Southeast Alaska that Tlingits customarily stretched their arms out in the form of a cross when seeking trade or when participating in the deer ritual. Langdon notes similar accounts of peace symbols as written in the Spanish journals during the 1779 Spanish expedition when two ships came to Bucarelli Bay on Prince of Wales Island:

> Several large dugout canoes with Natives came into view of the Spanish ships. They were described as impressive vessels that approached in what was interpreted as a solemn fashion, slowly, with the rowers singing to a drummed beat. A man stood in the bow of one of the vessels crossing his chest with his arms and then extending them. He was dressed in a cloak with designs and appeared to have white down attached to his face. Other persons in the boat tossed what appeared to be down into the air above this man, and the feathers drifted over his head and onto his shoulders. [Haycox et al. 1997:89]

Whether it be traders or other Indian groups, the Tlingits living in a given area observed strict formalities when they saw a group approaching which was not of their residence. Suria described how other Native visitors were received. When village men noticed canoes coming from another district, some men would

go to the beach and "all together in unison kneel until they remain on their knees and on standing up they utter a great cry, very ugly, and ferocious" (Emmons 1991:298). They repeated the cries three times and then began to sing. Apparently, the appearance of canoes during daylight hours usually meant the flotilla was not on a war mission. The scattering of eagle down and feathers, and maybe an ermine fur on an Indian groups' mast, would indicate a sign of peace. The traders had to be on the alert as shown by Vancouver's meeting encounter with two Indian groups.

On the Alert for Trade Prospects and for Battle

At Port Stewart on Behm Canal in Wrangell territory, Captain Vancouver received the same Tlingit traders on two occasions. A week later on the afternoon of August 30, 1794, twenty-five other Indians came aboard Vancouver's ship. There Vancouver presented the leader with gifts that were accepted indifferently. The Indians returned the next day, friendlier than before and expressed a desire to trade. Both sides exchanged formalities. That afternoon a large canoe not previously on the scene neared the ship with the men singing and keeping time with their paddles. The other Indians, who were already in their canoes next to Vancouver's ship, quickly put on their war apparel, taking up the spears from the bottom of their canoes and pointing them toward the oncoming group. They paddled toward each other, making what seemed like

heated speeches. The Indians who just appeared did not seem bent on battle as the ones who were already attempting to trade with Vancouver. As the groups neared each other, they lifted their paddles and began a dialogue. When the newcomers stood up, they were armed with pistols while the other group had spears. After seemingly reaching an agreement, both groups came alongside Vancouver's ship and another confrontation began:

> ...one of the chiefs who had been on board, drew, with much haste, from within the breast of his war garment, a large iron dagger, and appeared to be extremely irritated by something that had been said by those in the large canoe, who again with great coolness took up their pistols and blunderbusses. [de Laguna: "But a satisfactory explanation was evidently made, and they all put away their arms."] [A] perfect reconciliation seemed to have taken place on both sides. [Emmons 1991:299]

One group only had spears and knives. The group with firearms was cool and confident when they came alongside the other group during daylight hours. Apparently the group with the firearms was taunting the other, because in an irritated gesture, a chief drew a large iron dagger from his war garment. Emmons quoted de Laguna: "a perfect reconciliation seemed to have taken place on both sides" (Emmons 1991:299). Most likely, since it was two warrior groups who encountered each other, the one group with knives and spears

would not forget the insult, that is the cavalier confidence displayed by the armed men. Assuredly at a later time they would fight firearm to firearm.

What I have covered concerned initial attempts by the Tlingits and Pacific Northwest Indians to trade with the Spanish. The Spaniards also (unknowingly) participated in a deer ritual as shown in the following paragraph.

Early Observations of the Deer Ritual

In perusing a Spanish journal of their trade mission to the Prince of Wales Island area, Langdon came across a description of a peace ritual when two of the Spanish crew jumped ship and apparently sought to be accepted by the Tlingit or Haida society:

> The two crewmen were then taken to separate villages, where they spent at least one night. Riobo reported that the men were kept up all night with "horrible dancing" and continuous song. These descriptions suggest that the Spaniards may have been treated as "deer hostages" in the ceremony used by the Tlingits to create a category of cleansed intermediaries as a prelude to peaceful exchange. [Haycox et al. 1997:93]

The following is a summary of events associated with the foregoing peace ritual that Langdon noted.

Ignacio de Arteaga, one of the leaders of the 1779 Spanish expedition, responded to the hostage taking of his two men by ordering an Indian nobleman to be captured and used as an exchange. The Indians holding the two men were not interested in exchanging them for the nobleman. Langdon postulates that the nobleman was Haida and the Indians holding the two Spanish men were Tlingit. In pursuing an exchange, the Spanish took about twenty more hostages, and in the process two Tlingits died. Arteaga gave presents to the dead Tlingits' relatives. The Tlingits probably recognized this action as a familiar form of peace settlement. Both sides began negotiating. Eventually hostage exchanges were completed. (Haycox et al. 1997).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Tlingit and Pacific Northwest Coast Indian ceremonialism was revised to signal a desire to engage in trade relationships. That is, when two groups who had no prior contact with one another met, each side did not know the intention and military strength of the other. As the Spaniards came to Alaska to trade, and the Tlingit and fellow Pacific Northwest Coast Indians also desired to trade, both fashioned peace and trading signals. These signals included the Indians singing slowly and paddling toward the Spanish ship during daylight while the leader tossed eagle down and feathers instead of spears, and the Spaniards offering food and drink.

Chapter Nine

International Peace Ceremonies

At some point in the constant give and take of battles, the victors and losers must seek a negotiated peace settlement because of manpower losses in battle. Even the victors could lose in the long-run if they didn't have enough men to gather seasonal natural resources. There were different levels and kinds of peace settlements. This chapter covers the battles, negotiations, and peace settlements between Alaskan Tlingits and British Columbia Tsimpshians and Nishkas.

Importance of Cross-Cultural Communication

The war and resultant peace settlements (Emmons 1991) between the Wrangell Tlingits and the British Columbia Tsimpshians and between the Wrangell Tlingits and the British Columbia Nisgaa.a or Nishka carried some compelling information from an historic standpoint. The nature of the war and peace settlements that occurred for centuries show that different Indian groups resided in adjacent or contiguous dwellings, and participated with each other in trade, warfare, and peace settlements. These groups also possessed similar social organizations, religious beliefs, art, and cross-cultural communication. More than anything else, the element that fostered these similarities was trade. For example, the Nishka's ample eulachon oil resource attracted Haidas from the

Queen Charlotte Islands, Tsimpshians from northern British Columbia, Gitksan from the inland area, Tlingits from Southeast Alaska and Yukon, and the Tahltan Athabascans from the Upper Stikine River. During the eulachon season, when these Indian groups brought their trade goods to the Nishka's domain, cross-cultural communication was a necessity in order to carry on trade among the multi-lingual groups. After the trading had been completed, they would compete by singing and dancing. They had to be multi-lingual to carry on these activities.

Likewise, this facility was necessary during warfare and during attempts at peace settlements. The confrontation between the Wrangell Tlingits, British Columbia Tsimpshians and Nishka, and the consequent efforts to make peace are presented to show the international flavor that existed.

Wrangell Tlingits and British Columbia Tsimpshians

Based on a Wrangell Tlingit informant's historical knowledge, R. L. Olson (1967:80, 81) wrote an account of the raids, counter-raids, warfare, an attempt at a peace settlement between the Wrangell Tlingits (Nanyaa.ayi and Kayaashkeiditaan) and the British Columbia Tsimpshians. This account conveys how both sides communicated their arrogance, their devotion to crest honor, their homage to the opposite moiety, their respect for the dead in battle, and their attempt at a deer ritual. Although these groups, among others, had been feuding for generations, the recurring confrontation between the Wrangell Tlingit

Nanyaa.ayi and Kayaashkeiditaan of the Eagle moiety and the British Columbia Tsimpshians, also of the Eagle moiety of their social structure, escalated when the Tsimpshians stole a carved bone box from a memorial post. This box contained the skull of a Wrangell leader named Ceddiste of the Eagle moiety who had recently died. The Tsimpshians threw the skull away. In retaliation, the Wrangell Tlingits raided one of the Tsimpshian villages. As expected, the Tsimpshian made a return raid. Then raids and counter-raids between the two groups continued for several years.

To put an end to these skirmishes once and for all, a sizable war party from four Tsimpshian villages (Gitga'ti, Waku'tl, Metlakatla, and Port Simpson) moved to engage in a decisive battle with the Wrangell Tlingits. According to Olson's informant, the Wrangell Tlingit shaman "saw" the Tsimpshian flotilla and counseled all men to prepare to fight. As the Tlingit men prepared for battle, the women and children were taken to nearby Farm Island. The next morning, the Tsimpshian war party arrived. There were so many warriors that instead of using the usual hit and run tactic, they opted for a set battle against the Wrangell Tlingits. The Tsimpshian leader, Yaxwe'xc, and the Tlingit leader, Gucx'in, belonged to their respective Eagle moieties, both claimed the Killer Whale hat crest, and both were from equivalently ranked clans. The confrontation began by the two leaders taunting each other. The Wrangell leader sat on the beach. The mouth of his Killer Whale hat was painted red, which portrayed a Tsimpshian

who had been killed, or in symbolic art "eaten" by the killer whale. In a derisive manner, the Tsimpshian leader told Gucx'in, the Wrangell Tlingit leader, to run away into the woods, implying that he was a coward. A traditional duel was in the offing. The Wrangell leader challenged him to one-on-one combat. The two were going to duel.

Meanwhile, the Tsimpshian warriors spread some mats on the beach, and began gambling to show not only their arrogance, but to let the Wrangell Tlingits know they were going to be routed. While playing their game, in loud voices they contemptuously said that when they finished gambling, they would begin slaughtering the Wrangell Tlingits. Apparently, the two leaders did not duel because Olson did not mention it again. When the battle was taken up, the Tlingits were in retreat, with one leader vainly trying to rally them.

Web of Relationships

Five Wrangell Raven moiety clans (Kaach.adi, Kiks.adi, Teeyhittaan, Teikweidi and Taalkweidi) watched the battle from their houses. As it began, and to their dismay, they saw that the Nanya.aayi and the Kayaashkeiditaan (Wrangell Eagle moiety Tlingits) were in disarray and retreating. Inasmuch as the five clans were from the opposite moiety, the Tlingit's intricate web of relationships prompted them to step into the fray. The Kaach.adi leader, noting the deteriorating situation, rallied by proclaiming to the other Raven clan leaders

that their fathers were being massacred, that they should don their battle gear and fight the Tsimpshians. The quick response resulted in the Raven clans' mounting a surprise attack to the rear of the Tsimpshians. This development changed the tide of the battle in favor of the Wrangell Tlingits and the Tsimpshians were defeated. In reference to the Tsimpshian warriors' image of casually gambling on the beach while the two leaders engaged taunts, Gucxi'n, in a bellowing tone, asked Yaxwe'xc why he wasn't gambling now.

The Wrangell leader called for the cremation of the Tsimpshean dead. The contestants then exchanged captives, who were previously confined. In actuality, the combatants were still on a war footing because there had been no peace negotiations to arrive at an equitable settlement, and there was no peace dance to validate the settlement. To provide a defensive posture after the battle, the Wrangell leader ordered his men to reconnoiter the area. They located an inlet on Kupreanof Island where, during low tide, the soft, muddy flats served as a barrier to oncoming canoes. In that area, they constructed a fort which became a semi-permanent site. Thus began a long period of stalemate hostility. Negotiations to arrive at an equitable settlement, restitution, and exchange of noblemen as guwakaan or deer, bestowal of deer names, and a peace dance had not yet been considered.

Peace Ceremony

About a year later the Tsimpshian surveyed the inlet. Not being aware of the tidal and sandy situation of the inlet, the tide changed quickly on them, leaving their canoes stranded. As the Tsimpshians jumped out of their canoes to dislodge them from the muddy flats, they were stuck waist deep in mud, in a defenseless situation. The Tsimpshian leader promptly told the Tlingit leader that his expedition to the inlet was to conclude a deer ritual. Customarily, the Tlingits were honor bound to take part in the ritual. The two groups exchanged deer (Yika'.a's and Kuda'ne'k! from the Tlingit side and Yetlgoxco'h and Klawa'nk from the Tsimpshian). The deer remained with their selectors for a year. Meanwhile, during the protracted ceremony, speeches and dances took place. The Tsimpshians gave the Tlingits valuable gifts, such as the Tsimpshian names, Ceks (Shakes) and Goxcoo'h, along with songs, dances, masks, mourning songs, and a personal name, Keet Yakw, which in Tlingit means, "Killer Whale Canoe." Normally, the victors of a battle are the losers on the negotiating front because they customarily make restitution to balance the losses of their adversary. Thus, it would seem that the Wrangell Tlingits were the ones who should make payments to the Tsimpshian to even the score, instead of vice versa. The Tsimpshian leader explained that his warriors went to the inlet to enact a mock raid before informing the Tlingits they were on a peace mission. The Tlingits thought it was a war party, that is, until they heard the Tsimpshian

leader make his peace overture after the canoes and his warriors became stuck in the mud. The real intention of this mock raid may never be known.

That the request for peace and the complicated deer ritual then ensued show the extent each side understood the other, for the ritual was immediate and sustained. Crest symbols, social organization, and the deer ritual were similar and understood by the Wrangell Tlingits and British Columbia Tsimpshians, thus demonstrating cross-cultural communication.

Tlingit and Nishka Peace Settlement

In addition to trade, another factor helps explain the origin of this cross-cultural communication: geography. According to Tlingit and Nishka oral history, after the last flood that covered the Pacific Northwest Coast, the tail end of the Tlingit clans moved north to what is now called Southeast Alaska from the Nass and nearby Skeena Rivers in British Columbia.

As with the Tsimpshians and Haidas, the earlier dwelling place of the Tlingit in British Columbia made it easier for them to communicate with the Nishkas. The move north was gradual, and the peoples who took the place of the Tlingit would have learned of their ways and vice versa. The desire to end the conflict between the Tlingits and the Tsimpshians was communicated and over a long period this goal was attained. The details of this settlement,

however, are not known. We must look to another conflict for evidence of their specific nature.

Emmons (1991) cited an account of a peace settlement between the Wrangell Shtax' Heen Kwaan (Bitter Water Tribe - Stikine Tlingits) and the Nisgaa.a (Nishka) of British Columbia. The following is a condensed version of the peace settlement that took place between the two groups. Several hundred Wrangell Stikine Tlingits arrived at the entrance of the Nass River in British Columbia to negotiate a peace settlement to the continual raids and disputes that both sides had been waging for many years. Of the thirty-five Tlingit war canoes used on this peace mission, one continued to Greensville, the principal village of the Nishka, where the Tlingit leader found the Nishka receptive to a peace overture. The remaining Tlingits followed.

Negotiation, an Equitable Concept

As practiced throughout the Pacific Northwest Coast, a council was held to determine a balanced settlement. For the computation of indemnity, both groups accounted for the number of persons they killed by marking red paint symbols on hides. There were symbols indicating the relative value of men, women, and children by gender and rank. In the case of pregnant women, they were specially marked because each woman counted as two lives. The computation showed that more Tlingits than Nishkas had been killed. For about

a half hour both groups sat in silence with their heads bowed and partly buried in their blankets as was the custom, perhaps to create an air of thoughtful seriousness as well as indeed to create an environment in which to think. Then after a brief huddle, all of the Nishka stood up, went to their homes to get Hudson's Bay Company trade blankets to make up for the greater number of Tlingits killed versus the Nishkas. The Nishka returned and sorted the blankets into separate piles. Each pile was inspected by the Tlingits, who then discussed the matter and announced that the offer of restitution was acceptable. Then with a happy whoop, both groups rushed towards each other and embraced, securing a peace that is still being maintained.

The concept of balance and restitution prevailed. Missing from this traditional "peace ceremony" was the religious ritual of exchanging deer and the singing and dancing associated with it. It seems that either the negotiations to balance losses and injuries were sufficient or the observer did not have the opportunity to see a peace dance that might have been performed after the negotiations were completed. The Nishka and Tlingit rituals and symbols of the deer ritual however, were, in any case, similar, including negotiations to arrive at an equitable settlement and restitution for battle losses. Too, it could be that the joyous rush toward one another was the beginning of the singing and dancing.

Chapter Ten

Peace Settlements Not Involving the Deer Ritual

Settlement of disputes took on several forms. Sometimes they required a feast and an exchange of gifts and at other times the exchange of guwakaan (deer). Some examples are shown here for different types of situations.

Kind of Settlement at Family and Clan Level

There are various causes for family disputes such as insults, jealousy over women, and revenge. These situations required settlement not by the usual naakaani, brother-in-law route, but instead by a revenge killing, a feast, an exchange of gifts, or other acceptable avenues to a settlement.

Insult

In Tlingit thinking, duxwei (insult) is a most offensive personal act against a man's sense of honor or sense of self-respect. It is said that a Tlingit saw insults in every form of social intercourse and he was wont to pay back a perceived insult by intending to injure or kill the perpetrator or seek an equitable settlement. For example, if an insult involved personal honor, the insulted man went to his hit s'aati (house group leader) to issue a formal complaint. If a negotiated settlement was not forthcoming, the insulted man's recourse was

revenge, which usually meant a killing. If this happened, no blood price was paid if it were known that an insult—a despicable act—had occurred.

Disagreement

Another form of settlement took place in the case of disagreements. A serious disagreement between two men from the same house group of the same moiety was normally settled by the hit s'aati (house group leader) through a bestowal of gifts. But if hard feelings still persisted between the men, a naa shaade haani (clan leader) or his designee from a neutral clan of another moiety would be selected to initiate a settlement. After some oratory by the neutral clan leader and probably a dance by the disputants, the clan leader distributed gifts to them. Should they perceive this occasion as an amicable settlement, they were expected to exchange gifts after they returned to their families. At an extended family level, the Tlingit naakaani was a brother-in-law or sister-in-law of noble birth who played a primary role in quelling family-level disputes or recommended punishments and rewards. According to Cyrus Peck, "If there is trouble in ordinary life...., no one can be the peacemaker or go-between except the brothers-in-law" (1986:42). Because the naakaani is a brother-in-law, the disputants cannot harm him, as they "have respect for his authority for he is a brother-in-law" (1986:42). If they cannot agree on an equitable settlement, then the next step may be feuds. Should feuding begin, the naakaani steps aside and

the clan leaders and respected elders take over. Disagreements among Tlingits occurred most frequently in villages at the extended family level and less so at the clan level where transgressions might result in formal warfare and settlement by the guwakaan (deer) ritual.

Clan Level Disputes Require Negotiations

Tlingit codes decreed forms of legal settlements. The concept of balance played an important part in arriving at an equitable settlement among disputants. Emmons notes, "in the matter of death, a life of equal value or a proportional indemnity (in slaves, furs, blankets, or other property) was exacted" (1991:47). If the social position of the murderer was unequal to the murdered person, another person, or two or more people of a lower social rank, might have to be killed to even the score, although they were not participants in the killing. If restitution were not made for a killing, a long-standing feud (sometimes for generations) may be in the offing. Succeeding generations remember the reasons for a feud that has not been settled.

Oberg, writing about the Tlingit social economy, notes "There are many ways of settling legal differences, but the Tlingit selected the indemnity as equal in importance to blood vengeance...." (1973:132). By indemnity, what Oberg means is restitution.

Restitution and Retribution: Evening the Score

Evening the score may be channeled through avenues not usually considered legal by the Euroamerican mind. For example:

> ...to cost the life of a clan mate by making trouble with another clan so that his life had to be forfeited to make peace was the most despicable act. The troublemaker might even be killed by his own people. His lawlessness put him outside the social order, like a slave; his reckless acts were like the crazy treason of witchcraft. [de Laguna 1972:596]

During childhood, children are taught that among the various levels of Tlingit social hierarchy, the clan is the most important because ego's mother, the mother's brother (the uncle that will raise the nephew), the matrilineality (ego is of the mother's clan), crests, songs, myths, and other values are associated with the clan. To act detrimentally to the clan is considered repulsive by all clan members, attaching a stigma to the immediate family, their in-laws, and their district.

Kakgwadeix' (Shame)

In 1891, Emmons (1991) witnessed the initiation of a deer ritual to placate bitter feelings between the Kiksadi and the L'uknaxadi, the two leading Raven moiety clans of Sitka, who took every opportunity to shame each other. Instead

of resorting to physical encounters, the clans would shame each other as a form of degradation. Although the deer ritual is not shown here, the events leading to it are presented. According to Emmons' data (1991), a Kiksadi clansman from Sitka brought some liquor to the village of Angoon on Admiralty Island for a drinking party. During the revelry, a Xootsnoowu clansman from Angoon was killed. The Xootsnoowu elders concluded that the Kiksadi were responsible for the death.

At the time of the killing the Xootsnoowu did not consider indemnity for settling this dispute. But years later they decided that the Kiksadi must make a payment, so they journeyed to Sitka to claim indemnity. Arriving at Sitka they stopped near the house of Katlian the leader of the Kiksadi clan. The Xootsnoowu leader stood up in his canoe and recounted the illegal killing and demanded prompt compensation. Katlian rushed from his house and refused to acknowledge the Xootsnoowu or accept any responsibility for the wrongful death.

When the Xootsnoowu began their journey back to Angoon, the L'uknaxadi invited them to their locale. They were going to shame the Kiksadi. The L'uknaxadi paid the debt of eight blankets, one bottle of whiskey and eight yards of cloth on behalf of the Kiksadi. By paying their adversary's debt, the L'uknaxadi shamed the Kiksadi. An opportunity arose to avenge this slight when the Kiksadi learned that a Yakutat woman had a claim against the L'uknaxadi. The Kiksadi paid the lady's claim of fifteen blankets. Since this payment by the

Kiksadi was greater in value than the one paid by the L'uknaxadi, the Kiksadi's payment placed a greater shame on the L'uknaxadi because the greater value paid by the Kiksadi was evidence they were the wealthier clan. It seems the shaming game took on a form of one-upmanship between and among powerful clans.

Another Form of Evening the Score: Respect or Kaa yaa.a wu.ne

In the daily social intercourse of the Tlingit villagers, it was not always disputes or conflicts that were uppermost in their minds. A central concept that Tlingits adhered to was that of "respect." Tlingit children were taught the meaning of the word kaa yaa.a wu.ne at an early age. Respect not only applied to people but also to elements of nature such as trees, rocks, glaciers, wind, mountains, flora and fauna, as well as the arts, religion, myths, and history. This concept carried and still carries a great deal of weight among the Tlingits. The following is a personal account of it.

As a six year old, I lived with my grand uncle, Jim Young. His Tlingit name was Kaa Ji.aas, and he was the leader of the Chookaneidi clan. During a rest period from stacking firewood, he told me to sit down, for he had something important to tell me. He told me to listen closely, for he would tell me only once. He said, metaphorically, we all carry an invisible spear and that we should be careful how we handle it. That is, we should not unnecessarily jab people with it.

This spear can be used to hurt people, keep them at bay, move them around, and control them. But we have to be careful with it. Later, I asked my parents, grandparents, and uncles as to what my grand uncle meant by the invisible spear. They told me that since it was imparted to me in a metaphorical vein, I had to unravel it myself. I was about thirty years old when I finally learned what Kaa Ji.aas tried to impart. The invisible spear is the potential power of speech. Unless we intend otherwise, we must always show respect for people. We should not hurt them unnecessarily. It took quite an interval in time for me to learn what he meant: the spear is sharp and can be used in two ways. It can produce kaa yaa.a wu.ne (respect) or its opposite, kakgwadeix' (shame).

Evening the score is normally used to respond to an injury such as a killing or an insult. Killing one's relative for despicable behavior and placing shame on another group were some of the incidents used to even a score. Instead of resorting to battle, clans competing for prestige shamed each other at every opportunity. The shaming sequence has the trappings of what is now called "one-upmanship." Use of respect is not only a social value cherished by the Tlingits, but it is also a preventative means of maintaining balance in personal relations. The metaphoric invisible spear may be used to hurt, to control, to keep people at bay, or to convey respect, as in oratory, which can take place between individuals or as a form of respectful address to an entire clan.

Chapter Eleven

Negotiation and the Deer Ritual

I have relied on Leach's definitions to distinguish my usage of the terms "negotiation" and "ritual" as they pertain to equitable settlements. He explains:

> Ritual is then usually set apart as a body of custom specifically associated with religious performance, while ceremony and custom [negotiation] become residual categories for the description of secular activity. [Leach 1968:521]

The following depicts an explicit picture in defining preliminary steps to events that take place from negotiating settlements of disputes, conflicts, and wars to validating a peace settlement through the guwakaan (deer) ritual.

The Meaning of Peace

Ceremonial negotiations (de Laguna 1972, Emmons 1991) via Tlingit law to assure equitable settlement such as the exchange of scalps, crest objects, and captives, must be agreed upon before going to the ritual peace dance. According to Tlingit code, negotiations could not begin until the killings on both sides were judged equal in numbers and rank. Negotiating was comparable to arriving at a legal decision that should eliminate the reasons for present and future conflicts. Under this procedure, the winners were the losers because an end to the battle and a search for ways to make an equitable settlement meant

the victors—who usually had fewer warriors killed—would have to select some of their people of matching rank to be killed to even the score. A balance might be achieved by way of payment to the losers with property such as copper, blankets, and slaves, if the losers agreed that the exchange equalized the number of dead. Property could be offered to redeem captives and crest objects. After this phase had been settled, the victors and the losers could select "deer" from each side and begin the Guwakaan or Deer Ritual.

In this time-honored ritual, grudges were supposed to be buried and congeniality was the watchword. However, on occasion, the Tlingits sometimes considered the ritual a continuation of conflict. For example, one of the many instances in the ongoing confrontation between the Sitka Kaagwaantaan and the Wrangell Shx'at Kwaan (or Nanyaa.aayi) clans, involved an invitation from the Sitka clan members to the clan members from Wrangell for a peace dance. While the Wrangell group began its peace dance, the Sitkans shed their peace regalia and slaughtered the Wrangellites. Lilly White (videotape, 8-13-98), a Chookanshaa from Hoonah, notes that a Kaagwaantaan clan leader named Yaakwaan paddled his canoe from Sitka to Hoonah to seek advice from his grandfather, Yaakana.uk, a Chookaneidi clan leader from the Xaatl Hit (Iceberg House) about what emblem to wear on his hat when he and his clan started to kill the Wrangell group during the forthcoming peace dance. Yaakana.uk told Yaakwaan to wear the At gawjatayi Ch'eet (sea bird) emblem. According to

White's version, Yaakwaan paddled back to Sitka, and during the peace dance he wore the hat when he and his clan began attacking the Wrangellites.

Another form of peace settlement is splitting from the parent clan or destroying one's own property to show that not all confrontations require the guwakaan or deer ritual. The disputants might suspend hostilities or a group may join the more powerful one. A powerful clan coveting another region with abundant resources may just purchase the region. Or one side may begin killing the other even during a peace dance.

It may be difficult to relate the foregoing peace proceedings and episodes, but as stated by de Laguna (1972), peace does not mean that fighting ceases or that one group surrenders. Peace meant restoring relationships and providing compensation for injuries—which sometimes took generations. Over time the compensation may no longer be acceptable, and lengthy negotiations would again be required.

Preliminaries to the Deer Ritual

The leaders relied on the naakaani (brother/sister-in-law) to perform many functions. During personal or extended family disputes, naakaani was either the messenger who carried the dialogue between leaders or was called upon to

listen to complaints and, based on the naakaani's judgment, make recommendations to the leaders. Most of the time, attempts at the peaceful settlement of disputes were performed by the naakaani:

> that is, men [and women] who were married to women [or men] of the clan they were to represent....[N]aakaani in time of war should not belong to either clan that was involved in the trouble. [de Laguna 1972:593]

De Laguna (1972) also indicates that it was the brother/sister-in-law's duty to determine the indemnity demanded by the aggrieved group, relay the information to the other side to secure an agreement, arrange for the exchange of guwakaan, search for weapons (to prevent their being used) when the contending parties entered the clan house where the deer ritual was to take place, and supervise the guwakaan's ceremonial dances. In a deer ritual, the naakaani's position was almost as responsible as that of the guwakaan, who were chosen to insure that neither side resorted to violence.

Responsibility of Conducting Deer Rituals

At Yakutat, deer rituals were held only between clans of the opposite moiety, whereas in the southern region, clans could hold the deer ritual within their moiety or with the opposite moiety (de Laguna 1972).

The Guwakaan (Deer)

Since a guwakaan (deer) is perceived as a gentle animal that does not prey on other animals, it seems that in ancient times the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians chose it to be a symbol of peace. Ultimately it assumed a central role during the deer ritual practiced along the coastal lands of British Columbia to the southern end of the Gulf of Alaska.

Hostages

When the disputants agreed to a settlement of claims formulated through negotiation under Tlingit law and decided to validate it by staging the deer ritual, both sides exchanged hostages who, before the deer ritual began, became guwakaan (deer). The presence of these symbolic signs of peace from opposite sides helped in an attempt to avert violence during the ceremony. It should be kept in mind that the terms hostage, deer, peacemaker, peacekeeper, and other names were interchangeable, i.e., writers and Native groups were referring to the deer. The selectees must be of noble birth and, if possible, related to the opposite moiety. According to Euroamerican observers, being chosen to perform as a deer was considered an honor (de Laguna 1972, Emmons 1991, Olson 1967).

An antithetical version of the role and it's being an honor was stated by Lilly White from Hoonah during a video interview about the peace ritual. She

said her mother told her that in order to put a halt to the kaxeel' (trouble) the clan leaders and elders devised stringent taboos for the "deer," pertaining to such matters as food, clothing, speaking, caring for one's self, and using the left hand only. Those considered as deer were most reluctant to perform the role because of the rigorous taboos. According to White, the villagers thought twice about breaking Tlingit Law since they might be the ones to assume the role of a deer, a role they were reluctant to perform. So from the Hoonah version, being selected was not an honor—it was an obligation to be avoided if one could.

Depending on whether the disputants who were going to hold the deer ritual were from the same kwaan (district) or from another island, or whether indemnity was demanded, the ritual of hostage taking took on various forms. In the southern part of Southeast Alaska, for example, on Prince of Wales Island, those selected to be hostages were taken in a mock battle; in the Haines/Klukwan area, the clan leaders named the hostages from the opposing side. In arriving from another district to a village by flotilla, the clan leader desiring a peace settlement made a speech from a standing position in his canoe and, after citing the wrongs suffered by his clan, noted the names of the noblemen he wanted as hostages. While editing Emmons's manuscript, de Laguna added a Yakutat version of hostage taking:

> The peace hostages were taken in a mock battle, and were carried, feigning death, into the house of their captors. Here the whole

> ritual of growing up was enacted, from helpless babyhood when they had to be fed, to the restrictive taboos and magical exercises reminiscent of a girl's puberty. [Emmons 1991:352]

Olson describes selecting a guwakaan (deer) in Klukwan. The selection process involved a sequence of ceremonial steps known to us from Klukwan in a specific deer ritual (Olson 1967:81, 82). These steps form the foundation of the sequence listed below.

a. At Klukwan, a Gaanaxteidi clan nobleman (Raven moiety) was killed by a Kaagwaantaan clan member (Eagle moiety). Under the supervision of a neutral clan, the Kaagwaantaan paid 3,000 blankets in compensation. Then a peace ritual began in which armed men from the two clans formed outside the house of the neutral clan, and both sides marched in, one clan on the right and the other on the left. Although the settlement had been paid, there was still tension between the two. After the clan leaders made their speeches, they sang while marching out of the neutral clan house. The Gaanaxteidi sang several war songs while pretending threatening gestures and handling their weapons as if in battle. When its turn came, the other clan did likewise. During this display, the participants wore black war paint and were dressed for war.

b. After this sequence, the Gaanaxteidi spokesman informed the Kaagwaantaan which noblemen they wanted as deer. The person

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selected surrendered his weapon and stepped forward. Men from the neutral clan seized him and twice turned him counterclockwise (sunwise), giving a prolonged "waaa!" while doing so. Then they carried the deer into the house. The Kaagwaantaan went through the same process. When the deer were escorted in to the clan house, both clans marched in, singing a war song and firing their weapons. Men from the neutral clan removed the black (war) paint from the deers' faces and replaced them with red (symbol for peace) paint. The clan leaders gave each of their hostages dressed skin costumes, which could not be black in color.

c. These deer were given honorary names appropriate to their clan, geographic area, and crest symbols.

d. The Gaanaxteidi men and their wives sang first because it had been a member of their clan who was killed, and their deer made a turn counterclockwise. After the song ended, the members of the Gaanaxteidi wept while the Kaagwaantaan sat with their heads bowed and their hands crossed over their chests. The Gaanaxteidi sang more songs, and during each one the deer slowly turned counterclockwise.

e. After the songs were completed, it was time to present the deer with a symbolic article of peace. The Kaagwaantaan called the name of one of the deer Goon Guwakaan (Sweet Water Deer), and he answered with a "he+." The attendants gave him an eagle tail fan. After this process was

repeated with the other deer, they sang and danced, joined by the Gaanaxteidi men and their wives.

f. Next, the Kaagwaantaan clan leader shouted the name Shaa Guwakaan (Mountain Deer). The performances were alternately repeated. Then each clan's members went outside and again marched in, and the singing and dancing were repeated.

g. After the selectees initially went to the other side as deer, they were symbolically changed. The change followed this pattern. The first three fingers of the right hand were laced together because it had been the right hand that caused trouble. Eagle down was placed in their hair. They were given a flat, hard rock or rubbing amulet with which to scratch themselves or wash their mouth (they could not touch any part of their body with their hands). As the symbol of peace, they wore two eagle feathers, guwakaan t'aawu, in the shape of a V on their heads. The deer name they were given was the one with which they were called during the eight days of singing and dancing. This name they could keep after the ceremonies were over.

h. The ceremonies lasted from four to ten days, depending on the region and whether the negotiations called for an indemnity. If a ceremony lasted ten days, the deer were kept only eight days by their selectors.

i. Beyond the taboos already listed, there were more. It is supposed that the taboos were designed to insure peaceful behavior by the deer. The deer had about two daa kaax'u (attendants) to take care of their every need. The attendants were with the deer of the same gender twenty-four hours a day. Since the deer were forbidden to touch their heads, the attendants combed their hair. So that the deer would not cause trouble by speaking out of turn, every morning before the raven called they had to rub their mouth with the amulet; the deer could not eat beach food (shellfish, seaweed....), bear meat, fresh fish, rice, and so on. Spouses were not allowed to be near the deer during, and sometimes for a period after, the ceremonies ended. The deer were watched not only by the attendants, but also by the villagers, and if they made a mistake in action or speech while they went through their daily routine, the attendants would shout "waaa!"

The ceremonial dress, symbolic change to deer, and taboos were about the same through the Pacific Northwest Coast region.

In the Tlingit language, guwakaan kuwdzitee means a deer is born. This is a signal by the disputants to enact a deer ritual as recompense for wrong deeds. It might be that centuries ago attempts at negotiating a peace settlement failed because disputants renewed their confrontations if one side deemed a proposed payment unacceptable. It probably took centuries to develop a

formula that would reduce an excuse to go to arms while negotiating agreements. A formula was devised whereby two, four, or eight noblemen/women were selected and exchanged by the opposites. A deer ritual cannot be effective until both sides have agreed upon the selectees, whose presence in the enemy camp provided security and insurance that a proposed solution is agreeable and carried out by both sides. After an agreement is reached and compensation is made, the peace dance begins. Up to this point, what I have mentioned is a cultural ideal. On many occasions somewhere along the way, equitable agreements, restitution, and a peace dance fell through. Sometimes when one side did not like the noblemen/women offered as deer, those that were offered were killed. At other times, after reaching an equitable agreement, taking part in the process and concluding the deer ritual with a peace dance, one side may decide that they were not given an equitable share, and disputes would flare up again. The same antagonistic groups may have tried for decades to put an end to their confrontations, but there was interference, such as killing the other side during a feast or clubbing the dancers during a peace dance. This was the social reality of the deer ritual.

Eight Nights of Dancing

The ceremonial number eight (de Laguna 1972, Olson 1967), which was formerly used to signify the normal number of days the singing and dancing

would last, came from the "eight long bones of a human being's upper and lower arms and upper and lower legs." The place where the ceremony would be performed depended on the region's traditional custom. In Klukwan (Olson 1967), the disputant clans marched into the neutral clan house with one clan leading the first time and the other clan leading the next time. The bereaved clan (Gaanaxteidi) sat on the east side of the house (where the sun rises) to symbolize the coming of a new day of peace, and the Kaagwaantaan clan on the opposite side. The singing and dancing were alternately performed throughout each day and night in this one clan house. In Yakutat, on the other hand, the disputant clans used their own clan houses during the eight days and only came together in one house for the final dancing night.

The dances and songs varied regionally. In Yakutat (de Laguna 1972), the dancers entered the clan house dancing as if in battle: waving dance paddles and stamping their feet wildly. Next, the deer with their faces painted, wearing two eagle feathers on their head, and wearing button blankets, entered with their attendants. The deer stood with their faces to the wall, flanked by their attendants. They remained that way until each one sang a family or tribal song. Then they turned counterclockwise to face the people and started dancing.

The Klukwan version (Olson 1967) had a variation to the foregoing entrance theme:

a. When the Kaagwaantaan entered the neutral clan house, they sat on

the left. Then the Gaanaxteidi,preceded by their wives and a drummer, entered. The men sang some songs and danced peace dances. The deer repeated the songs and dances they had performed the previous day when they were given the eagle fans.

b. At the end of the deer performance, the Gaanaxteidi twice shouted a prolonged "waaa" and passed the drum to the Kaagwaantaan. After the Kaagwaantaan exited the clan house, the Gaanaxteidi removed their dance costumes and the Kaagwaantaan donned theirs. The Gaanaxteidi reentered the clan house and sat down. Then, in the following order, the drummer, the Kaagwaantaan men, and their wives marched in to try to outdo the Gaanaxteidi in singing and dancing. After this presentation, the deer danced again.

I contrast the Klukwan version with the Yakutat peace ritual (de Laguna 1972). The Ch'aak' or Eagle moiety Tekweidi's wives, who were of the L'uknaxadi, Yeil or Raven moiety, seated on one side of the house, stood up, and while jumping up and down, they joined in with their husbands' singing. The women were referred to as kaa x'usi shaawu (wives of the men's feet).

Similar rituals were performed on the third and fourth day. At the conclusion of the songs and dances of the fourth day, all stood up, and the deer of each side were held in the air. Then the following occurred:

a. The Gaanaxteidi began to sing, and the Kaagwaantaan joined in,

singing their own song. The aggrieved clan, which sang first, was customarily seated on the east side because the sun rises from that direction.

b. After the singing, the deer were held in the air while the clans marched out of the clan house and made four counterclockwise circuits of the house. The deer were held in the air because it was taboo for them to touch the ground. The counterclockwise circuit denotes the direction the sun rises and sets. The number "four" denotes the directions north, south, east and west. Upon completion of the counterclockwise trek, those who were holding the deer in the air returned them to their own clan. This concluded the symbolic role of the deer as a central focus of the ceremony.

c. Meanwhile, at the neutral clan house, the Gaanaxteidi marched out and the Kaagwaantaan did likewise. This ended the ritual.

The Yakutat version ended as the disputant clans and their deer came together for a final dance. They called this wooch neilde gaxtu.aat (we will meet in the same house). According to de Laguna, it was not clear whether the final dance was on the eighth or ninth day. Since each used its own clan house for the ceremonials, the clans went to one another's houses with their deer for the final dance. While the clans sat on opposite sides of the house, the deer faced the wall. The deer danced alternately, turning three or four times, and then they

went to their own clan's side. A feast followed, and the neutral clans were invited to the peace ritual, as well as the house groups which invited their opposite moiety to the feast. The end of the ritual also marked the lifting of taboos, called ligaas kawudzik'e hooch' awe (everybody is free).

The peace dance of the deer ritual validated the negotiations that resulted in an equitable peace settlement.

Changes to the Peace Ritual from the End of the 19th Century To the Early Part of the 20th Century

At the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century, elements of the peace ritual began to shift for many reasons, such as Alaska's changeover to U.S. ownership, diffusion, availability of Western apparel, and failure by elders to remember specifics of the ritual because the people had no need to perform the ritual. The traditional apparel of the guwakaan (deer) began changing. De Laguna in Emmons' book cites some of the changes that took place at Yakutat. She notes the L'uknaxadi clan used the American flag because "it aroused elevated feelings" (Emmons 1991:600). Customarily, deer names were associated with clan crests, geographic area, and important clan affiliated objects. However, de Laguna reports that the Shangukeidi clan gave common and unrelated deer names like Xanas' Guwakaan (Fish Rack) and Dei Guwakaan (Trail). Even the esteemed symbol of peace, the guwakaan t'aawu

(two feathers) that stood up like a V on top of the deer's head were later "made of silver, incised with the crest or crests of the donors" (Emmons 1991:600). De Laguna adds:

> When Qedluaxtc, a L'uknaxadi man, was a hostage in the Cankuquedi [Shangukeidi] Thunderbird House in Dry Bay, 1902, he wore two white feathers attached to an ermine skin and a white handkerchief on his head, big earrings of shark's teeth, and a button blanket. When Mrs. Situk Jim,...was a "deer,": she wore a black Navy "handkerchief" tied around her head, two silver feathers fastened to the middle of the ermine skin across her head, and a purple-red Hudson's Bay cockade, sticking up at the back. [Emmons 1991:600]

Traditional ways of doing things started to change as the peace ritual began to lose its place in the judicial scheme of things.

The formal selection of deer and the role they played in the peace dance changed somewhat. In Yakutat, as told—in his words—by an informant to de Laguna, the last "war" and peace dance was held in 1911 when a drunken man killed himself after he discovered he killed his wife:

> First they had war, then peace dance. War was not real. Both Eagles and Ravens blackened their faces as in the old days, and met each other with guns. They pretended to fight by shooting

> over each other's heads. Then the Eagle side grabbed a Raven man and took him to the community house. That was the beginning of the peace...The other tribe had met to decide who to take. They got someone of the same rank and grabbed him. In this case it was an Eagle woman, mother of the murdered woman, and they took her to the Raven house...They have a good time. Dances went on in each house for 4 days, at the same time. Each fellow imitated what he wanted—used different masks. Had lots of fun. It was the best fun I ever seen. At the end they exchange deers. [Emmons 1991:604]

The changes I noted in the preceding account are these: there was no mention of the kind of settlement the families agreed upon, the mother of the murdered woman was selected as a deer (it seems she would have been the last person to be selected because it was her daughter who was murdered), clans of the Eagle and Raven moiety then "had a wonderful time," and then they exchanged deer. Formerly, the selection of deer followed an equitable settlement, which in this case happened to be the mother of the murdered wife, and after four nights of dancing, deer were exchanged. Deer were customarily exchanged before the peace dance began. When the informant said "and then they exchanged deer" (Emmons 1991:604), he probably meant the deer were returned to their own group after the conclusion of the dance.

After the Alaska Native Brotherhood was formed in 1912, the organization tried to bring two warring clans together. They did not succeed. The U. S. Government intervened and a "final" peace treaty between the Sitka Kaagwaantaan and the Wrangell Nanya.aayi [Shx'at Kwaan?] clans—who had fought one another for ninety plus years with some attempts at peace settlements in between—"was signed on the day before the United States entered World War I" (de Laguna 1933:744, Emmons 1991:329). Although there was government intervention before, such as when Captain Beerdslee mediated Tlingit disputes, there had not been such an active part taken in settling them.

Traditionally, disputants were not also selected as guwakaan (deer) during a deer ritual because they were the reason negotiations for an equitable settlement and a peace dance were being held. That is, clan leaders and elders or a neutral clan met in council to negotiate a settlement for the contending group. After a settlement had been agreed upon, a peace dance was held to validate the agreements. When the deer ritual was beginning, clan leaders and elders representing the disputants selected deer from the opposite side to insure the ritual was carried out in good faith. But during a deer ritual held in Hoonah, Alaska in 1958, the two disputants, William Johnson and Jim Martin, were also selected as deer to a ritual that was initiated to validate an agreement to put an end to the hard feelings they had toward each other. The clans involved may have added that variation to the role of the deer. Because the U. S. Government

assumed judicial functions at the turn of the 20th century, there was no need for the villages to continue their judicial practices. Before the Hoonah clans decided to revive and utilize the deer ritual, many leaders and elders objected to it, contending that the ritual had already been defunct for a couple of generations and the state and federal governments have a judicial system to settle legal matters. Nonetheless, a peace ritual was held. An informant mentioned that it was for "show." The disputants did cease their confrontation, although some regret and anguished feelings still linger by relatives of the men and a spouse who were close to the disputants.

Modern Peace Rituals Have Occurred

A video titled Haa Shagoon manifested the concern of the Chilkoot Tlingits for what they perceived as a trespass by the state government on their traditional land. The video captures a modified "peace ceremony" to get the government's attention:

> Austin Hammond and other Tlingit elders in documenting a day of Tlingit Indian ceremony along the Chilkoot River in 1980 of Tlingit prayer, oratory, riddles, singing, and dancing in the context of actual ceremonial performance. It culminates in the peace ritual, performed both as a cultural event and as an appeal for justice in

the struggle of the Tlingit people against the exploitation of their tribal lands and water. [Chilkoot Indian Association 1980]

Then toward the end of the 20th century (1990s), the village of Angoon held two modified "peace ceremonies" with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act corporations, Shee Atika of Sitka and Goldbelt of Juneau. These rituals concerned the selection of timber land by the two corporations on Admiralty Island, home of the Angoon Tlingits, and the ill feelings aroused among the groups involved. The peace ritual consisted of oratory, dancing, a feast, and media coverage. The other ingredients of a peace ritual such as selection of deer, giving of deer names, and so on, were not used. Still, even the greatly modified version of the ritual served its purpose as the two corporations and the village of Angoon agreed to settle their differences and seek a just solution.

Many Tlingit leaders and respected elders are reluctant to talk about the deer ritual, either because it has ceased to play an important part in settling disputes or they do not know the mechanics of the ritual. Nevertheless, as the foregoing examples show, modern versions of the peace ritual have been enacted to convey to the establishment its encroachment on traditional salmon streams and burial grounds (Austin Hammond's peace dance), U.S. Government intervention (Sitka Kaagwaantaan and Wrangell Nanya.aayi - Shx'at Kwaan? clans), and the Angoon clans' invitation to the Shee Atika and Goldbelt Native corporations to cease altercations and work together. These examples suggest

that the deer ritual remains symbolically important, although many elements have changed.

Chapter Twelve

Speculation Concerning the Origin of the Guwakaan (Deer) Ritual

Since the Tlingits who were knowledgeable about the origin of the Guwakaan ceremony died many decades ago, scholars and Tlingit historians can only speculate about its origin.

Mythical Origins

Numerous origin theories have been presented, but only in a speculative sense. Rosita Worl reports learning from an informant that the "first peace ceremony among the Tlingit was held in Hoonah with the 'Tree People'" (1994:71). Worl mentioned that a clan or group of people from the south originated the ceremony. She mentioned that the "Tree People"—who were not Tlingit—introduced the ceremony to the Tlingits, but whether "they were real humans or spirit people is not known" (1994:71). Consistent with mythical narratives, the peace settlement began in the supernatural world. Worl writes:

> The first peace ceremony was held between a brown bear and dog salmon. To record his promise that he would no longer bother the dog salmon, the bear painted red stripes on the dog salmon. The dog salmon retained the red stripes that appeared when he entered fresh water, but the peace was obviously short-lived since the bear

> continues to feed on the dog salmon. However, after this period, red became a symbol of peace. [1994:71]

Brown bear and the dog salmon show this to be a mythical narrative. I could not find the source of the brown bear and dog salmon story, and it seems that the "Tree People" story is from mythical times as well as from someone in Hoonah. However, the Hoonah elders that I asked do not remember an account of the "Tree People."

There may be some credence to the reference about the ceremony beginning in the south (British Columbia?) and moving north.

Guwakaan Ritual is Basically the Same From Yakutat to British Columbia

It appears that the Guwakaan ceremony has been practiced for thousands of years, as exemplified by the dance ritual, the symbols, and the taboos being essentially the same among the Tlingits from the Yakutat region to the Nishka and other Indian groups from northern British Columbia. Based on constant contact with each other over the centuries through trading expeditions, warfare, intermarriage, and the like, these three groups not only learned one another's languages but also similar songs and dances, crest symbols, and social organization. Their interaction and these similarities generate similar cultural traditions.

Tlingit's Move Northward From the South

The Tlingit migration from British Columbia to the north is supported by Tlingit oral history as told by some village elders who, when asked to point out their clan historic sites, mentioned that after the "flood," the Wooshkeetan and Shangukeidi clans of the Eagle moiety moved to the Auke Bay and Haines/Klukwan regions, respectively, from British Columbia. Frank See, a highly respected leader, mentioned that the Shangukeidi clan was from Vancouver, British Columbia. The Haines Shangukeidi clan's totem pole, which bears the Xeitl (Thunderbird crest) is similar to the Vancouver, British Columbia Shangukeidi clan totem pole, with its Xeitl (video recording on July 27,1998). During the move of the Tlingits northward, they may have taken the "peace ritual" from British Columbia with them.

Chapter Thirteen

Conclusion

Before the turn of the 20th century, the Pacific Northwest Coast Indians' deer ritual played an effective role in the administration of justice among the regional Native groups. When the United States and European governments assumed control and rule of indigenous Natives, reliance on the deer ritual began to diminish—sometimes gradually, sometimes abruptly. Since the ritual ceded its judicial clout to Western and European powers, indigenous people ceased to rely on a judicial arm that for many centuries provided guidance, and its loss of power removed it from its place in Native governance and oral history. Thus, because it ceased to play a pivotal role, the protocol and mechanics of the ritual and its significant place in social intercourse was withheld by the elders from subsequent generations. The skeletal foundation (negotiation, restitution, and validation by a peace dance) of the ritual remained intact until around the 1920s when only lip service was paid to the remnants of it. Acculturation into the Western world and abidance to Western and European rule touched and changed the fabric of the Pacific Northwest Coast Indian culture.

Even though the Natives began adopting Western values which at times placed traditional Native customs into a secondary role (such as the house group's primary function of gathering food sources, hunting, fishing, and providing manpower for clan purposes for its members), the loss of the clan's

political power, the diminished attention to convey oral history, and the adoption of Western ways impacted more on the deer ritual because it lost its significant role and place in oral history.

When the practice of the deer ritual ceased to play an effective role in the Natives' judicial system in the early 20th century, knowledgeable elders rarely mentioned the vital role the ritual played when they recounted and conveyed oral history. Sporadic attempts were made at reviving the ritual. The last formal deer ritual held in Angoon was in the 1930s. A facsimile of a ritual, of which a knowledgeable elder remarked was put on "only for show," was held in Hoonah in 1958. Sporadic revival of the deer ritual shows that only remnants of it are remembered.

There are some reasons why the ritual receded from oral history accounts while other traditional customs are still a part of oral history. Present day historians, including house group and clan leaders, have forgotten the mechanics of the ritual. During interviews held in Hoonah, Juneau, and Klukwan about what comprised a deer ritual, interviewees usually had two standard replies, "It is sacred, we should not bring it up," and "It is religious, we cannot talk about it." It seems to be another way of saying that they have forgotten many aspects of it, so the replies were couched in its "sacredness" or its "religiousness." Most elders frankly stated they were not told about the mechanics of the ritual, thus they had no knowledge of it. Besides three Nishka

chiefs from British Columbia, two Alaskan elders consented to an audio-video interview. One mentioned that what he knew about the ritual was passed on to him by his parents. He had not actually observed a traditional ritual until a facsimile of one was held in Hoonah in 1958. The other interviewee, a highly respected Tlingit historian, remarked that her parents and village leaders imparted the history and mechanics of the ritual to her. Three Nishka chiefs from British Columbia recounted from oral history the practice of the ritual. With the exception of traders and explorers' log books and anthropological papers, there is a dearth of primary sources of information about the ritual at the present time.

Inasmuch as most of the knowledge concerning the ritual has receded, some concerned Native leaders of recent times have subscribed to the ritual's once efficacious role by reviving the rites in a different form to contest and correct state and federal neglect of the Natives, and to open a forum for discussing disagreements and seeking equitable solutions. For example, at the behest of Austin Hammond of Klukwan, Alaska, the Chilkoot Tlingits held a deer ritual to highlight and correct the state officials' destruction of Tlingit burial grounds and encroachment on traditional salmon streams in the Haines/Klukwan area. Another present day utilization of the ritual was when Angoon leaders met with Goldbelt and Shee Atika Native corporation executives to cease altercations over timber rights on Admiralty Island, home of the Angoon Tlingits. Another avenue highlighting Native grievances is the marshaling of forces to battle

injustices and attempting to improve the Alaska Natives' lot in the form of regional and village Native corporations, Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood camps, Alaska Federation of Natives, Tlingit and Haida Central Council, and village advocacy groups. The spirit of the ritual prevails.

The foundation of the judicial arm of Pacific Northwest Coast Indians governance known as the deer ritual or peace ceremony contributed to social stability for many centuries until the assumption of powers by the Western and European governments. When the ritual ceased to be the hub of Tlingit and neighboring Indians' laws concerning property rights, compensations for legal violations, reestablishment of equity, and resumption of lawful relations because its purpose for existence was usurped, it faded from the Tlingit and neighboring Indians' cultural scene. It was infrequently mentioned by elders when they conveyed Tlingit history to subsequent generations. Some efforts at conducting the ritual were made in recent times, but with little success. This did not mean that it became defunct. On the contrary, it is still a viable force with Native organizations and clan-related groups using the Tlingit and neighboring Indian's laws of respecting property rights, compensating for wrongs, and aspiring for equitable treatment.

Appendix I

Some Symbols Pertaining to the Meaning of War And Guwakaan (Deer) Ritual

Similar symbols were used in battle and in peace ceremonies from northern British Columbia to Yakutat in the Gulf of Alaska.

Black paint - The color was painted on objects and persons when in warfare mode. War paint.

Deer names - The names were derived from some valued possession of the captors, including their crests, that might symbolize goodwill.

Eagle down - Used to indicate peace overtures by blowing them or by placing them on a headdress during initial meetings with Euroamericans and during ceremonial dances. When a dancer came in front of a leader during his performance, he shook his head to allow the down to fall on the leader. This practice was a sign of respect.

Eagle feathers - A symbol of peace with the guwakaan t'aawu (two feathers) standing up like a V at the top of the deer's head.

Eight - This symbolic number comes from the number of long bones of a person's arms, thighs and calves.

Extension of arms in the form of a cross - Another form of peace symbol.

Green bough (tree branch) - Another peace symbol.

Guwakaan (deer) - Before a Guwakaan ritual begins, Tlingit persons of noble birth are selected by the opposing clan as a symbolic deer and remain with the opposite clan until the end of the ceremony. This act is a safeguard to avert violence. The deer was the symbol selected because they were perceived to be gentle, non-violent animals that do not prey on other animals.

Number four - Indicates the four corners of the earth, or the directions: north, south, east, west. Used in rituals.

Red paint - Color of peace from the red stripes on the dog salmon in the story on the origin of the deer ritual.

Right hand - Guwakaan used the left hand because the right hand causes trouble. To insure that the right hand was kept idle, the fingers were laced together with a cord.

Rubbing amulet - The guwakaan was forbidden to scratch himself with his fingers, for this action would result in "agitating more war." The deer were given a flat hard rock, or rubbing amulet, with which to scratch himself.

Slow song - Singing a song with a slow beat, as when a flotilla approaches a village other than its own; indicates peaceful intentions.

Some peace symbols - The sign of peace was the display of white feathers on a pole or in the hand, the picking of bird's down and blowing it in the air, or

the carrying of green boughs in the hands. In later years a white flag was displayed.

Sunwise - East to west (counterclockwise). A ceremonial act when a person turns around or when a group marches around an object.

Taboos - War

The taboos observed in preparation and participation in hunting and warfare were similar. The following are excerpts taken from authors whom I have referred to in this paper.

Food - The shaman prolonged his fast in order to discover when and where his people would come upon the enemy. The warriors in the canoes observed special food taboos. The bow man fasted differently from the others. The war leader, during war time, no matter where he was, always drank from a small basket-work cup hung about his neck.

Heix̲waa (purification exercises and abstinences) - They were carried out before the departure of the war party, and also accompanied it.

Sex - The warriors, like hunters, had to stay away from women. Such avoidance had to last for as long a time as the expected duration of the war party, and might even last a year.

Taboos - Guwakaan or Deer Ritual

Food - To be avoided were "beach food" (shellfish and seaweed), Indian rice, bear meat, fresh or dried. But mountain goat meat put up in seal oil, dried fish, and fresh or preserved berries were permitted.

Guwakaan (Deer). Selection of a noble person as deer. It was as if the deer turned into a shaawat wusiti (woman). He may not do anything. He may not be angry, he may not talk funny like a girl. That is, he must obey taboos similar to those of the adolescent girl and the widows.

Northern Pacific Northwest Coast Indians - When initially researching secondary resources, I focused on the Southeast Alaska Native people's concept of the deer ritual. Further research revealed that Indians from what is now called British Columbia not only practiced a similar ritual (beliefs, symbols, performance) but also most of the Southeast Alaska Indian groups were formerly in British Columbia. The term applies to Southeast Alaska and British Columbia Indians.

Right hand - He has to use his left hand, because his right hand causes trouble. To insure that the right hand was kept idle, the fingers were laced together with a cord. The cry "waaa" was uttered again "when they change to the right hand," that is, when it was unbound and he was allowed to use it in eating.

Rubbing amulet or hard rock - The guwakaan was forbidden to scratch himself with his fingers, for to do so would cause "agitating more war." Instead he was given a hard rock or rubbing amulet.

Speech - The guwakaan had to rub his mouth with a stone or amulet every morning during the ritual period of his confinement before the raven calls so that he would not cause more trouble by his speech.

Waaa! - Every word and gesture of the guwakaan was watched to make sure that there were no signs of anger or hard feelings. To prevent, or perhaps to drown out any expression of resentment, or to cause the breach of a taboo, all his captors and attendants would utter the ritual cry, "Waaa! (Wooshdaseigaa has awduwalaa)."

Sex/gender - It was only in default of properly qualified attendants of his own sex that those of the opposite sex were provided. Furthermore, the spouse of the guwakaan was not allowed near him. The same taboos applied to the attendants, and probably to all those who slept in the big house with the guwakaan. The taboos of the guwakaan and his environment must not be broken.

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